

= Interstate 35E (Minnesota) =

Interstate 35E (I @-@ 35E) is an Interstate Highway in the US state of Minnesota , passing through downtown Saint Paul . It is one of two through routes for Interstate 35 through the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul , the other being Interstate 35W through Minneapolis . Thus , both ends of I @-@ 35E are shared with I @-@ 35W and I @-@ 35 . This is one of two pairs of suffixed Interstates that has not been eliminated ; I @-@ 35 also splits into I @-@ 35E and I @-@ 35W in Dallas @-@ Fort Worth , Texas .

In Minnesota , I @-@ 35E continues the exit numbers of I @-@ 35 , while those of I @-@ 35W begin with 1 just north of the split . I @-@ 35E also carries the legislative route of I @-@ 35 ? unsigned legislative route 390 ? through the Twin Cities . On the other hand , the portion of I @-@ 35E through the West Seventh neighborhood of Saint Paul is a controversial four @-@ lane parkway that heavy trucks are prohibited from using .

Interstate 35E in Minnesota is 39 miles (63 km) in length .

= = Route description = =

The southern terminus of I @-@ 35E is at exit 88A in Burnsville , where I @-@ 35 splits into I @-@ 35E and I @-@ 35W . While I @-@ 35W heads north into Minneapolis , I @-@ 35E takes a northeasterly path into Saint Paul . There is no access between I @-@ 35E and I @-@ 35W here , but Dakota County Road 42 (exit 88B) , immediately to the north , connects the two Interstates in Burnsville . Major interchanges south of Saint Paul include State Highway 77 (MN 77 , signed as Cedar Avenue ? exit 92) at Apple Valley ? Eagan and Interstate 494 (exit 99) in Mendota Heights . Between exits 94 and 97 , the highway deviates from its relatively straight path to avoid Blackhawk Lake . As it crosses I @-@ 494 , I @-@ 35E turns more to the north , crossing MN 110 (exit 101) and MN 13 (exit 102) in Mendota Heights before crossing the Mississippi River on the Lexington Bridge into the city of Saint Paul . This portion of I @-@ 35E is four lanes wide (two in each direction) , except between MN 77 and MN 110 , where it carries six lanes . The Lexington Bridge carries six lanes ? four through lanes and the exit and entrance lanes for MN 13 ? as well as a bicycle and pedestrian path . The bridge has an innovative automatic anti @-@ icing system that sprays potassium acetate onto the bridge surface to prevent frost and ice formation in inclement weather .

The auxiliary lanes from MN 13 leave at the first exit in Saint Paul , a half interchange with Shepard Road (exit 103A) with ramps toward the bridge . Shepard Road is a four @-@ lane roadway with minimal intersections that follows the Mississippi River northeast into downtown Saint Paul . Immediately after Shepard Road is MN 5 (West 7th Street) (exit 103B) , which leads northeast to downtown through the heart of the West Seventh neighborhood . The portion of I @-@ 35E between MN 5 and downtown is a mostly sunken four @-@ lane parkway with a speed limit of 45 miles per hour (72 km / h) (this portion is sometimes referred to as the " practice freeway " by locals) , a ban on trucks over 9 @, @ 000 pounds (4 @, @ 100 kg) gross vehicle weight , and median landscaping . This parkway was built instead of a typical six @-@ lane freeway because of local opposition . Major interchanges on this section include Ayd Mill Road (exit 104B) , a sunken four @-@ lane road to the northwest , and Kellogg Boulevard (exit 106B) , which extends in both directions as part of a loop around downtown .

The four lanes of I @-@ 35E pass through downtown Saint Paul in the center of the six lanes of I @-@ 94 , with a short overlap occupying the blocks between 11th and 12th streets . Despite this short overlap , there is no weaving between the two highways , since an exit in each direction of I @-@ 35E ? exit 107A from I @-@ 35E north to I @-@ 94 east , and exit 107B from I @-@ 35E south to I @-@ 94 west ? takes traffic that would move to the right in the overlap instead to the right of the entire roadway . There are no interchanges on the common segment , and no direct access from I @-@ 35E northbound to I @-@ 94 west or I @-@ 94 eastbound to I @-@ 35E south . Kellogg Boulevard provides an indirect connection ; Ayd Mill Road , further west , nears I @-@ 94 but does not connect without several turns and traffic lights . Unlike the west split of I @-@ 35E and

I @-@ 94 , all ramps are present at the east split ; among other uses , the I @-@ 35E southbound to I @-@ 94 east and I @-@ 94 westbound to I @-@ 35E north ramps carry traffic following US Highway 10 (US 10) , which overlaps I @-@ 35E north of downtown , and truck traffic using the nearby Lafayette Freeway (US 52) to avoid the parkway through the West Seventh neighborhood .

