

Our Mission: Providing quality services through responsible leadership, innovation and the cooperation of dedicated people

Date: March 26, 2024
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the March 26, 2024, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota.

County Board approves contracts for agencies to work with those with disabilities

AXIS Healthcare LLC and Handy Help LLC will work with Washington County residents with intellectual/developmental disabilities after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a contract with the agencies March 26.

The contracts are for a term of April 1, 2024, through Dec. 31, 2025, and an amount not to exceed \$30,000.

The county is responsible for providing case management services to more than 1,500 children and adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities. The case management for these individuals is performed by county social workers, or contracted through private agencies.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) process was completed for case management services in December 2023 and six vendors were awarded a contract. A second solicitation of the RFP for case management services was issued in January 2024 and has resulted in these two additional contracts being approved.

The services will be billed directly to the State of Minnesota or paid for with county levy dollars.

Contact: Denise Landry, Community Services Division Manager, 651-275-7754

County acquiring right of way, easements on County Highway 32 in Forest Lake

The road improvement project on County Highway 32 in Forest Lake will move forward after the Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the purchase of the right of way March 26.

The purchase will include permanent right of way, permanent road easements, permanent drainage and utility easements, and temporary easements necessary to improve County Highway 32 from Interstate 35 to Trunk Highway 61 in the City of Forest Lake.

The right of way purchase estimate is approximately \$1,175,000 and will be funded by state aid and local contributions.

County Highway 32 is a regionally important east-west collector roadway between Interstate 35 and Trunk Highway 61 in the City of Forest Lake. This corridor has seen continued growth with the construction of the overpass over Interstate 35 and the pavement has begun to fail. This corridor also lacks adequate pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and accessibility. The County Highway 32 Improvement Project has proposed improvements including:

- Intersection and traffic safety, capacity, and operational improvements.
- Surface water and drainage improvements.
- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements.
- Access management improvements.
- Pavement improvements.

Construction is planned for 2026.

Contact: Mindy Leadholm, Right of Way Specialist, 651-430-4361

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County accepts grant for forest restoration at St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park

Washington County received a \$201,705 grant for a forest restoration at St. Croix Bluffs Regional Park.

The funds will be used to enhance 47 acres of mesic oak forest with the control of common buckthorn. The removal of common buckthorn favors the native ground cover, ensuring plant species diversity is maintained.

Project expenses for the restoration include contracted services for common buckthorn removal and follow-up control, including use of goat grazing. A 10% in-kind match is required and will be provided by staff time to plan and implement the project.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the \$201,705 grant from Conservation Partners Legacy Grant Program March 26.

The grant program is part of the Outdoor Heritage Fund, one of four funds established by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment. Funding is appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature and recommended by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC).

Contact: Theresa Friendshuh, Natural Resources Coordinator I, 651-430-4389

County Road 74 trail project cooperative agreements, contract approved

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved cooperative agreements between the county and the City of Cottage Grove, and approved a construction contract for the County Road (CR) 74 shared-use trail project March 26.

The project will construct a new segment of shared-use trail between Meadow Grass and Hadley Ave. S. in Cottage Grove. The project was identified in Cottage Grove's 2017 Safe Routes to School engineering plan. This trail will connect an existing gap in the trail system along CR 74 which will allow pedestrians to continue on an off-road trail while traveling along this section.

The county board approved a cooperative cost-share agreement for improvements along the CR 74 trail and a cooperative maintenance agreement for ongoing maintenance of the trail with the City of Cottage Grove.

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Additionally, the board approved the Safe Routes to School Grant Agreement for the project. Washington County was awarded a Safe Routes to School grant in 2021 for the construction of this trail.

A construction contract for the project totaling \$295,934 was awarded to Sunram Construction Inc. Funding for these construction expenses will come from wheelage tax, state grants, and local contributions.

Contact: Eden Rogers, Engineer II, 651-430-4352

County Highway 33 project cooperative agreements, contract approved

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved cooperative agreements and approved a construction contract for the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 33 project March 26.

The board approved a construction contract in the amount of \$5,269,606.90 with Eureka Construction for the CSAH 33 (Everton Ave.) Pedestrian and Safety Improvement Project.

The board approved a cooperative cost share agreement with the City of Forest Lake for project improvements and a cooperative maintenance agreement for maintenance responsibilities.

Additionally, the board approved a cooperative cost share agreement with Menard, Inc. for realigning its access to CSAH 33.

The project will include the following improvements:

- Reconstruct to a three-lane road section with a center left turn lane.
- Off-street multi-use trail.
- Corridor lighting.
- Realignment of Menards driveway
- Additional queuing capacity at Broadway Ave.
- Stormwater management.
- Mill and overlay along Broadway Ave.
- City utility upgrades.

Contact: Ryan Hoefs, Engineer II, 651-430-4336

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