

Hennepin County Minnetonka Boulevard Reconstruction



Jason Staebell
6/1/2026

Recommended action

Motion to adopt resolution granting city support for the preliminary layout for the Hennepin County Minnetonka Boulevard Reconstruction project and authorizing staff to continue to work with Xcel Energy on relocating the overhead utilities underground.

Policy considerations

- Does the city council support Concept B as the preliminary layout for the Minnetonka Boulevard Reconstruction project phase 2?
- Does the city council want to continue to pursue the relocation of the overhead utilities underground in conjunction with this project?

Project overview

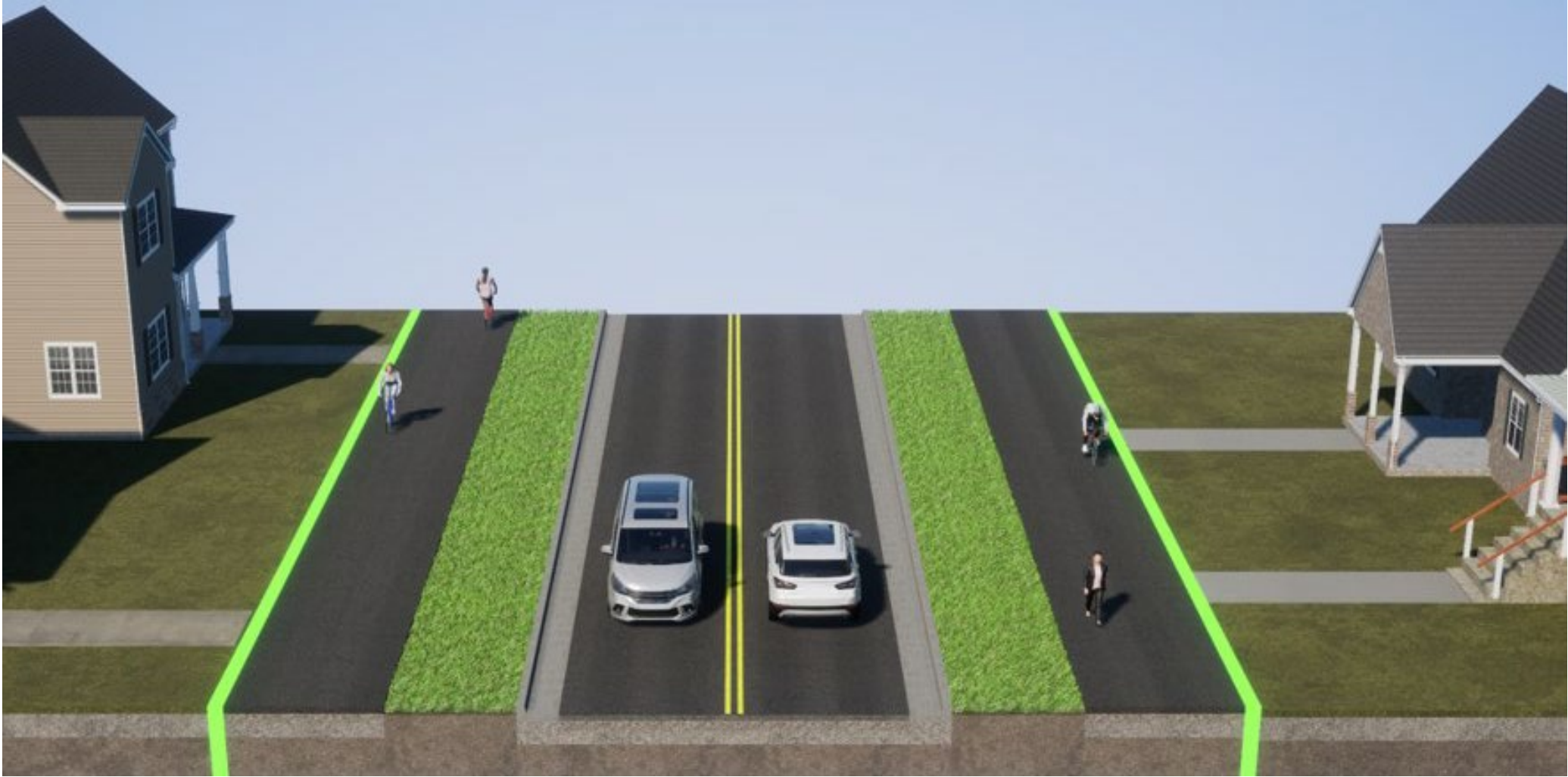
Reconstruct Minnetonka Boulevard from Hwy 100 to Aquila Avenue, continuing work from the east. This Segment was last fully reconstructed in 1956.



