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Date: Oct. 8, 2019
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Oct. 8, 2019, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota

County Board offers comments on TIF district proposed in Woodbury

The Washington County Board of Commissioners offered comments Oct. 8 on a tax increment finance (TIF) district proposed for a redevelopment project in Woodbury.

In a TIF district, increased taxes from an improved property are “captured” to help offset the cost of development. The proposed TIF district in Woodbury would have a maximum life of 25 years to spur the redevelopment of commercial property at the intersection of Wooddale Drive and Woodlane Drive.

By law, the city must provide a 30-day notice to the county and the county has the ability to provide comment to the city to be included in the public record of the public hearing. The comments to the city say that the county does not anticipate that the redevelopment would substantially increase traffic on county roadways, that the city may wish to consider a trail on the west side of Woodlane Drive, and that the proposed land use would be compatible with plans for the Gold Line transitway.

Contact: Kevin Corbid, Deputy Administrator, 651-430-6003

Prescription Landscape will do snow removal for 2 county properties

Prescription Landscape will do snow removal for the Government Center campus in Stillwater and the Wildwood Library in Mahtomedi, once the building is completed, after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a \$105,728 contract with the company for the snow season.

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The contract provides for the removal of snow, plus ice control from surface lots and sidewalks at the Government Center, Courthouse, Law Enforcement Center, and Wildwood Library. The contractor shall be “on-call” 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Snow removal will begin within one hour once an accumulation of one-half inch or more of snow.

The contract covers non-business hours and holiday coverage at the Law Enforcement Center entrances, sidewalks, and parking ramp. During business hours, the clearing of sidewalks within the Stillwater campus will be completed by Washington County’s custodial staff.

Contact: Tim Stich, Building Services Operations/Maintenance Manager, 651-430-6233

County will apply for funds from DNR to maintain cross country ski, snowmobile trails

Washington County Parks will apply for money from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for cross country ski trail maintenance after the request was approved by the County Board Oct. 8.

The request is for the cross-country ski grants-in-aid program, which supports the maintenance and grooming of cross-country ski trails. The application requests financial assistance for maintenance on cross-country ski trails at Lake Elmo Park Reserve, Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park, St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park, Pine Point Regional Park, and Big Marine Park Reserve. The county will apply for \$21,428 for ski trail assistance.

The County Board also approved participation in the DNR snowmobile trail grant, which the county will administer for the Star Trail Association. The Star Trail Association clubs throughout the county groom, sign, mark, and maintain 140 miles of snowmobile trails throughout the county. The County Board entered into a county/club agreement with the Star Trail Association in 1991, whereby the county agreed to sponsor the snowmobile club and act as a pass-through agency for funds from the DNR snowmobile trail maintenance and grooming grants-in-aid program. The snowmobile club cannot receive the grant funding directly. All grant revenue received by the county on behalf of the Star Trail Association will be forwarded to the club as a reimbursement for costs expended for trail maintenance during the 2018-2019 snow season. The grant amount varies slightly from year to year, but has averaged \$44,440.

Contact: Dan MacSwain, Natural Resources Coordinator, 651-430-4323

County to work with Rice Creek Watershed district to manage stormwater at Wildwood

Washington County and the Rice Creek Watershed District will work together to manage the stormwater around the rebuilt Wildwood Library in Mahtomedi, after the county approved an agreement with the watershed district Oct. 8.

The Wildwood Library rebuilding project includes improving the stormwater management on the site. The stormwater management plan includes an infiltration basin and an underground infiltration facility. To obtain a watershed district permit, the Rice Creek Watershed District requires a maintenance agreement with the property owner to ensure the long-term maintenance and viability of the stormwater plan and facilities.

The maintenance agreement sets out the long-term maintenance responsibilities of the county for infrastructure on the property to be used for stormwater management.

The Rice Creek Watershed District signed the agreement Sept. 23.

Contact: Mandy Leonard, Building Services Project Manager, 651-430-6236

Sheriff's Office will receive Toward Zero Deaths grant

The Washington County Sheriff's Office will receive a \$221,550 Toward Zero Deaths grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Office of Traffic Safety, after the County Board approved the grant Oct. 8.

The money is to be used through Sept. 30, 2020.

The Toward Zero Deaths grant dollars will reimburse overtime costs associated with traffic enforcement of driving while intoxicated, distracted driving, speeding, move over, seat belt, and pedestrian enforcement. The overtime cost will cover work by the Washington County Sheriff's Office and the police departments of Stillwater, Bayport, Woodbury, Forest Lake, Oak Park Heights, Cottage Grove, and St. Paul Park.

