



For immediate release

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Contact: Lyndon Robjent, Public Works Director, lrobjent@co.carver.mn.us
[\(952\) 466-5206](tel:9524665206)

CARVER COUNTY RECEIVES FUNDING FOR HIGHWAY 212

CHASKA, MINN.—Carver County has been awarded \$7 million in Federal funding through the Metropolitan Council’s Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) for the County’s planned upgrades to U.S. Highway 212.

“This funding is another step towards making Highway 212 safer and more efficient,” Carver County Commissioner Randy Maluchnik said. This round of funding supports phase one of the two-phase project, nearly completing the funding for improvements from Chaska to Cologne. Phase two covers the five-mile stretch from Cologne to Norwood Young America.

Part of the National Highway System, U.S. Highway 212 is one of the most important economic and freight corridors linking Carver County to the Twin Cities metro area; and the metro area to points west. It serves as a critical gateway for businesses throughout Minnesota, and notably in the southwestern metro and Carver County. While the State of Minnesota Department of Transportation is the roadway’s responsible entity, Carver County has prioritized improving the highway as quickly as possible. The Board of Commissioners have earmarked local sales tax dollars towards the project.

“In concert with Carver County and the Southwest Corridor Transportation Coalition, we’ve long advocated to expand Highway 212 to a four-lane expressway between Norwood Young America and Chaska,” Minnesota Transportation Alliance executive director Margaret Donahoe said. She noted that two separate two-lane portions still exist, creating traffic bottlenecks and unsafe conditions. These two-lane segments have seen six fatal crashes since 2009. Upgrading these two segments to four lanes enhances safety and mobility for everyone who relies on the corridor for transportation and commerce. The two-lane segments, built in 1930, struggle to serve the current traffic load. Nearly 2,000 trucks per day travel the two-lane sections, causing significant risk to travelers.

“We’re grateful to local legislators and members of Congress, who are very supportive and continue supporting funding requests and legislation that directs the state to fund the second phase of this project,” Maluchnik said. “We’re also thankful to our Metropolitan Council representative, Deb Barber, for her support of the regional funding.”

The first phase, between Chaska and Cologne, needs only \$5 million more towards the estimated \$46 million project. This segment is slated for a 2022 construction start. Maluchnik stated the County would ask MnDOT to fill the small funding gap. The County continues to develop construction documents for this phase and soon will begin to purchase the property needed to expand the highway.

“We are very confident we can build phase one in 2022 but our work is not done,” Maluchnik said. “We continue to seek funding for phase two between Cologne and Norwood Young America through the Federal Department of Transportation BUILD and INFRA programs and have engaged the Legislature to garner state funds.”

That second phase is \$38 million short of its projected \$53 million cost. This segment includes the County Road 51 intersection. Known locally as the Bongards’ intersection, it witnessed a fatal crash this past August. Critical crash rates at this intersection and the County Road 43 intersection are higher than the state average. In fact, they exceed the crash rates on comparable roads such as more highly-publicized intersections on Highway 55 east of Rockford and Highway 12 west of Delano.

MnDOT is currently developing a resurfacing project on this segment in 2020. It also plans to improve the highway within the City of Norwood Young America, including a new pedestrian underpass. The County is working with MnDOT to design solutions that fit the resurfacing project and are compatible with the future four-lane highway.

“We are particularly concerned about the intersection at County Road 51 where there have been several crashes, including the fatal one this past August,” Maluchnik said. “With the sheer volume of trucks on Highway 212, the risk of more crashes occurring is rising. We need to build a safer intersection as soon as possible and are studying all options.”

If the County is successful in securing the \$38 million shortfall for phase two by 2020, it will ask MnDOT to leverage its resurfacing budget and additional County sales tax to build the four-lane highway. The soonest construction on this phase could start is 2023.

U.S. Highway 212 Funding	
Phase 1: Chaska to Cologne - \$46 million	Phase 2: Cologne to Norwood - \$53 million
MN Hwy Freight Program: \$15 million MnDOT Preservation: \$13 million County Sales Tax: \$6 million <i>TAB/Met Council: \$7 million (awarded Jan. 2019)</i> GAP=\$5 million	Total Project: \$53 million MnDOT Preservation: \$5 million County Sales Tax: \$10 million GAP: \$38 million

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