



MEMORANDUM

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**DATE:** April 26, 2021

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers  
Dave Perrault, City Administrator

**FROM:** David Swearingen, Interim Public Works Director

**SUBJECT:** Improvement Public Hearing for the Snelling Avenue North and County Road E Improvements Project

Budgeted Amount: \$1,120,000 (2021-2025 CIP Area 1)	Actual Amount: \$1,242,560 (Recommendation)	Funding Source: PIR, Utility Funds, Special Assessments
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**Council Should Consider**

- Conducting Improvement public hearing for the proposed Snelling Avenue North and County Road E Improvements project in accordance with City Council Resolution 2021-022. The City Council will be requested to make a formal decision regarding ordering the specific improvements and ordering project plans and specifications under Agenda Item 10A.

*All items need a simple majority for action unless otherwise noted.*

**Background/Discussion**

On April 12, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution 2021-022 receiving the feasibility report and calling for a public hearing to consider proposed improvements for the Snelling Avenue North and County Road E Improvements Project. A complete copy of the feasibility report is provided on the City project webpage <https://www.cityofardenhills.org/968/Snelling-Avenue-North-and-Co-Rd-E-Improv> (scroll down to Project Feasibility Report). The only information that has had additions since the April 12<sup>th</sup> Council meeting is Appendix J – Public Information and Open House Documents which is provided in Attachment B.

Projects involving special assessments generally require two public hearings commonly known as an improvement hearing and an assessment hearing. The subject hearing for April 26 is the improvement hearing. The purpose of the improvement hearing is for the City Council to discuss a specific local improvement before ordering it done. The second assessment hearing would be scheduled after the project has received contractor bids to provide property owners an opportunity to express concerns about the actual special assessments.

At the improvement hearing, interested persons may voice their opinion regarding the proposed project improvements and whether or not they are in the proposed assessment area. A reasonable estimate of the total amount to be assessed and the description of the methodology used to calculate individual assessments for affected parcels is contained within the feasibility report, a copy of which is available for review on the City's website.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 429, notices of the public hearing were published in the Pioneer Press on April 13, 2021 and April 20, 2021. A notice was also mailed to each property within the draft assessment roll area on April 14, 2021.

Prior to opening the hearing, City staff will present general information regarding the scope of the proposed improvements, the overall cost and funding for the project, and assessments that apply for this project. The proposed improvements are generally summarized below and described in greater detail within the feasibility study report provided in Attachment B.

**Street Improvements:**

The following streets are proposed for improvements: Area 1 which includes Snelling Avenue North from Trunk Highway 51 to County Road E, Cummings Lane and the intersection at Bussard Court. Area 2 which includes improvements to the intersection of Snelling Avenue North and County Road E.

Area 2 is recommended to not be part of construction in 2022 due to Ramsey County rescheduling these intersection improvements to 2023. In the interim, further traffic studies and analysis should be conducted.

Area 1 has two Alternatives:

Alternative 1 involves full reconstruction of the roadway and the addition of an 8 to 10 foot-wide multiuse pedestrian/bicycle trail extending from County Road E to Highway 51. Alternative 1 proposes to narrow the roadway from 40 feet to a width of 28 to 34 feet within the center section, install curb and storm sewer, and placement of the trail alignment directly adjacent to the west curb line in an attempt to minimize substantial tree removal, minimize large volumes of cut and fill grading, and avoid impacts to delineated wetlands.

Alternative 2 involves full-depth reclamation with pedestrian travel continuing to utilize the roadway shoulders but including additional safety strategies as described on page 13 and 14 of the feasibility report.

Cummings Lane and the east 100-feet of Bussard Court are highly deteriorated and can no longer be cost-effectively maintained. Proposed improvements for Cummings Lane consist of reclaiming the existing pavement, shaping the generated aggregate material to raise the center crown to improve pavement drainage and repaving the roadway with 4-inches of bituminous pavement. The installation of curb and gutter is not proposed along Cummings Lane.

**Storm Drainage Improvements:**

Storm drainage improvements involve rehabilitation and expansion of the existing storm sewer system within the project area to improve surface drainage. Project design will include stormwater best management practices as required under Rule C of the Rice Creek Watershed District which is determined by the Alternative chosen.

Improvements also include replacement of the storm sewer structure at the low point of Cummings Lane and the culvert extending into the drainage ditch along Trunk Highway 51.