The Sheriff's Office will be the fiscal agent for the grant.

Contact: Sheriff Dan Starry, 651-430-7601

County Board approves contracts for fiber maintenance

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract amendment and a new contract with MP Nexlevel, LLC, Oct. 8 to provide maintenance for the county's fiber optic cable system.

The county has a contract with MP NexLevel LLC to maintain the county's fiber optic cable system. As part of the contract, the company agrees to provide all necessary tools, equipment, and labor to perform all aspects of fiber maintenance on the county system. Examples of services include replacing, repairing, and relocating fiber optic cable when breaks occur, placing new fiber, screening and clearing Gopher One Calls, and locating and marking the county's fiber locations.

The contract amendment will allow for the completion of fiber projects in 2019. Additional fiber relocations are required by road construction projects in the county, including the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 13 Pedestrian Bridge at Radio Drive and Interstate 94, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Highway 95 project at Highway 95 and Highway 61. The amendment will also allow for the completion of fiber to the Stillwater License Center, as well as the CSAH 13 Trailhead Extension project. The amendments to the contract will cover work that costs \$365,200. The new contract covers work to be done from October 2019 through Dec. 31, 2022. The contract sets a maximum amount to be paid for those three years at \$2.5 million. Fiber relocations are required for construction projects, such as Phase 2 and 3 of Bailey Road, the (CSAH) 13 Pedestrian Bridge at Radio Drive and Interstate 94, the St. Croix Bluffs Pole Barn project, fiber documentation and mapping, Cottage Grove Ravine Park improvements, the CSAH 19 project, and fiber additions for the county's traffic lights.

These projects are in addition to the required fiber locations that occur monthly as an ongoing utility requirement to locate and mark along the fiber utility paths.

Contact: Renee Heinbuch, Information Technology Director, 651-430-6421

County wraps up Third Street project in Stillwater

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved final steps for the 2018 reconstruction project on Third Street, or County State Aid Highway 23, in Stillwater Oct. 8.

The project, which was from Walnut Street to Chestnut Street, included:

- replacing the concrete road pavement;
- reconstructing sidewalks and pedestrian ramps to adhere to the American's with Disabilities Act;
- replace and relocate storm sewers;
- replace retaining wall adjacent to the old armory building;
- minor city utility work; and
- narrow the roadway and add bump-outs to induce traffic calming.

The board approved changes to the original construction contract with Meyer Contracting, Inc., for \$44,440.98 for the balancing of final concrete quantities and the deduction for non-conforming pavement thickness.

Additional contract changes were made during construction, and totaled \$153,792. The City of Stillwater contributed \$96,455 to the increased project costs. The final cost of the project was \$2.52 million.

The project is funded by state highway aid and the City of Stillwater.

Contact: Allan Brandt, Engineer II, 651-430-4348

County Board accepts donations for benches along trail, in park

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted the donation of five benches along county paths and one in a county park Oct. 8.

Five benches, with memorial plaques, are placed along the St. Croix Multi-Use Trail, and were provided by the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation. They are valued at \$17,000.

The 4.1-mile St. Croix Multi-Use Trail was reconstructed in 2017 from 30th Street in Afton to the Interstate 94 bridge over the St. Croix River to replace the trail surface, and add concrete pedestrian ramps and trail signing. In addition, the railing was replaced on the bridge over Valley Creek.

In 2017, the Lower St. Croix Valley Community Foundation inquired about the installation of benches with memorial plaques along the St. Croix Trail. The county developed a process for providing benches through donations. The donation includes installation of a concrete bench pad, bench, and memorial plaque.

The Lower St. Croix Valley Community Foundation donation includes the five benches and maintenance of the bench sites for five years, one each in Lakeland, Afton, St. Mary's Point, Lake St. Croix Beach, and Lakeland Shores. During the five-year period, the county will maintain the bench sites, including repair and replacement of the benches and plaque. After five years, the county has the option to dispose, replace, or relocate the benches based on its needs at that time.

A donation from the Leadholm Family and Friends was also made for the purchase of a bench in memorial to John Leadholm. The bench was installed at Point Douglas Park in July 2019, valued at \$2,500.

Contact: Sandy Breuer, Parks Director, 651-430-4371