



REQUEST FOR COUNCIL ACTION

MEETING DATE: May 2, 2022

PREPARED BY: John Hagen, P.E., PTOE, Transportation Operations Engineer

AGENDA ITEM: Highway 610 Extension Project No. 19-24
Noise abatement walls

PREVIOUS ACTIONS:

Council previously received reports from staff related to proposed noise abatement walls as an element of the Highway 610 Extension Project No. 19-24.

RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:

Motion to receive staff report summarizing the SRF Consulting Group, Inc. summary of noise abatement walls.

As it relates to the 14 noise walls that only benefit trails – (Proposed Noise Walls A1-1, A2, B1, B2, C, D, G1, G2, G3, I1, I2, I3, I4, and I5), motion to direct the Director of Public Works to vote “No”.

As it relates to the two noise walls that benefit both trails and residences – (Proposed Noise Walls E2 and F), motion to direct the Director of Public Works to hold off from voting until votes are received from the benefited residents, property owners, and HOA. Once the votes have been received from the benefited residents, property owners, and HOA, Council can decide whether to direct the Director of Public Works to vote Yes, No, or to abstain.

COMMENTS:

It is the intent of this Council action item to address the city’s role in the voting process to proceed with certain noise abatement walls as integral elements to the overall project.

Noise Solicitation Process Summary

Since the Highway 610 Extension project includes federal-aid funding, the project must comply with the noise requirements set by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). A traffic noise analysis is required with the 610 Extension Project because of the new roadway connection between County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 30 and Highway 610, the addition of interchange ramps to Interstate 94 (I-94), and auxiliary lanes on eastbound and westbound I-94 between Maple Grove Parkway and the proposed 610 extension. Modeled traffic noise levels under future (2040) conditions with the proposed project would exceed the federal noise abatement criterion at trail receptor locations along the 610 extension, CSAH 30, and Lawndale Lane. Noise abatement measures (i.e., noise walls) are considered at trail receptor locations where predicted noise levels approach or exceed the federal

noise abatement criterion. If the modeled noise walls meet the feasibility and reasonableness criteria, a noise wall solicitation (i.e. – voting) process is conducted where input is received from the benefited property owners and residents in the form of a weighted vote. Detailed information regarding the noise requirements, noise wall criteria, and the solicitation process can be found in the Attachment A and on MnDOT's noise webpage located at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/environment/noise/index.html>.

A total of 17 modeled noise walls were determined to be feasible (provide at least a 5 dBA reduction at a minimum of one receptor behind the modeled noise wall), met the noise reduction goal (provide a minimum 7 dBA reduction for at least one benefited receptor behind the modeled noise wall), and were cost effective (below the cost effectiveness threshold of \$78,500 per benefited receptor).

The City of Maple Grove is responsible for voting on 16 of the noise walls. This is because Maple Grove is the trail authority for existing and proposed trails and the property owner for the proposed 610 extension. The locations of these 16 noise walls for City of Maple Grove voting are shown in green and blue in Attachment B. One noise wall (identified in red in Attachment B) only impacts and benefits nearby residents. The only voters for this wall are the benefited residents and HOA within the Village of Rush Creek development.

Of these 16 locations where the City of Maple Grove gets to vote, 14 consist of noise impacts and benefits to trails only; with no impacts or benefits to nearby properties of residents. These 14 walls are shown in green in Attachment B. Since the only benefiting receptors at these 14 wall locations are the adjacent trails along the existing or proposed roadways, the City of Maple Grove and Hennepin County will determine if these noise walls will be constructed. The remaining two locations (shown in blue in Attachment B) provide benefits to both the trail and adjacent residents. Therefore, voters for these two walls include residents/property owners, the HOA, Hennepin County, and the City of Maple Grove.

The noise solicitation process will begin on May 2, 2022 and will run for 30 days. During this 30-day period, benefited property owners, residents, and HOAs will receive an informational packet describing the process. A neighborhood meeting will be held on May 19, 2022 to engage those that receive benefit from the noise walls, and answer any questions that they may have about the noise solicitation process. If 50% or more of all possible voting points from eligible voters are received during the 30-day period, the majority of the points (based on votes received) determine the outcome of the noise wall. If less than 50% of the possible voting points are not received in the first 30-day period, a second ballot and 30-day period will be provided to those eligible voters that did not respond. If 25% or more of the possible voting points are received following the second 30-day voting period, the outcome of the wall will be determined by the majority of votes received. If less than 25% of the total possible voting points is not received after the second request, the wall will not be constructed.