**Water System Improvements:**

Under Alternative 1 (trail), water main along Snelling Avenue North would be replaced with new ductile-iron or PVC pipe due to the significant excavation and disturbance required for construction of the trail and associated storm sewer system.

Under Alternative 2 (shoulder pedestrian travel), a majority of existing water main south of County Road E is proposed to remain in-place. These segments of water main do not have a history of water main breaks based on City records. Removal and replacement of water main between Lametti Lane and Bussard Court is recommended to improve reliability of the water supply feed from Cummings Lane, particularly for Bussard Court, which is supplied from only one direction. A water main break between Bussard and Cummings Lane would disrupt water service to 19 or more homes. The locations of water main improvements are indicated in Appendix D of the feasibility report.

**Sanitary Sewer System Improvements:**

Sanitary sewer along Snelling Avenue is located approximately 30 feet or more to the east and west of the roadway pavement. The segment between Arden Place and Skiles Lane was previously improved with a CIPP liner. The recommended sanitary sewer improvements are limited to replacement of the 8-inch diameter crossing under Snelling Avenue at Skiles Lane east as shown in Appendix D of the feasibility report. This segment of sewer was originally constructed with a combination of vitrified clay and cast-iron pipe materials, which is believed to have been done as an alternative to installing a steel casing pipe within the former State highway. The CIP section of pipe is in a highly deteriorated condition.

**Area 2 sanitary sewer, water main and drainage improvements:**

Intersection improvements at Snelling Avenue North and County Road E are not recommended to proceed to construction until completion of further investigation of projected traffic volume growth for Bethel University and the surrounding roadway system. The proposed future improvements are described in section 3 of the feasibility report.

**Budget Impact**

Proposed project funding sources are a combination of the City's Permanent Improvement Revolving (PIR) fund, utility funds, Ramsey County, Municipal State Aid, and special assessments for street improvements described in section 5 of the feasibility report and summarized in the following table.

Funding Source	AREA 1		AREA 2	Cummings Lane
	Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Roundabout Funding Amount	Funding Amount
	Funding Amount	Funding Amount		
PIR Fund	\$1,716,530	\$768,350	\$0	\$32,565
Special Assessments	\$122,150	\$122,150	\$18,860	\$32,565
Municipal State Aid Funds	\$0	\$0	\$330,530	\$0
Ramsey County	\$0	\$0	\$1,048,170	\$0
Sanitary Sewer Improvements	\$58,420	\$60,480	\$125,740	\$0
Water Main Improvements	\$440,260	\$161,970	\$158,230	\$0
Storm Drainage Improvements	\$947,590	\$44,200	\$0	\$20,280
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,284,950</b>	<b>\$1,157,150</b>	<b>\$1,681,530</b>	<b>\$85,410</b>

Area 1: Snelling Avenue North from CR E to Highway 51, including Bussard Ct. intersection  
Area 2: Roundabout Intersection Improvements at Snelling Ave and County Road E  
Alternative 1: Reconstruction with addition of pedestrian trail  
Alternative 2: Full depth reclamation with no trail construction

At this time, there are no MSA funds available for this project. The project will still be designed and constructed to MSA standards and when funds do become available they can be allocated to qualified costs in the future. Coordination with State Aid representatives will help guide staff through the process to make this an option.

**Assessments**

Section 5.3 of the feasibility report provides the estimated special assessment rate calculation for properties within Area 1 and Cummings Lane, as well as the methodology used to calculate individual assessments for affected parcels. Assessments for Area 1 were calculated using the residential equivalent unit (REU) method as identified in the City’s Assessment Policy. Assessments for Cummings Lane were calculated based on the standard application of the Assessment Policy by calculating 50 percent of the street improvements divided by the number of lots with mailing addresses on Cummings Lane.

The estimated assessment rate per REU for the recommended improvements is \$4,524 per unit for Area 1 regardless of what Alternative is chosen. The reason why the assessment rate does not change is because the full-depth reconstruction of Alternative 1 is triggered by the construction of a trail which would be considered a regional improvement that serves numerous properties outside the project corridor, thus it is not an assessable cost.

The estimated assessment rate for Cummings Lane is and \$4,071 per unit.

A preliminary assessment map and detailed preliminary assessment roll is provided in Appendix L of the feasibility report.

**Attachments**

- Attachment A: Presentation Slides for Public Hearing
- Attachment B: Appendix J of the Feasibility Report for the Snelling Avenue North and County Road E Improvements Project