



**HIGHWAY 55 CORRIDOR COALITION  
Full Membership Meeting**

Friday, April 8th, 2022 - 9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

City of Independence Community Room

1920 County Rd 90, Independence, MN 55359

Hybrid Meeting - In-person and Virtual Meeting Options

**AGENDA**

1. **Call the meeting to order** – Chair Chris Husom called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.
2. **Introductions** -- Chair Chris Husom welcomed in-person and virtual meeting attendees. Those in attendance included:
  - Christine Husom, Wright Co. Commissioner
  - Marvin Johnson, Mayor of Independence
  - Kent Koch, Mayor of Loretto
  - Mary Wetter, Wright County Commissioner
  - Zach Rodvold, Rep. Dean Phillips’ Office
  - Rep. Jerry Hertaus, MN Representative
  - Linda Betts, Independence
  - Greg Eckblad, Rockford Township
  - Dan McNiel, SRF Consulting
  - \*Chad Ellos, Hennepin County
  - \*Chris LaBounty, City of Plymouth
  - \*Scott Johnson, City of Medina
  - \*Stacy Morse, Rep. Tom Emmer’s Office
  - \*Tony Fischer, Met Council
  - \*Tom Nixon, MnDOT District 3
  - \*Deb Geyen, City of Maple Lake
  - \*Wayne Paumen, City of Maple Lake
  - \*Renee Eckerly, City of Maple Lake
  - \*April Crockett, MnDOT Metro District
  - \*Andrew Lutaya, MnDOT Metro District
  - \*Sen. Ann Johnson Stewart, MN Senate
  - \*Kevin Anderson, Hennepin Co. Commissioner
  - \*Renee Hafften, Mayor of Rockford
  - \*Virgil Hawkins, Wright County
3. **Approve draft Meeting Minutes from December 10, 2021** - Motion by Mayor Marvin Johnson, second by Mayor Kent Koch to approve the December 10, 2021, meeting minutes. Roll call of coalition members in attendance. Motion approved.
4. **Financial Report** – Andy Mielke and Virgil Hawkins provided an overview of April 6, 2022, Financial Report.
  - Motion to accept Financial Report subject to audit by Mayor Marvin Johnson, second by Commissioner Mary Wetter. Roll call of coalition members in attendance. Motion approved.
5. **MnDOT / County / Community Updates Regarding Hwy 55 Corridor**
  - MnDOT
    - Tom Nixon (MnDOT District 3) noted a 2022 project to resurface Hwy 55 from Meeker/Stearns County line, between Watkins and Kimball, to Brown Ave in Annandale; includes the Hwy 55/15/24 intersection in Kimball. Expect alternate one-way traffic through work zone. Work scheduled for August to October 2022.