Additional information regarding these modeled noise walls and the voting scenarios is provided in Attachment A.

Recommendations

Council is allowed to identify a representative to vote on behalf of the interests of the city. Historically, Council has identified the Director of Public Works as the city representative to vote on behalf of the city.

Noise Walls that Only Benefit Trails

In the case of the 14 noise walls that only benefit trails (Proposed Noise Walls A1-1, A2, B1, B2, C, D, G1, G2, G3, I1, I2, I3, I4, and I5), the city is a property owner and trail authority for seven of the 14 (Proposed Noise Walls G2, G3, I1, I2, I3, I4, and I5) located along the proposed Highway 610 Extension and Lawndale Lane. Therefore, the city holds all of the voting points and will determine the outcome for these seven noise walls.

For the remaining seven of 14 walls that only benefit trails (Proposed Noise Walls A1-1, A2, B1, B2, C, D, and G1) along County Road 30, Hennepin County is the trail property owner and the City of Maple Grove is the trail authority for the seven noise walls along County Road 30 that only benefit the adjacent trails. Therefore, Hennepin County holds a majority of the voting points for these seven noise walls along County Road 30. A City of Maple Grove response (yes or no) will determine the outcome after the second solicitation period only if Hennepin County does not provide a response. County staff has given city staff indications that the County Board will likely vote with the City of Maple Grove on noise walls that only benefit trail users.

Estimated cost for these 14 walls is approximately \$4.5 million and they would only provide noise reduction benefits to users of the trails adjacent to the roadway. Both city and county staff have maintenance (lack of snow storage) and safety concerns (trail users no longer visible from roadway) with noise walls constructed within the boulevard area between the roadway and the trails.

Due to the high cost and low benefit of these 14 noise walls that only benefit the trails along the proposed Hwy 610 Extension, Lawndale Lane, and portions of County Road 30, staff recommends the Council to direct the Director of Public Works to vote “No” on the fourteen noise walls that only benefit trails.

Noise Walls that Benefit Trails and Residents

In the case of the two Noise Walls that benefit both trails and adjacent residents (Proposed Noise Walls E2 and F), the county is the property owner, the city is the trail authority for noise wall voting. The benefited residential property owners, residents, and townhome association are included with the noise wall voting. These two noise walls would be constructed in the boulevard area between the existing roadway and the existing trail, in order to shield the trail users. There are benefited residential receptors behind both noise walls. In order to provide adequate snow storage and clear zone for vehicles traveling along County Road 30 to safely recover before hitting the proposed noise walls, the existing trail of the south side of the road will need to be relocated closer to the existing homes. This will result in the removal of some trees that currently provide a buffer between the existing homes and County Road 30 and the trail.

The benefited residents/property owners and townhome association hold a majority of voting points for both noise walls. If the benefited residents/property owners and townhome association

all vote yes, then the noise walls will be constructed. If the benefited residents/property owners and townhome association all vote no, then the noise walls will be removed from the project and not constructed.

The two scenarios where Hennepin County and the City of Maple Grove could determine the outcome is if the benefited residents/property owners and townhome association do not respond, or if there is a split vote from the benefited residents/property owners and townhome association.

Preliminary discussions with representatives of the North Glen Association reveal that they would prefer that the proposed noise wall be constructed on the back side of the trail, rather than within the boulevard between County Road 30 and the existing trail.

However, if the noise wall is not constructed in the boulevard area between the roadway and the existing trail, then it will not provide benefit to the only impacted trail receptors at these two locations. If the only impacted trail receptors at these two locations are not provided any benefit, then these two noise walls will be removed from consideration and not constructed.

City staff is continuing discussions with the North Glen benefited residents and HOA to investigate possible alternatives to provide the desired buffer between the existing North Glen neighborhood and County Road 30 if a noise wall in the boulevard area is not constructed as part of the Hwy 610 Extension project.

Since the benefited residents/property owners and townhome association hold a majority of voting points for both Noise Walls E2 and F, staff recommends that Council consider directing the Director of Public Works to hold off from voting until votes are received from the benefited residents, property owners, and HOA. Once the votes have been received from the benefited residents, property owners, and HOA, Council can decide whether to direct the Director of Public Works to vote Yes, No, or to abstain.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A: SRF noise analysis summary

Attachment B: Noise wall location map