From downtown Saint Paul north to the junction with I @-@ 694 west (exit 113) in Little Canada , where US 10 also leaves I @-@ 35E , the highway carries three lanes of traffic in each direction . Major interchanges here include Pennsylvania Avenue (exit 108) , another part of the loop that includes Kellogg Boulevard , and MN 36 (exit 111) . An overlap of about one mile (1 @-@ 5 km) exists between the two interchanges with I @-@ 694 (exits 113 and 115) ; unlike the one with I @-@ 94 , traffic must weave to remain on either road . Heading northbound on I @-@ 35E , the three lanes split into two for I @-@ 694 westbound and two for I @-@ 35E northbound , and then one lane from I @-@ 694 eastbound enters on the left . These three lanes then split into two on the right for I @-@ 694 eastbound and two on the left for I @-@ 35E northbound ; after the turn north , a lane joins on the right from I @-@ 694 westbound traffic . Thus through traffic on I @-@ 694 eastbound must move right at least one lane , and only the center lane of I @-@ 35E north continues through . The configuration in the other direction , where I @-@ 35E southbound and I @-@ 694 westbound merge , is similar , but two lanes of I @-@ 694 westbound enter the merge , and the rightmost of the two I @-@ 35E lanes ends , so all I @-@ 35E south traffic must move at least one lane to the left , while the right lane of I @-@ 694 west can continue straight through . A four @-@ year construction project , called " Unweave the Weave " beginning in 2004 , was completed in 2008 , to eliminate this weaving in a similar method to the I @-@ 94 overlap , with three I @-@ 35E lanes inside three I @-@ 694 lanes , and separate right @-@ side ramps from I @-@ 35E to I @-@ 694 .

I @-@ 35E is four lanes wide north of I @-@ 694 ; the third lane added northbound from the I @-@ 694 westbound ramp exits immediately onto County Road E (exit 115) in Vadnais Heights . Other than the northern terminus of I @-@ 35E (exit 127) in Columbus near Forest Lake , where it merges with I @-@ 35W to re @-@ form I @-@ 35 , there are only four interchanges on I @-@ 35E north of I @-@ 694 between Vadnais Heights and Columbus , all for county roads .

= = History = =

Early plans for the Interstate Highway System include a route along roughly the same alignment as the present I @-@ 35 through the Twin Cities area , but are not detailed enough to show exactly how the cities would be served . When preliminary urban routes were laid out in 1955 , a split alignment was chosen to serve both cities equally . South of the Twin Cities , I @-@ 35 followed the corridor of old US 65 , which had followed Lyndale Avenue between Burnsville and downtown Minneapolis . I @-@ 35E was located parallel to MN 13 , which cut northeast to Saint Paul from old US 65 south of the Minnesota River . North of the metropolitan area , I @-@ 35 closely paralleled US 61 , which passed through Saint Paul ; I @-@ 35W paralleled old US 8 from Minneapolis northeast through New Brighton and then to the present day I @-@ 35E ? I @-@ 35W split at Columbus near Forest Lake , near where old US 8 had joined US 61 . The Minnesota Legislature defined I @-@ 35E as part of unmarked Legislative Route 390 , which stretched south to the Iowa state line and north to the city of Duluth along I @-@ 35 .

I @-@ 35E was completed north of downtown Saint Paul in 1970 . The first section to open ran north from Maryland Avenue in Saint Paul to I @-@ 694 in Little Canada ; this was completed in the early 1960s , concurrently with I @-@ 694 west to old MN 49 (Rice Street) . Later that decade , I @-@ 35E was extended south to downtown Saint Paul , opening first to Pennsylvania Avenue and then to I @-@ 94 , including the I @-@ 35E / I @-@ 94 concurrency (and I @-@ 94 in both directions) . In 1970 , I @-@ 35E was extended north along the I @-@ 35E / I @-@ 694 concurrency in Little Canada ? Vadnais Heights and also extended northbound to its northern terminus at Columbus near Forest Lake ; the adjacent sections of I @-@ 35 , I @-@ 35W , and I @-@ 694 opened at about the same time .

The southern half of I @-@ 35E in the metro area took a lot longer to build . Its first section ? a

short stretch from MN 110 north to State Highway 5 , including the Lexington Bridge over the Mississippi River ? opened in the mid @-@ 1960s . Even though the connecting piece of I @-@ 35W and I @-@ 35 at the southern terminus of I @-@ 35E in Burnsville opened in the mid @-@ 1960s , it was not until the mid @-@ 1980s that I @-@ 35E was completed south of MN 110 at Mendota Heights and southbound through Eagan and Apple Valley , where there had been a missing link of I @-@ 35E for 20 years . Construction was delayed by opposition from nearby residents in Burnsville and from environmentalists over the proposed alignment across Blackhawk Lake . The final plan involved a new alignment avoiding the lake , as well as a less complicated interchange at I @-@ 494 in Mendota Heights , eliminating access to MN 55 that was part of the earlier plans .

