

**WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**  
**Radisson Road (CSAH 52) and Bunker Lake Boulevard (CSAH 116)**  
**Reconstruction Project**

Approximately 1900 postcards were sent to residents and property owners within a half a mile of the reconstruction project informing them of an open house to be held on November 8, 2007. Information on the postcard included the date, time and location of the open house. The postcard also provided a Web address for people to visit in order to find out more information about the proposed project. Residents and property owners that attended the open house were able to fill out comment cards at the meeting or take the card home and mail comments back at a later date. Approximately 16 comment cards were received at the open house or were mailed to the county following the meeting. Another four comments were received via the project Web site or e-mail. The following summarizes, by category, the substantive comments and questions that were received. Categories include:

- Project Need
- Property Values and Right of Way Acquisition
- Public Participation
- Access Locations and Traffic Signals
- Church of St. Paul
- Turn Lanes
- Trails and Bicyclists/Pedestrians
- Noise and Privacy
- Speed
- Other Comments

**PROJECT NEED**

**COMMENT:**

**Some comments expressed the belief that increased traffic on Radisson Road is due to the current Highway 65 construction and that the recent traffic counts will be skewed as a result. Several comments requested that the project be put on hold until the Highway 65 construction is completed, and that the need for improvements to Radisson Road be reevaluated at that time.**

**RESPONSE:**

The decision to improve Radisson Road was made before the Highway 65 construction project began. Prior to the Highway 65 project, approximately 12,000 vehicles a day used Radisson Road in the City of Blaine in the project area. This is more traffic than the roadway was designed to accommodate. As a result, Radisson Road is congested during the morning and evening rush hour periods. This congestion will continue to worsen as the area develops and additional traffic continues to use Radisson Road. Future traffic volumes are estimated to reach over 24,000 vehicles a day in the project

area in the City of Blaine. The improvements being made to Highway 65 were taken into account when the future traffic volumes were calculated.

**COMMENT:**

**I would like to see the survey (traffic count) results. Are they posted somewhere?**

**RESPONSE:**

Traffic counts taken at the Radisson Road intersection with 129th Avenue/Quail Creek Parkway in 2006 and at the Radisson Road intersections with 127th Lane and 130th Lane were utilized in the traffic study to determine whether a traffic signal was warranted at the Radisson Road and 129th Avenue/Quail Creek Parkway intersection. [Click here to view the traffic counts.](#)

**COMMENT:**

**What confidence are you giving homeowners that their needs are being met, not just yours?**

**RESPONSE:**

The county is collecting input from the public and is making changes based on that input. Not everyone will be happy with the final project, but we will make the adjustments that can be made and still serve the purpose of improving safety and mobility on Radisson Road and Bunker Lake Boulevard.

**PROPERTY VALUES and RIGHT OF WAY ACQUISITION**

**COMMENT:**

**Two comments expressed the concern that a four-lane roadway could affect property values for adjacent residences.**

**RESPONSE:**

Property owners must be compensated in accordance with the requirements of Public Law 91-646, The Uniform Relocation and Real Properties Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970, as amended. This Act is commonly known as the "Uniform Act."

Property needed for the project must be appraised, and a formal written offer to purchase based on this appraisal must be given to the property owner. Anoka County chooses to use independent fee appraisers rather than a staff member in most cases, except where the anticipated damages are expected to be a very small amount. The offer to the property owner cannot be less than the value established in the appraisal. The law also provides that an owner may obtain his/her own appraisal report if desired and the county will pay for it up to a statutory limit.

When preparing the appraisal report, the appraiser must offer the property owner an opportunity to accompany him/her when the appraiser is on site. This is intended to give the property owner a chance to point out items of value or concerns. Appraisal reports include a value for the land to be taken, but they also evaluate any additional “damages” the remainder of the property may suffer as the result of the actual acquisition. These may include, but are not limited to, trees/shrubs and landscaping, changes in access, privacy, zoning changes, etc.