Project scope

- Reconstruction of Minnetonka Blvd. from Highway 100 through Aquila Ave.
 - Roadway surface
 - ADA improvements
 - Pedestrian crossing enhancements
- Signal replacements
- Construct off street mixed-use trails
- Improve roadway drainage and stormwater treatment
- Watermain replacement and utility upgrades

Recommended design: Concept B: two-sided shared-use trails

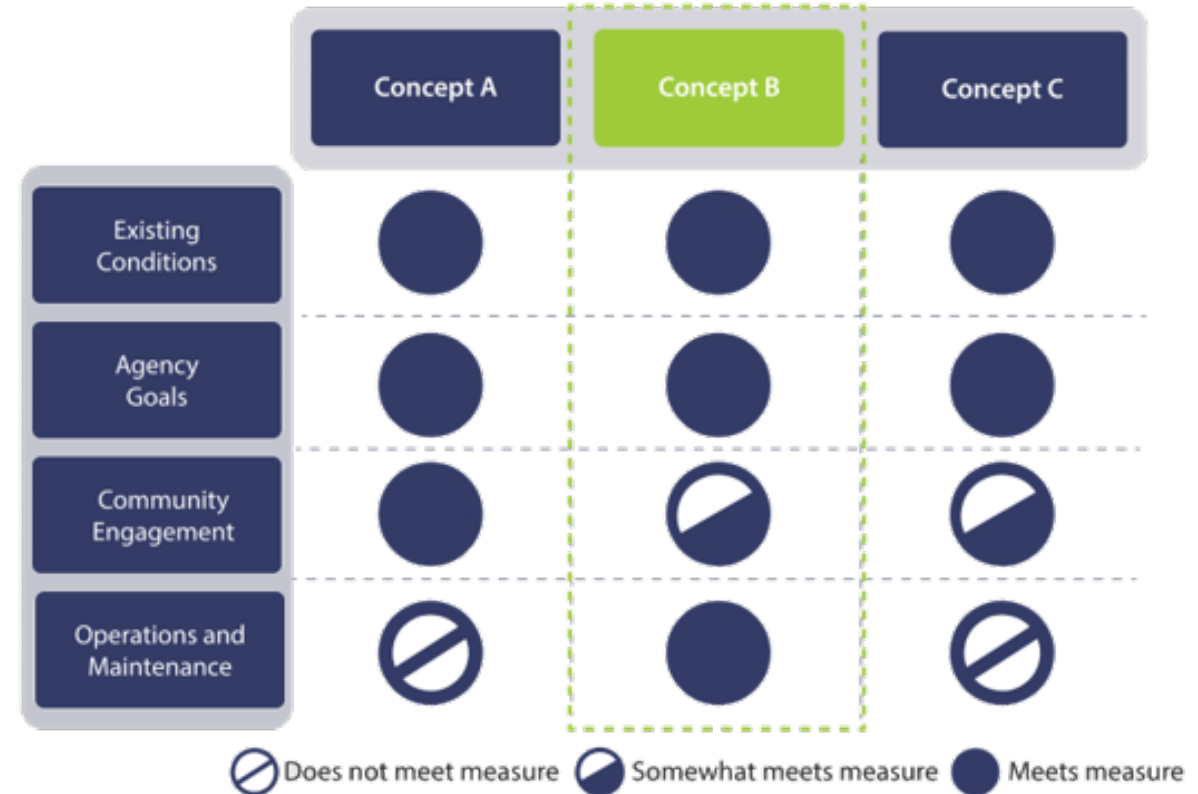


Concept evaluation

All three concepts would improve the corridor.

Concepts B was selected because it:

- Provides the best all ages and abilities network for both pedestrians and cyclists
- Eliminates the need for cyclists to cross Minnetonka Boulevard depending on travel direction.
- Maintains a large greenspace that supports new tree planting.
- Does not require the city to hire additional full-time staff to maintain the current level of service and minimizes operational impacts.
- Offers lower implementation and long-term maintenance costs.
- Strikes an effective balance between mobility and maintenance needs



Can Hennepin County reduce the speed
limit on Minnetonka Boulevard?

