

Committee Report

Transportation Committee



Committee meeting date: March 23, 2026

For the Metropolitan Council: ~~April 8, 2026~~
April 22, 2026

Business Item: 2026-15

Metro Freeway Project Approval: Highway 610 and East River Road

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by the City of Coon Rapids, Anoka County, and MnDOT to construct a grade separated interchange at Highway 610 and East River Road in Coon Rapids, subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council if there are any significant changes in the design of the proposed project.

Summary of Transportation Committee discussion/questions

Motion by Johnson, seconded by Carter, Toni. Motion carried, consent to Council.



Business Item

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Metro Freeway Project Approval: Highway 610 and East River Road

District(s), member(s):	District 9, Diego Morales
Policy/legal reference:	MS. 473.166
Staff prepared/presented:	Bethany Brandt-Sargent, Manager, 651-602-1725
Division/department:	Metropolitan Transportation Services

Proposed action

That the Metropolitan Council approve a request by the City of Coon Rapids, Anoka County, and MnDOT to construct a grade separated interchange at Highway 610 and East River Road in Coon Rapids, subject to further review and approval by the Metropolitan Council if there are any significant changes in the design of the proposed project.

Background

To ensure that proposed highway projects are consistent with regional policies and plans, state law requires Council approval of controlled access highway projects. This request covers the construction of new interchange ramps to-and-from the east at an existing freeway interchange at Highway 610 and East River Road.

The City of Coon Rapids, in partnership with Anoka County and MnDOT, completed a Non-Programmatic Categorical Exclusion for the proposed project. It was approved in March 2026. The project was included in the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program approved on September 11, 2024.

Rationale

Minnesota state law (MS. 473.166) requires that the Council approve any controlled access highway in the metropolitan area before construction or right-of-way acquisition begins. This project is included in the current 2050 Transportation Policy Plan and the region's 2026-2029 Transportation Improvement Program.

This project is consistent with regional policy, and most directly advances the Imagine 2050 Goals around healthy and safe communities and a dynamic and resilient region and Transportation Policy Plan objectives:

1. People do not die or face life-changing injuries when using any form of transportation.
2. People have better travel options beyond driving alone to meet their daily needs, with a focus on improving travel times, reliability, directness, and affordability.

Thrive lens analysis

On February 12, 2025, the Council adopted Imagine 2050, which builds on policy direction in Thrive MSP 2040. This project will provide direct access to Highway 610 and will improve freight and emergency response access, reduce congestion on the local and regional highway system, improve safety with auxiliary lanes and other improvements, and provide safe connections to Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Funding

This project is funded through a variety of federal, state, and local sources, including \$10 million through the Regional Solicitation competitive grant program in 2024.