The property owner’s receipt of the offer initiates a period of negotiations when a county right of way staff member will meet with the owner to discuss the project plans and, hopefully, arrive at an agreeable settlement.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

### **COMMENT:**

**One comment expressed the opinion that residents do not want the project and asked how it can be changed and who makes decisions regarding the project.**

### **RESPONSE:**

It is the obligation of the county to address the safety and mobility problems on its roadway network. The county and the cities know that there are a number of existing problems on both Radisson Road and Bunker Lake Boulevard and that those problems will continue to worsen as the area develops. The county is collecting input from the public and is making changes based on that input. Not everyone will be happy with the final project; however, adjustments that still serve the purpose of improving safety and mobility on Radisson Road and Bunker Lake Boulevard can be made.

## **ACCESS LOCATIONS and TRAFFIC SIGNALS**

### **COMMENT:**

**How will the newly created bottlenecks be addressed?**

### **RESPONSE:**

The county recognizes that bottlenecks will occur at the locations where the four-lane roadways transition to the existing two-lane roadways: northbound Radisson Road north of Bunker Lake Boulevard and eastbound Bunker Lake Boulevard east of Radisson Road. Traffic signs and pavement markings will be installed to advise motorists of the transition in roadway width.

**COMMENT:**

**Some comments questioned why medians are needed, especially when space is at a premium, and some suggested that the medians could be narrower. One comment expressed that “every foot of median is taking a foot of private property.”**

**RESPONSE:**

The proposed medians will reduce the amount of access along the corridor, thereby reducing the number of vehicle conflicts and reducing the likelihood of a crash. The typical width of a median in Anoka County is 15 feet, which is at least three feet narrower than the width used by many other agencies. The proposed medians on this project are also 15 feet wide. The left turn lanes are 11 feet wide, leaving 4-foot-wide medians adjacent to the turn lanes. A 4-foot-wide median is the narrowest median allowed by design standards.

**COMMENT:**

**While not displayed at this forum, a map at Blaine City Hall shows an extended island blocking the left turn at Hastings when traveling east. This blocks access and extends mileage for drivers and emergency vehicles.**

**RESPONSE:**

In the future, improvements to 125th Avenue (County Road 14) will convert Hastings Street into a right-in/right-out access. At that time, residents would then need to use either the right-in/right-out access locations or turn into the neighborhood earlier, closer to the new intersection created with the interchange at Highway 65 and County Road 14.

**COMMENT:**

**By blocking community access at 125th Lane NE, northbound vehicles will need to drive to 129th Avenue for a U-turn back to 125th Lane NE. This adds approximately one mile, or more, for vehicles entering 125th Lane NE. It could also affect emergency access.**

**RESPONSE:**

Anoka County has developed a set of access spacing guidelines in order to promote safety and mobility on the County Roadway System. Numerous studies at the national and state levels show that the more access there is on a higher-speed (above 30 mph) roadway, the higher the likelihood of a crash. It is the county’s responsibility to provide the safest roadway system possible. Access needs to be managed. With a full-access intersection at 125th Avenue (CSAH 14), a full-access intersection at 125th Lane is not compatible with a four-lane roadway with higher speeds.

Residents will still be able to use 125th Avenue at Hastings Street to get into the neighborhood. In the future, improvements to 125th Avenue will also convert Hastings

Street into a right-in/right-out access. At that time, residents would then need to use either the right-in/right-out access locations or turn into the neighborhood earlier, closer to the new intersection created with the interchange at Highway 65 and County Road 14.

**COMMENT:**

**Several comments expressed a desire to turn left from Radisson Road northbound onto 130th Lane, heading west.**

**RESPONSE:**

The City has studied the feasibility of constructing a left turn lane and allowing left turns from northbound Radisson Road to westbound 130th Lane as part of this project. At the City's request, and based on the results of the study, a northbound left turn will be allowed. However, a left turn from 130th Lane to northbound Radisson Road will not be allowed. The County reserves the right to close this median opening in the future if there are safety or operational concerns at the intersection.

**COMMENT:**

**One comment requested the ability to turn left from 130th Lane eastbound onto northbound Radisson Road.**

**RESPONSE:**

With full-access intersections at 129th Avenue/Quail Creek Parkway and 132nd/Quail Creek Drive, a full-access intersection at 130th Lane is not compatible with a four-lane roadway with higher speeds.