Hennepin County speed limit process

- State statute requires MnDOT's Commissioner to approve speed limits on county roads.
- A speed study must be completed after construction before any change to speed limits can happen.
 - Minimum speed limit allowed on county roads is 30 mph.
 - The reconstructed design (narrower roadway) is expected to naturally slow traffic.
- The Phase 1 speed study (France Avenue–Highway 100) supported a reduction to 30 mph, now implemented.

Is it feasible to include on-street bike lanes or wider travel lanes for cyclists who prefer to ride on the road rather than using a separated facility?

On-street bikeway

- Adding on-street bike lanes would require widening the roadway.
- A wider roadway would reduce boulevard space and limit tree planting opportunities.
- Wider lanes can also increase vehicle speeds, reducing safety for all users.
- Bicyclists are allowed to use Minnetonka Boulevard travel lanes under any design.

Will the new roadway design impact emergency vehicle response times?

Emergency response times

- No negative impact to emergency response times is expected.
- Fire and police departments have reviewed the design and expressed no concerns.
- Roadway width allows safe emergency vehicle passing.
 - Proposed design matches the overall width of Cedar Lake Road west of Louisiana Avenue.
- Minnetonka Boulevard will keep the same number of through lanes and left turn lanes as existing.

Will the new roadway design impact traffic on adjacent parallel city streets?

Traffic impacts

- Proposed roadway remains a two-lane corridor with no on-street parking, same as today.
 - Only minor turn-lane adjustments at intersections.
 - Maintains key traffic signals
- Existing traffic volume: approximately 12,000 vehicles per day (ADT).
- Corridor capacity expected to handle current and future peak-hour traffic.
- With minimal capacity changes, no impacts to adjacent parallel city streets are expected.

Concerns about construction impacts
to businesses adjacent to road diet projects?

Business impacts

- Minnetonka Boulevard project is not a road diet; no reduction in travel lanes.
- Construction will cause short-term impacts to adjacent businesses.
 - Expected disruptions: reduced visibility, modified access, detours, noise, dust, utility work, and reduced pass-by traffic.
 - Greatest impact occurs when construction is directly in front of a business.
 - Staff conducted early outreach to businesses and shared resources for preparation.
 - County and City will work to minimize impacts through coordination, signage, updates, and access planning.
- Main challenge is temporary construction disruption, not the final roadway design.

Concerns about electric bicycles (e-bikes) or scooters using the shared-use trail and requested data on shared-use trails.

