The I-35W Mississippi River bridge provided direct access to downtown Minneapolis, the University of Minnesota, area businesses and north suburban destinations for more than 140,000 vehicles each day. The tragic collapse of the bridge caused substantial loss of life and injury.

The bridge collapse has also significantly impacted road-users and the Minnesota economy. Mn/DOT’s initial study concluded that road-user costs due to the unavailability of the river crossing would total $400,000 per day. In addition to the road user cost study, further analysis by DEED and Mn/DOT estimate the economic impact - or loss to Minnesota’s economy – at about $17 million in 2007 and $43 million in 2008.

The Mn/DOT study focused on valuing how the unavailability of the river crossing affected road-users and assigned monetary values to auto travel time, heavy commercial truck travel time, as well as to variable operating costs for both – a sound approach for measuring impacts to road-users.

The impact analysis takes an economic approach to estimate the impact of the bridge collapse. This approach focuses on factors that directly affect Minnesota’s economy. It does not consider the value of auto travel time since non-business travel (i.e., commuting) is not considered an economic contribution. Moreover, some of the remaining road-user costs would have been spent on other goods and services in the state without the bridge collapse offsetting some of the road-user costs.

**Economic Impact Background**

Although the economic impacts of the bridge collapse and subsequent activities are widespread, this report examines only the economic impacts of the road-user transportation detours.

The data was collected through a variety of sources and analyzed with the assistance of REMI Consulting using their Transight and Policy Insight econometric models. The model analyzes how detours affect costs and access to goods/services. The model also considers how strategies by businesses and commuters can mitigate the costs to the economy. The model generates initial, or direct, economic costs and indirect or “spin-off” impacts.

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1 REMI models have been used to estimate economic impacts by more than 100 public and private organizations throughout the world. See Remi.com.