\*Denotes virtual attendance via Zoom

- Tom also noted MnDOT will resurface and/or reconstruct, Hwy 55 between Brown Ave. N and Poplar Ave., and widen Highway 55 from Poplar Ave. to just east of Annandale Blvd. to add a center left-turn lane. The project will also improve sidewalks and upgrade the traffic signal system at Excelsior Ave. Construction is scheduled for 2024. A comment was made about opportunities to improve safety at Highway 55 and CR 6 as this intersection has had crashes in the past.
- Andrew Lutaya (MnDOT Metro District) noted upcoming work will resurface Hwy 55 between Old Rockford Rd. in Plymouth and General Mills Blvd. in Golden Valley. Construction anticipated for June 2024 through July 2025.
- Andrew also noted that MnDOT is replacing the Bassett Creek tunnel and will be closing Hwy 55 for one month between I-94 to the Park area. The exact timing of the closure is not known yet, but will be determined later this summer.
- **County**
  - Virgil Hawkins (Wright County) noted a local option sales tax has helped to fund approximately 50% of the County's construction program and this amount is continuing to rise with additional growth anticipated in Wright County. No specific improvements planned for Hwy 55, but the County is actively planning and preparing for roadway improvement projects over the next 10 years.
  - Chad Ellos (Hennepin County) noted Hennepin County does not have any active Highway 55 projects. Chad noted upcoming work on County Road 19 from Hwy 12 to Hwy 55 occurring in 2023. Improvements will include deeper pavement rehab, but not a full reconstruction.
    - City of Loretto Mayor Kent Koch asked Hennepin County for an update on railroad crossing improvements as part of the project. There is ongoing work to the Hwy 12 and Hwy 92 interchange and Hwy 55 may see some diverted traffic.
- **Local Government**
  - Mayor Renee Hafften, City of Rockford noted a city street project is anticipated in the summer of 2022 but does not anticipate impacts to Hwy 55.
  - Greg Eckblad, Rockford Township noted upcoming culvert replacement work.
  - Mayor Marvin Johnson, City of Independence shared an update on Hwy 92 work and noted the ongoing Hwy 12 Corridor Safety Improvement work led by MnDOT and Hennepin County.
  - Mayor Deb Geyen, Maple Lake noted no projects planned on Hwy 55 this year, and the city is working to secure funding for Hwy 55 / Spruce improvements in 2023.
  - Chris LaBounty, City of Plymouth shared an update on current construction work in the City of Plymouth and noted the Metro Transit Bus Rapid Transit study is underway.
  - Scott Johnson, City of Medina shared that the City and Open Systems International have reached agreement with driveway access near Arrowhead & Hwy 55. City also noted that industrial expansion is currently planned along Hwy 55.
- **Met Council**
  - Tony Fischer noted that Met Council's regional solicitation grant applications are due Thursday, April 14. These grants provide funds for highway, transit, and bike & pedestrian projects. Applications will be evaluated over summer and winners will be announced by the end of the year.

## 6. Legislative Updates Regarding Hwy 55 Corridor

- Federal
  - Zach Rodvold, from Representative Dean Phillips' Office, shared an update on the fiscal year omnibus bill, noting that authorized infrastructure funding is starting to flow to states as planned. Minnesota is slated to receive approximately \$6 billion dollars for roads and bridges infrastructure improvements. Funding will be allocated through existing sources, including the Community Project Funding requests. Community Project Funding requests in 2022 included a bridge project on Hwy 5 near Lake Minnewashta in support of a Hwy 5 expansion project.
  - Zach also noted that redistricting has occurred. Starting in January, the District 3 office will continue representing Highway 55 corridor, but Carver County will move into District 6 and the communities of Hopkins and Anoka will be added to District 3. Zach noted this is quite a bit change on the southern portion of District 3. Representative Phillips will continue to represent the existing District 3 through January 2023.
- State
  - Representative Jerry Hertaus noted the legislature is beginning to transition away from remote work protocols, with Senate offices re-opened and more opportunity for in-person interaction with colleagues and constituents. The House is anticipated to return to the Capitol in the late Spring of 2022.
  - Rep. Hertaus noted this is an important time for the Highway 55 Corridor Coalition with the current housing market and critical shortage of supplies and skilled labor. The Highway 55 Corridor Coalition continues to maintain open and developable land near the metro and will continue to see significant growth and redistricting. There are several important issues tied to transportation.
  - Representatives Ginny Klevorn, Marion O'Neil, and Jerry Hertaus have co-sponsored House File 339 which requests \$4.5 million dollars to help plan future Hwy 55 expansion. A companion bill is carried in the Senate by Senator David Osmek. It is a bonding year in the Minnesota Legislature and there should be an urgent effort to secure this funding. If this funding is secured, work would include preliminary road design and right of way acquisition in an effort of reduce costs for acquisition and future legal costs.
    - Andy Mielke noted the coalition would be happy to help if there is any support needed for House File 339, including providing testimony or background data.

7. **Coalition Activities**, Chair Husom noted the executive committee continues to meet on an as needed basis and there were no recent or upcoming coalition activities of note.

## 8. Establish next full membership meeting date and time and tentative 2022 meeting schedule.

- August 12, 2022, at 9:30 am (tentative)
- December 9, 2022, at 9:30 am

9. **Adjourn** – Motion to adjourn meeting by Mayor Kent Koch, second by Mayor Marvin Johnson. Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.