= = = Controversy through the West Seventh neighborhood of Saint Paul = = =

The missing piece through the West Seventh neighborhood of Saint Paul , from MN 5 (West 7th Street) northeast to I @-@ 94 in downtown Saint Paul , was held up by controversy . Construction began in 1964 , and was planned for completion in the 1970s as a typical six @-@ lane freeway , but in late 1969 , a group of neighbors in the area had formed " Residents in Protest 35E " (R.I.P. 35E) to oppose the completion of I @-@ 35E . The group convinced the city to drop its support , and in August it filed a joint lawsuit against the Minnesota Highway Department (MHD) and U.S. Department of Transportation along with four neighborhood associations and eight citizens . The parties quickly reached an agreement , favorable to the plaintiffs , to halt construction pending an environmental impact statement (EIS) .

The Saint Paul City Council decided in late 1974 to support I @-@ 35E , possibly due to the influence of proponents . R.I.P. 35E proposed an alternative to the original plan , and convinced the city council to go along with it . The plan included a four @-@ lane boulevard upgrade of Pleasant Avenue (the street chosen for the I @-@ 35E alignment) , with another route such as Shepard Road or the nearby Lafayette Freeway forming part of I @-@ 35E . The group opposed any direct connection of this parkway to I @-@ 94 near the State Capitol , where I @-@ 35E and I @-@ 94 were to merge . The EIS was completed in early 1975 , identifying noise pollution , air pollution , vibrations , and slope stability as the main concerns . In addition to the nearby location of historic districts , hospitals were worried about the effects of vibrations on sensitive operations ; the MHD solved this problem while the report was being developed . The EIS identified the primary benefit of completing I @-@ 35E as connecting downtown Saint Paul to the Interstate Highway System , and determined that the original Pleasant Avenue corridor was the best choice , but with minor changes such as lowering the freeway below Grand Avenue and Ramsey Street .

A bill passed by the Minnesota Legislature on May 31 , 1975 , imposed a moratorium on building I @-@ 35E , as well as other area freeways such as the canceled I @-@ 335 project and the MN 55 (Hiawatha Avenue) upgrade project . This law defined several new legislative routes , which " may be added by order of the commissioner of transportation to the trunk highway system " (as opposed to other such routes , which were added to that system by the legislature) :

Legislative Route No. 380 . Beginning at a point on Route No. 390 [I @-@ 35E] at its intersection with Shepard Road in the city of Saint Paul ; thence extending in a northeasterly direction generally following along the course of Shepard Road to a point on Route No. 112 [Lafayette Freeway] ; thence extending in a northeasterly direction to a point on Route No. 392 [I @-@ 94] easterly of the downtown area of Saint Paul ; providing a connector route between Route No. 390 and Routes No. 112 and 392 ;

Legislative Route No. 381 . Beginning at a point on Route No. 112 [Lafayette Freeway] , northerly of the Lafayette Street bridge in the city of Saint Paul ; thence extending in a northwesterly direction to a point on Route No. 390 [I @-@ 35E] , southerly of Maryland Avenue in the city of Saint Paul ; providing a connector route between Route No. 112 and Route No. 390 ; and

Legislative Route No. 382 . Beginning at a point on Route No. 390 [I @-@ 35E] at its junction with Route No. 111 [MN 5] , thence extending in a general northerly direction , within the corridor of the right of way already acquired on the effective date of this act , for Route No. 390 , to a point on Short

Line Road ; thence extending in a northeasterly direction within said corridor of right of way to the intersection of Pleasant Avenue and Kellogg Boulevard in the city of Saint Paul .

Legislative Routes 380 and 381 provided for an alternate alignment of I @-@ 35E along Shepard Road and a northerly extension of the Lafayette Freeway , while Legislative Route 382 was a " four @-@ lane parkway facility " that the MHD could build along the original alignment of I @-@ 35E , but without a connection to I @-@ 94 . The city announced its support of the parkway in August 1976 .

An act passed on April 5 , 1978 , added a condition to the definition of Legislative Route 390 (I @-@ 35E) :

Legislative Route No. 390 [I @-@ 35E] shall not include any portion of Legislative Route No. 382 [the parkway] as designated by section 161 @. @ 117 or any portion of any route connecting Route No. 382 to Route No. 392 [I @-@ 94] , nor shall it include any portion of trunk highway marked number 3 from trunk highway marked number 110 in Dakota County to East Seventh Street in the city of Saint Paul .

