

Transportation Committee

Meeting date: June 22, 2020

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of July 8, 2020

Subject: Metro Freeway Project Approval: MN 36 at CSAH 15 (Manning Avenue), Washington County

District(s), Member(s): District 12, Francisco J. Gonzalez

Policy/Legal Reference: Mn. Statute 473.166

Staff Prepared/Presented: Nick Thompson, Director, MTS, 651-602-1754

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Division/Department: Metropolitan Transportation Services (Review #22454-1)

Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by Washington County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to convert a signalized intersection at MN Highway 36 and CSAH 15 (Manning Avenue) to a grade separated interchange, subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council if there are any significant changes in the design of the proposed project.

Background

Minnesota state law (MS. 473.166) requires that the Council approve any controlled access highway (i.e., freeway) in the metropolitan area before construction or right-of-way acquisition begins. This is implemented through the Metro Freeway Project Approval process. This requirement is to ensure that proposed highway projects are consistent with regional policies and plans.

This project proposes to construct an interchange at MN Highway 36 and CSAH 15 (Manning Avenue). This interchange will replace an existing at grade intersection to improve safety and operations along MN Highway 36 and CSAH 15. The proposed project includes connections to current and planned frontage roads, a grade separated bike and pedestrian crossing of MN Highway 36 and full access between MN Highway 36 and CSAH 15. This project also accommodates a planned connection of CSAH 15 to Stillwater Blvd (Old TH 5) which was turned back to the county in 2015 and is now CSAH 15. This locally led project will reduce crashes and delay and accommodate increasing traffic along MN Highway 36.

MnDOT and the local communities have been improving MN Highway 36 for years. This improvement is another step in that long process and more work continues to be planned.

Rationale

This project is included in Washington County's 2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan, and the region's 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Program and 2040 Transportation Policy Plan. It is consistent with regional policy as it most directly advances the Transportation Policy Plan's goals of Safety and Security, Access to Destinations and Competitive Economy.

Under the Minnesota and federal environmental review process a Project Memorandum has been prepared for the project and submitted to MnDOT and FHWA for review. The Project Memorandum is being updated to address MnDOT and FHWA comments. Approval is anticipated in fall 2020.

Thrive Lens Analysis

This project most specifically supports the Thrive MSP 2040 outcomes of Prosperity and Livability by reducing transportation costs and improving quality of life through reduced crashes and delay immediately upon completion and through the planning horizon.

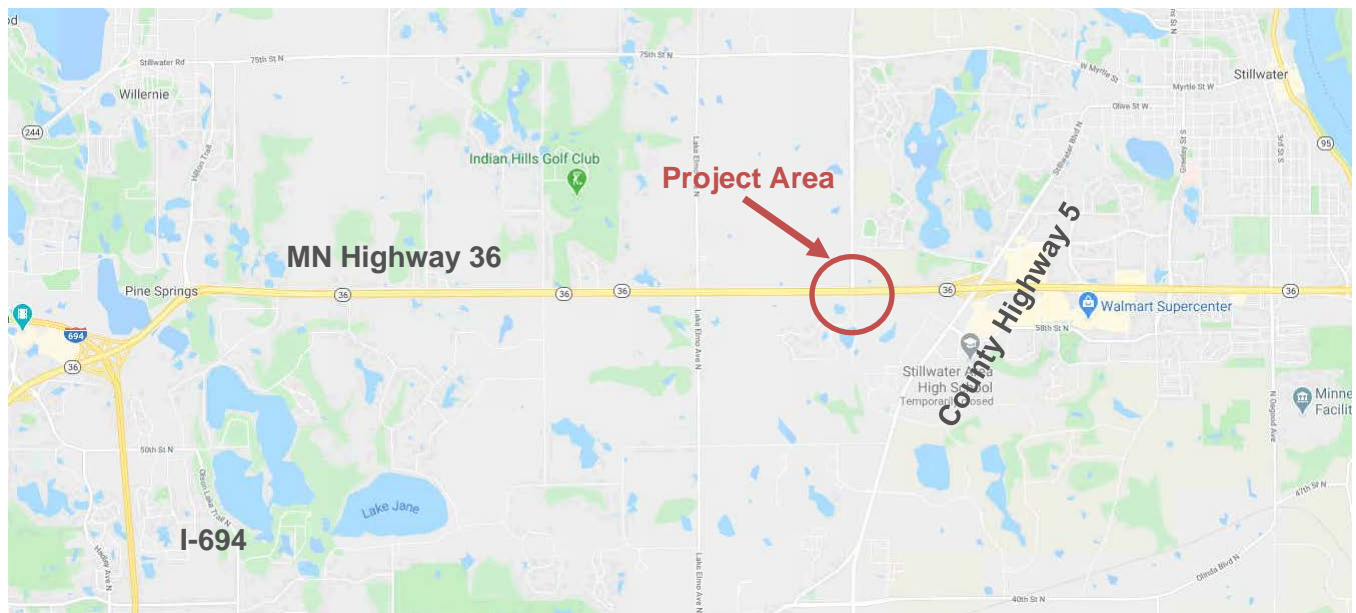
Funding

This Washington County led project is estimated to cost \$32 million. Funding includes a \$10 million award from MnDOT's Transportation Economic Development (TED) program, \$5 million in MnDOT Metro District Mobility funds, \$7 million awarded by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) through our Regional Solicitation and the balance from county and city sources.

Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to this project. It has been supported financially by a variety of transportation partners noted above.

Figure 1: MN Highway 36 Manning Avenue Project Area



Source: Google Maps

Figure 2: MN Highway 36 and Manning Avenue Proposed Project Improvements