**COMMENT:**

**Why don't you put in left turn arrows on the signals to yield to oncoming traffic, instead of making one sit and wait while there is no one coming?**

**RESPONSE:**

Left turn arrows will be included on the traffic signals. We believe the commenter was wondering why a green ball cannot be used which would allow a left turning driver to yield to oncoming traffic. On roadways with speeds of 45 miles per hour or higher, it is standard practice for Mn/DOT and the county to only allow left turns at traffic signals on a green arrow. Allowing motorists to yield at higher speeds is a safety issue due to the minimal time available to perceive an acceptable gap in oncoming traffic and then to complete the turn without conflicting with that traffic.

**COMMENT:**

**Fix the sequence on 129th Avenue and Highway 65. Sometimes I wait through three cycles of lights on Highway 65.**

**RESPONSE:**

Mn/DOT is responsible for the timing of the traffic signal at 129th Avenue and Highway 65. Your comment will be passed on to Mn/DOT. It should be noted that in the future the intersection with 129th Avenue and Highway 65 will have an overpass. This improvement will be complete by the fall of 2009.

**COMMENT:**

**Regarding the two left turn lanes north and south on Radisson Road, we could get by with one lane if the lights cycled properly. By removing a lane you would save us more private property.**

**RESPONSE:**

The two left turn lanes will be needed as the area develops and additional traffic continues to use Radisson Road. The county typically constructs two left turn lanes at major intersections.

**COMMENT:**

**Radisson Road is to be improved to keep heavy volumes of traffic moving, but traffic control must necessarily allow local residents and visitors to go in and out of the local area, so we need either stop signs or signals.**

**RESPONSE:**

In order to put in a traffic signal, the county and the city must prove that it is needed. There is a set of criteria (warrants) that are used to determine if a location meets the threshold to install a traffic signal. An evaluation has been made for the Radisson Road and 132nd/Quail Creek Drive intersection and a traffic signal is not warranted. The City has studied the feasibility of constructing a traffic signal at the Radisson Road and 129th Avenue/Quail Creek intersection. At the City's request, and based on the results of the study, a traffic signal will be included at this intersection in the proposed design of this project.

It should be noted that, even at non-signalized intersections, the widening of Radisson Road will make it easier for drivers to get onto Radisson Road. The additional travel lane in each direction will spread out the traffic and provide more gaps for turning vehicles to get onto Radisson Road. Drivers will have to be aware of the additional travel lanes, but there will be more and bigger gaps for them to enter the roadway.

Radisson Road is part of the county highway system and has higher traffic volumes than the local streets. The purpose of the county highway system is to move people between communities in a safe and efficient manner. Motorists traveling along a county highway do not expect to stop at a stop sign at an intersection with a local street. Introducing stop signs on Radisson Road would likely result in safety and congestion problems.

**COMMENT:**

**Several comments requested a traffic signal at the Radisson Road and 129th Avenue/Quail Creek Parkway intersection. Safety for motorists and pedestrians and access concerns were given as reasons.**

**RESPONSE:**

The City has studied the feasibility of constructing a traffic signal at the Radisson Road and 129th Avenue/Quail Creek intersection. At the City's request, and based on the results of the study, a traffic signal will be included at this intersection in the proposed design of this project.

**COMMENT:**

**One comment requested that traffic signals or stop signs (on Radisson Road) at 130th Lane and/or 129th Avenue be installed during the Highway 65 construction.**

**RESPONSE:**

At this time there are no plans to put in a temporary traffic signal. Stop signs would likely result in safety and congestion problems.

**CHURCH OF ST. PAUL**

**COMMENT:**

**We need two full-access entrances to the Church of St. Paul. This church is not only in use on Sunday but every day of the week. St. Paul's is used as a polling place, it serves for the Blood Mobile, we have home school services for families, Bible studies that involve up to 1,200 people, and so many other activities. That requires 2 full entrances and exits.**

**RESPONSE:**

A single full access is consistent with the county's access spacing guidelines. Full access can be provided at the westerly entrance only. Providing a full-access intersection at the easterly access, which is less than 500 feet away, is not compatible with a four-lane roadway with higher speeds.

The county expects to close the westerly church access in the future when Eveleth Street is constructed. At that time, a connection from Eveleth Street to the church will be made

## **TURN LANES**

### **COMMENT:**

I have a concern about the geometrics on Radisson Road southbound just north 125th Avenue. It looks to me like the reverse curves could be shortened and slid north to reduce the right of way impacts to the west side and median width north of 125th Lane. This would also remove the southbound left curve from the right turn into 125th Lane. I feel that the current right turn lane geometrics will encourage outside southbound through lane traffic to stray into the right turn lane for 125th Lane, which may result in rear end accidents.

### **RESPONSE:**

Your comment has been incorporated into the design.

## **TRAILS and BICYCLISTS/PEDESTRIANS**

### **COMMENT:**

How will having a bike trail in our back yard increase crime? Have you studied other developments like this to see if crime has increased with direct access to property?

### **RESPONSE:**

National studies on the construction of trails indicate that crime does not increase when a trail is put in place. A majority of the communities in Anoka County have an existing or planned trail system. The trail system is in place to provide a safe location for pedestrians and bicyclists to get from their neighborhoods to parks, schools, commercial locations, adjoining neighborhoods, and other destinations. Trails are viewed by many as an asset and an amenity.

### **COMMENT:**

Who will be responsible for pick up and maintaining trash along the bike trail?

### **RESPONSE:**

The trail will be located within the county right of way. Similar to grassy areas adjacent to county highways, the adjacent property owners typically keep the area free of trash and litter. Individuals, groups, and organizations have the opportunity to keep segments of a county highway litter-free through the Adopt-a-Highway Program.

**COMMENT:**

**I am excited about the trail proposed along Radisson Road. I am curious if there will be a connection from our neighborhood onto County Road 14 prior to the construction along Radisson Road. It would be nice to avoid the construction by going around it.**

**RESPONSE:**

There are no plans to connect to County Road 14 prior to construction along Radisson Road.

**NOISE and PRIVACY**

**COMMENT:**

**Several comments asked what has been planned (what types of noise barriers) to reduce the noise levels and provide privacy.**

**RESPONSE:**

The noise analysis has been completed. See the “Environmental Studies and Documentation” page on this website.

**COMMENT:**

**One comment requested that the proposed berm in their backyard be heightened to increase safety, noise protection, and privacy. Vegetation was also requested at the top of the berm.**

**RESPONSE:**

The consultant is adjusting slopes to retain as much of the existing berm as possible.

There will be an opportunity for homeowners who currently have trees within the proposed additional right of way to transplant those trees to other locations on their property. As part of the right of way acquisition process, homeowners will be compensated for the land that is taken to improve the roadway. Homeowners can use this money to transplant the existing trees on their property or to plant new vegetation to provide a buffer between their house and the roadway and/or trail.

**COMMENT:**

**You stated that the cities are responsible to pay for sound walls, etc. to reduce road noise to residents. So let me see if I understand this correctly: Anoka County decides to reconstruct a road that will result in traffic noise levels that exceed both state and federal guidelines and the cities are expected to pay for a fix to the problem Anoka County caused! I wish I could build things that way!**

**RESPONSE:**

Presently there are locations where noise already meets or exceeds state and, in some locations, federal noise standards. The county has not created this situation. Traffic on the roadways is the result of land uses along the roadway corridors and traffic flow through the area. The types and density of those land uses, and their proximity to the roadway are the result of decisions made by each of the cities. With increased development, comes additional traffic. This traffic creates noise issues and also results in the need for roadway expansion, development of turn lanes, access management and other measures.

The cities do their best to have developers provide enough of a setback between homes and the roadway to minimize noise issues. However, it is not always possible to get developers to build berms and set homes away from the roadway. If too much land is used for setbacks and berms, projects may not happen. It is a difficult balancing act for communities.

