



# Capitol Contact by State Representative Steve Simon

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## Getting Answers on the Delay of Highway 100 Expansion

### Disappointing News

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) recently announced another delay, until 2014, to the start of construction to widen the 2.1-mile stretch of Highway 100 between Cedar Lake Road and 36th Street West in St. Louis Park. This Highway 100 project was originally scheduled to begin in 2004, was then pushed back to 2010, and is now nine years away.

MnDOT has already expanded Highway 100 to the immediate north and south of St. Louis Park. The MnDOT plan would leave intact for too many years the resulting bottleneck. Their substantial delay in the expansion of this last piece of Highway 100 will undermine the effectiveness of this important transportation artery.

MnDOT appears to have changed its priorities. As recently as four or five years ago, MnDOT personnel assured St. Louis Park officials that expanding this final section of Highway 100 was second only to the Crosstown/35W Project in importance. I am concerned that the residents of St. Louis Park were not consulted when MnDOT apparently decided to downgrade this project. I'm also concerned about how this delay will continue to dangerously affect the adjacent residential neighborhoods in St. Louis Park, where residents must deal with drivers seeking another route in order to avoid congestion on Highway 100.

### The Push for Answers

I want to make sure that MnDOT is treating St. Louis Park residents fairly. Because verbal assurances are not enough, Representative Ron Latz and I have made a formal legal request that MnDOT disclose documents and data demonstrating the reasons for downgrading and delaying the Highway 100 reconstruction.

The Star Tribune newspaper has taken notice of our somewhat novel approach to seeking answers. Last week it ran a prominently placed article on our effort to get this information. I eagerly await MnDOT's response.

### NEXT STEPS

**I will be meeting soon with MnDOT officials.**

**I will be hosting a general Town Hall Meeting on Saturday, March 5 from 10 a.m. to noon in the St. Louis Park Senior High cafeteria.**

**The City of St. Louis Park will host a Town Hall meeting on the subject of Highway 100 at 7 p.m. on March 15 at City Hall.**

*Please let me know your thoughts and opinions on the MnDOT's Highway 100 delay.*

Dear Friend:

As a member of the House Transportation Committee, I've heard many hours of testimony about the scope of our state's transportation crunch. Clearly, traffic congestion is a large and growing problem in our community that will only be resolved by investing more in highway construction and transit expansion. Highway 100--the subject of this edition of "Capitol Contact"-- is an important piece of the puzzle for our area. As always, please feel free to contact me about any issue, idea, or concern.

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE