



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor Keis and Members of City Council

FROM: Bill Dircks, Public Works Director
Eric Seaburg, P.E., City Engineer

DATE: June 8, 2022

RE: Little Canada Road Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Grant
Application Update

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED

No action is requested.

BACKGROUND

The existing conditions along Little Canada Road from Centerville Road on the east side to Lakeshore Avenue on the west side are difficult to navigate for cars, bicycles, and pedestrians. These conditions were discussed at the April 13 City Council Workshop and the Council approved the resources to apply for two different grant opportunities. One was the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) for improvements along Little Canada Road to improve safety through the corridor and the other was the MnDOT Local Partnership Program (LPP) for a potential realignment of Country Drive to move it away from the 35E interchange.

Bolton & Menk completed the HSIP application and submitted it ahead of the June 1 deadline. There is a requirement in the application to have an ADA Transition Plan in place for pedestrian facilities in the City. At a minimum, the City needs to have completed an ADA self-evaluation, which has not been completed for Little Canada. It was noted in the application that Ramsey County has a transition plan and the work would take place on the County-maintained road and that the City would complete an evaluation in 2022. Many of the grant opportunities are requiring the ADA transition plan as a new prerequisite so the City will need to get this work completed. Staff is working with Bolton & Menk to put a plan together in the coming months.

The HSIP application is requesting funds to help complete a four to three lane conversion between Lakeshore Avenue and I-35E and reconstructing the Lakeshore/County Road C/Little Canada Road interchange into a roundabout. This would greatly benefit the intersection and improve safety for all parties through the corridor. Ramsey County Public Works is on board with the proposed changes and submitted a letter of support. It should be noted that Ramsey County also submitted an application for HSIP funds for a four to three lane conversion on County Road C from Lakeshore Avenue west to Rice Street as well.

While researching for the LPP grant application, it was determined that there may be an easier, cheaper option than re-routing Country Drive so the application was put on hold and was not submitted by the due date. Bolton & Menk believe that a roundabout can fit in the right-of-way at the Country Drive/35E/Little Canada Road interchange and they are currently working with MnDOT on the feasibility of a roundabout and whether or not it would be allowed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Vetting the possibility of a roundabout at each side of the bridge (the east side of the bridge will be looked at as well) will involve traffic analysis and other steps that will likely need to be taken by Bolton & Menk. MnDOT has budgeted for replacing the signal system along the interchange in 2023 but said they could put the project on hold up to 2027 and then would have to replace the signals as they would be 40 years old. Country Drive is scheduled for reconstruction in 2024 but could probably be moved to 2025 or 2026 to coincide with a larger project if things work out. It will likely take some time to pursue funding for a project of this scope so it is probably realistic to shoot for 2025 or later before any work takes place.

The HSIP grant application cost \$7,400 and \$22,500 was dedicated to the LPP grant application. The thought is the funds dedicated to the LPP application could be re-routed to the work needed to perform the analysis for the roundabout options at 35E.

Staff will update the Council once the HSIP grant status is known and as progress is made on the 35E roundabout study.

May 20, 2022

Chris Heineman
City Administrator
City of Little Canada
515 Little Canada Rd E
Little Canada, MN 55117

RE: Highway Safety Improvement Program Funding
Road Diet on CSAH 21 (Little Canada Rd) and Roundabout at CSAH 23/21 (County Road C/Little Canada Rd) and MSAS 120 (Little Canada Rd)/Lake Shore Ave

Dear Mr. Heineman:

Ramsey County Public Works supports the Highway Safety Improvement Program application for the Road Diet (4 to 3 Lane Conversion) on CSAH 21 from CSAH 23 to west of Country Drive and the construction of a roundabout at the intersection of CSAH 23/21 and Little Canada Road/Lake Shore Avenue as well as the corresponding trail improvements, pedestrian crossings, and roundabout lighting. This project matches into previous planning efforts by the county that identified the CSAH 21/23 corridors as future 3 lane roadways.

We feel strongly that the proposed project is not only an enhancement to the local and regional transportation system, but also an essential safety project for the well-being of residents, workers, visitors, and travelers throughout the county. This project is located in close proximity to multifamily housing and businesses and serves as a connection for residents in the area to access regional and local destinations.

The Ramsey County All Abilities Transportation Network Policy demonstrates our commitment to safety for pedestrians and bicyclists by placing them as a top modal priority on our transportation network. This project will provide safety and connectivity in accessing recreational activities and local retail destinations in a motorized and nonmotorized method. The project will provide an essential trail linkage for pedestrians and bicyclists on the south side of CSAH 21 and provide pedestrian crossings across the CSAH 23/21 intersection legs as part of the roundabout and help connect residents to the local businesses, the regional trail system, transit, and regional destinations.

Ramsey County appreciates the opportunity to participate in this very exciting program.

Sincerely,



Brad Estochen, P.E.
Ramsey County Traffic Engineer