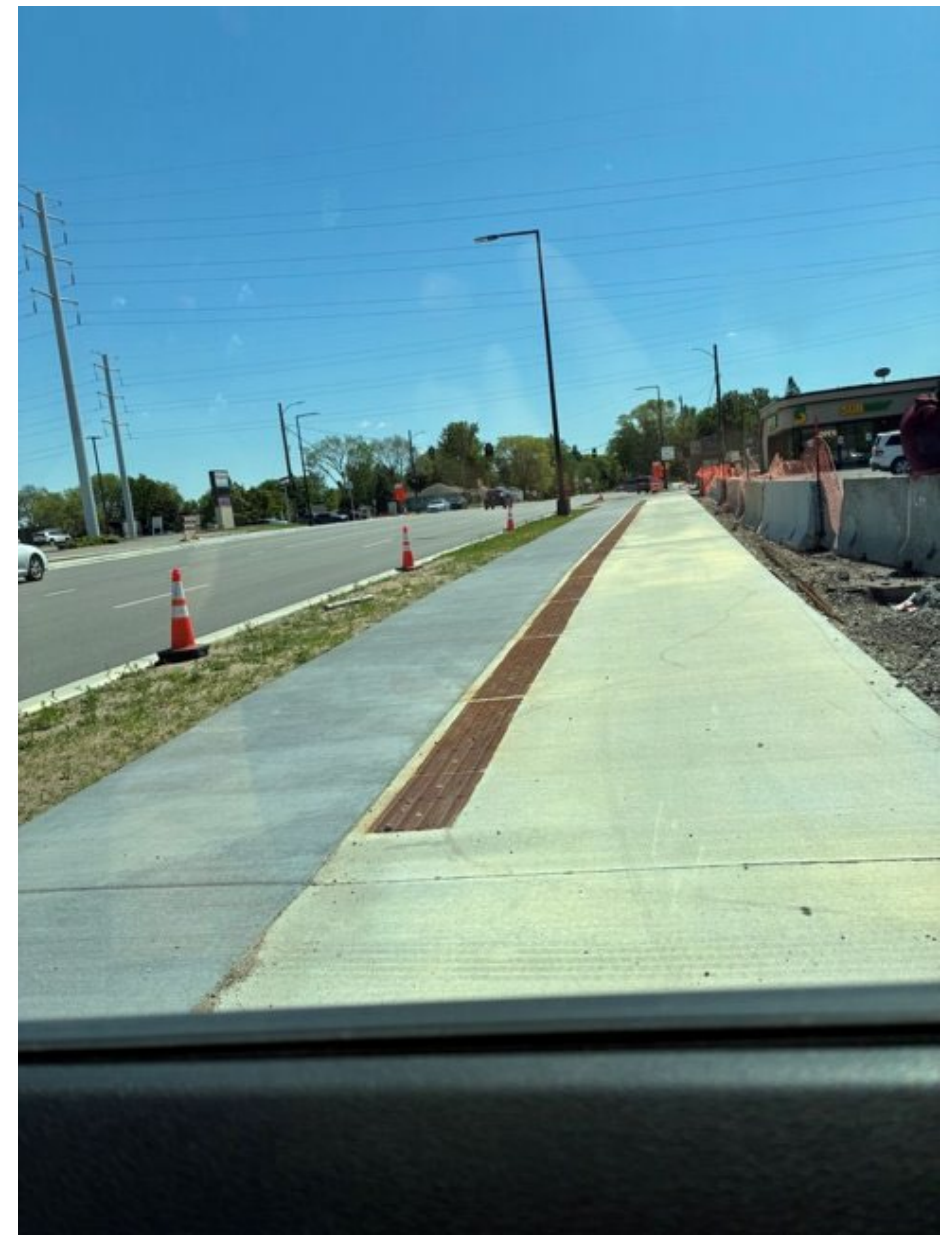
E-bikes and scooters

- Community concerns about e-bikes, scooters, and other micromobility devices are valid and increasing statewide.
- Electric bicycles (e-bikes) and scooters are permitted on trail systems, consistent with state statutes
- Adjacent cities and park districts currently allow their use wherever traditional bicycles are allowed
- Current traffic laws require yielding to pedestrians
- Staff will continue to monitor e-bikes and scooters for safety issues as usage grows

What would be the impact to the project if the cycle track and sidewalk in Concept A were always combined and separated from the road by a grass boulevard?

Concept A (combined)- Width

- Combining cycle track and sidewalk in Concept A would require a wider facility than Concept B.
- Increased width will likely lead to more tree removals and higher construction costs.
- New MnDOT guidance requires tactile delineation strips between adjacent, dedicated bike and pedestrian zones.
- Community feedback shows ongoing compliance issues (walking in cycle track, wrong-way riding, avoiding crossings) despite dedicated spaces.



Concept A (combined) - Cost

- Estimated cost increase: +\$2.8 million, raising city share to about \$13.6 million or \$2.2 million over the city CIP
- Wider facility requires two snow-plow passes, increasing winter maintenance effort.
 - Annual maintenance costs would be roughly double those of Concept B if maintenance challenges with the tactile delineation strips can be addressed.

Could the multi-use trail (Concept B) be striped and/or signed to indicate multi directional use on the trail?

Trail signage or striping

- City and County do not typically stripe or sign multi-use trails for directional use.
- This type of marking is not standard practice for this design.
- If Concept B is approved, staff recommend operating the trail for one year before evaluating need for additional markings or signage.

If the city council does not approve a preliminary layout on June 1, what are the next steps?

Potential next steps

- If council does not approve Concept B on June 1, further analysis and discussion are required.
- Staff would return a later date with an updated recommended design.
- Significant changes may require additional public outreach, including open houses.
 - Additional engagement ensures the public can provide feedback on new concepts.
 - This process would likely delay construction to the 2029 season.

There was a request for additional information on the costs of undergrounding the overhead utilities.

Overhead utility undergrounding update

- In phase 2, there are two segments of existing overhead utilities which could be relocated underground:
 - Segment 1: between Highway 100 and Blackstone Avenue; estimated to cost \$200,000
 - Segment 2: between Oregon and Aquila avenues; estimated to cost \$5,300,000.
 - The total cost for both segments is estimated at \$5,500,000.



Overhead utility undergrounding update – Service reconnection

- Xcel does not cover the private service reconnections during an undergrounding
 - Segment 1: estimated 5 impacted properties
 - Segment 2: estimated 8 impacted properties
- CRFS cannot be used to cover the cost of private service reconnections
 - The city can fund the one-time service reconnection costs.
 - The individual properties could pay for their individual service reconnection costs.