At the time , old MN 3 was marked along the nearby Lafayette Freeway (now US 52) from the late 1970s to 1994 .

It also allowed a connection from the parkway to I @-@ 94 , but this link could not be controlled access . The Metropolitan Council was to complete a draft EIS for the parkway and I @-@ 35E by September 1 , 1979 , with the cooperation of Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn / DOT) and Saint Paul . There was widespread support for a 45 @-@ mile @-@ per @-@ hour (72 km / h) parkway , with landscaping and a truck restriction , but the non @-@ connection to I @-@ 94 jeopardized federal Interstate funding , since it could no longer be part of the continuous I @-@ 35E . Two notable alternatives came out of the draft EIS ? a parkway with or without an I @-@ 94 connection . The parkway with a connection would provide the same level of service as a typical freeway .

R.I.P. 35E and other citizens ' groups continued to oppose a direct connection , arguing that it would be no different from a typical freeway , since drivers would be more likely to exceed the speed limit if it was a continuous roadway to I @-@ 94 . Saint Paul changed its mind again in September 1981 , supporting a direct connection , along with Mn / DOT and the Metropolitan Council . A bill passed in March 1982 removed the stipulation that the parkway shall not connect to I @-@ 94 , and allowed Route 390 (I @-@ 35E) to use Route 382 (the parkway) . The final EIS was approved at about that time , and several groups including R.I.P. 35E filed suit in early 1983 .

The suit alleged that the EIS focused almost exclusively on the Pleasant Avenue alignment , and that it did not consider the effect of a direct connection on speed limit compliance ; faster traffic would mean more noise . Judge Paul Magnuson ruled in February 1984 that the EIS was valid , stating that the Pleasant Avenue alternative was the only reasonable one that would meet goals . This court order has been interpreted as a legal contract , prohibiting the state from raising the speed limit or allowing trucks . Construction went forward , and I @-@ 35E was opened from MN 5 north to Saint Clair Avenue in 1984 , using original bridges that had been built for three lanes in each direction . Further extensions , including all new bridges , were opened to Grand Avenue in 1986 , to Kellogg Boulevard in November 1988 , and to I @-@ 94 on October 15 , 1990 , 26 years after construction began . The 1990 opening ceremony of I @-@ 35E in downtown Saint Paul was attended by a group of highway experts from the Soviet Union , and both the US and Soviet national anthems were played .

= = = Later changes = = =

The original plans for the I @-@ 94 overlap in downtown Saint Paul did not include the right @-@ side ramps that eliminate weaving . The ramp from I @-@ 35E northbound to I @-@ 94 eastbound was added when I @-@ 35E was finally completed in 1990 , and a five @-@ year construction project that was completed in 1992 added the ramp from I @-@ 35E southbound to I @-@ 94 westbound , as well as a direct ramp from I @-@ 35E southbound to the Lafayette Freeway (US 52) to avoid weaving across I @-@ 94 east . This project was done because the old Spaghetti

Junction at the east split of I @-@ 35E and I @-@ 94 would not be able to handle the extra load from the completed I @-@ 35E parkway .

When the first piece of the parkway opened in 1984 , unused provisions , pending more study , were added for a direct link to Ayd Mill Road , a sunken four @-@ lane road with minimal intersections that leads northwest from I @-@ 35E . The ramps were built and temporarily opened in 1992 for high @-@ occupancy vehicles , due to the closure of the nearby Lafayette Bridge (US 52) for reconstruction . The ramps were reopened on June 12 , 2002 , as a test , and remain open as of 2014 . A controversial extension of Ayd Mill Road to I @-@ 94 remains on the table .

The 1964 Lexington Bridge across the Mississippi River was replaced by a new bridge , built from 2001 to 2004 , due to deterioration of the old structure including cracks in steel beams . Unweave the Weave , a project to eliminate weaving at the I @-@ 694 overlap , was completed in 2008 .

The 1965 bridge just north of downtown Saint Paul carrying a daily traffic volume of 148 @,@ 000 vehicles over Cayuga Street and the BNSF Railway line was rated by Mn / DOT as meeting minimum tolerable limits in 2006 . Its superstructure and substructure were described as poor with advanced section loss , deterioration , spalling , or scour . As the fourth busiest bridge in the state , it was scrutinized following the collapse of the I @-@ 35W Mississippi River Bridge in nearby Minneapolis on August 1 , 2007 .

= = Exit list = =

Exit numbers and mileposts increase numerically from the south end , continuing the numbers used on I @-@ 35 .