Conditions also change. Ten to 15 years ago there was not as much development and traffic volumes were lower. At that time, noise was probably not an issue. It is a cumulative problem; the more a community develops, the noisier it will be along the roadway corridors. Additionally, traffic on Highway 65 was also lower 10 to 15 years ago and it was not as congested. Today, Highway 65 has congestion and safety issues all along the corridor within Anoka County. Steps are being taken to remedy the problems in some areas, but there are many problems along the corridor that still need to be fixed. No funding for additional improvements has been identified by Mn/DOT. Because of the issues on Highway 65, some motorists that do not live along Radisson Road have and will continue to use this roadway. Additionally, Radisson Road has a good connection to the freeway that also makes it a draw for motorists.

**COMMENT:**

**What kind of noise and impact can we expect when construction begins?**

**RESPONSE:**

There will be noise during construction. The exact level will depend upon the type of equipment used. The county will require contractors working on the project to follow city noise ordinances (e.g., cannot start before a certain time and must shut down for the night at a certain time).

During construction, a temporary easement will be needed from certain property owners. Property owners will be compensated for the use of their property during this time period. Yards will be restored following construction.

**SPEED**

**COMMENT:**

**By making 4 lanes it's going to create a freeway in our front yard. For our own safety, please consider building a large berm and soundwall, since we will be losing all of our trees in our front yard that offer protection from wayward cars traveling at freeway speeds already.**

**RESPONSE:**

The proposed project will not turn Radisson Road or Bunker Lake Boulevard into freeways. A freeway does not have any driveways, access is provided at interchange locations and there are no traffic signals.

The proposed project will reduce the likelihood of vehicles running off the roadway. The proposed project includes adding a travel lane, putting in a shoulder and putting in a curb and gutter. These types of changes make it more difficult for vehicles to leave the travel way compared to existing conditions where a motorist can easily overcorrect and end up in the ditch or the side of the roadway.

As part of the right of way acquisition process, homeowners will be compensated for the land that is taken to improve the roadway. Homeowners can use this money to transplant the existing trees on their property or to plant new vegetation to provide a buffer between their house and the roadway and/or trail.

**COMMENT:**

**In one of your replies to a question concerning the speed limit on Radisson Road, you stated that Mn/DOT determines the speed limits. I think the road design also determines the speed limits. If you design Radisson Road for a 35 mph speed limit, I don't think Mn/DOT will post a 45 mph speed limit for it.**

**RESPONSE:**

Radisson Road is a County State Aid Highway that is classified as a minor arterial roadway. Minor arterial roadways are intended to carry heavy traffic loads, to have limited access, and to have higher posted speed limits. People expect to drive county roads at a higher speed. Designing Radisson Road as a 35 mph roadway would not match drivers' expectations. When a posted speed limit is uncharacteristically low, it creates a greater speed variance (i.e., some drivers follow the speed limit, while most drive the reasonable speed). This speed variance can contribute to crashes.

Mn/DOT sets speed limits based on a thorough engineering and traffic investigation. The most important part of the traffic investigation is the speed study. When choosing a speed, drivers take many roadway environment factors into consideration. Therefore, the speed that the majority of people consider prudent is an important value. Data is collected by performing radar checks at selected locations on the roadway under ideal driving conditions. A technical analysis is done on the results to determine the 85th percentile. This is the value indicating the speed under which most (85 percent) drivers are traveling. Experience has shown that a posted speed limit near this value is the maximum safe and reasonable speed. Studies have shown that traveling much faster or slower than this value can increase your chance of being in a crash.

**OTHER COMMENTS**

**COMMENT:**

**Why will Bunker Lake Boulevard be wider (more lanes) than a highway (Highway 65)?**

**RESPONSE:**

Bunker Lake Boulevard will have four through lanes with turn lanes, similar to Highway 65.

**COMMENT:**

**Where is the funding coming from? If taxpayers are funding this, let's have a vote as other funded projects do.**

**RESPONSE:**

The funding for the project will be a combination of federal funding and Anoka County, City of Blaine, and City of Ham Lake State Aid funding and local funding. The cities do not plan to assess the adjacent property owners for the project.