Segment	Undergrounding cost	Service reconnection cost	Total cost
Segment 1 only	\$ 200,000	\$ 45,000	\$ 245,000
Segment 2 only	\$ 5,300,000	\$ 72,000	\$ 5,372,000
Segment 1 and 2	\$ 5,500,000	\$ 117,000	\$ 5,617,000

Overhead utility undergrounding update – CRFS

- City Requested Special Facilities Surcharge (CRFS)
 - Monthly increase to electrical bills for all St. Louis Park residents and businesses.
 - Does not include private service reconnections

Segment/CFRS period	Monthly residential bill increase	Total charged to residential property	Monthly low-income bill increase	Total charged to low-income property
Segment 1 only / 2-year CRFS	\$ 0.29	\$ 6.96	\$ 0.29	\$ 6.96
Segment 1 and 2 / 4-year CRFS	\$ 4.37	\$ 209.76	\$ 1.00	\$ 48.00
Segment 1 and 2 / 5-year CRFS	\$ 3.60	\$ 216.00	\$ 1.00	\$ 60.00

Phase 1 of Minnetonka Boulevard: Estimated - \$8.40 per year for residential, \$3.00 per year for a low-income property, over 3 years - Has not yet been added to bills.

Are there any cost savings for the city or property owners if the overhead utilities are relocated underground?

Undergrounding impacts

- No direct cost savings to the city or property owners from undergrounding utilities.
- Undergrounding reduces likelihood of weather-related power outages for nearby homes, businesses, and city infrastructure.
- Benefits include improved aesthetics, more space and flexibility for tree planting, vehicle safety, and additional space for walking and biking infrastructure.

Overhead utility undergrounding update – Next steps

- No decision is needed at this time
- Staff will return to council later this year for a council decision

Funding

- Current estimated cost for Concept B: \$39.22 Million
 - Hennepin County share: \$26.22 Million
 - Federal funding: \$7 Million
 - County State Aid and Metro sales tax funds: \$19.2 Million
 - St. Louis Park share: \$13 Million

Funding sources	CIP	Engineer's estimate
General obligation bonds	\$ 4,988,680	\$ 7,485,853
Sanitary sewer utility	\$ 700,000	\$ 502,300
Water utility	\$ 5,740,000	\$ 4,061,847
Total	\$ 11,428,680	\$ 13,050,000

Next Steps

2025-2026

Concept Design &
Public Engagement

2026-2027

Final Design

2027

Private Utility
Relocations

Hennepin county
cooperative
agreement

2028-2029

Construction

Recommended action

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Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

Presented by: David Yakes, Chair

Policy question

Does the council have any work direction for this commission?

Workplan summary

Workplan Item	Status Update	Completion Timeline
Meet with Environmental and Sustainability Commission	In 2025, the ESC and PRAC held a joint meeting in April to share information. This year, the chair of each commission participated in the other' meeting.	April / May, 2026
Youth Association President Summit	In partnership with the school district, community education, parks and recreation and PRAC, a semi-annual meeting is held in May and November. All youth association presidents are invited to participate in these meetings to discuss how to ensure all youth have access to athletics. At the May 27, 2026 meeting, myHealth presented information on physical and mental health options.	May & Nov.
Support Vision 4.0	The commission supported the citywide Vision 4.0 process by sharing information with other community members and encouraging participation.	Ongoing
Minnehaha Creek clean-up	The Commission lead the annual Minnehaha Creek clean-up community event in the fall of 2025 as well as spring of 2026. The focus of the spring clean-up was the canoe landing by Knollwood as well as the creek as it flows by the Municipal Service Center.	Fall and/or Spring
Webster Park master plan input	Commissioners review and provide input on the redevelopment of Webster Park, including intent to purchase the portion owned by MnDOT.	2026 – 2027

Workplan summary

Workplan Item	Status Update	Completion Timeline
Annual staff appreciation event	The commission hosts an annual staff appreciation event showing support for Parks and Recreation staff.	Sept.
Community group connections	The commission invites youth associations and other community groups to discuss opportunities and successes. In 2025 to present, Kids Around the World, Bassett Creek Watershed District, Westopolis and Minnehaha Creek Watershed District joined in the commission meetings. The commission also invites staff members for updates and/or introductions.	Ongoing
Community events volunteer	Commissioners are encouraged to volunteer at community events such as U.G.L.Y. Sweater Dash, ROCToberfest and other events held by the Parks and Recreation Department.	Ongoing