

MICHELE BACHMANN
6TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

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S10-090921-030

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2306

September 15, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

Thank you for your strong commitment to improving America's transportation infrastructure. I am writing to highlight an important project that the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) and/or local municipalities in Minnesota's Sixth Congressional District has requested funding assistance for through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program.

Northstar Phase II Project: This grant would provide the funding necessary to expand the Northstar Commuter Rail from Big Lake, MN up to St. Cloud. The corridor between St. Cloud and the Twin Cities is one of tremendous growth. Over the next 25 years, St. Cloud is expected to grow faster than any other region in Minnesota and current population projections suggest that more than 1 million people will relocate to the area during that time. Extending the Northstar Corridor to include an intercity passenger rail connection from Big Lake to St. Cloud could ease potential traffic and commuter issues that may result from this rising population.

Thank you for your consideration of this Sixth District transportation project. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Legislative Director, Jessica Taylor, at 202-225-2331 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Michele Bachmann
Member of Congress

MICHELE BACHMANN
8TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

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St. Croix River Crossing Project: This grant would allow MnDOT, in partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), to reconstruct the Trunk Highway 36 Bridge over the St. Croix River, a project that has been in the works for more than 40 years. The main focus of this project is to build a new, extradosed-type bridge, downriver from the existing historic Stillwater Lift Bridge, and realign approach roadways in Minnesota and Wisconsin to serve the new structure. This will substantially decrease congestion for daily commuters and has the potential to reduce traffic crashes by 50% or more. Perhaps most notably, the project will dramatically improve accessibility to the downtown Stillwater retail district, a growing tourist destination lined with specialty shops and restaurants. It will lessen downtown traffic delays and make it easier for potential visitors to frequent Stillwater's unique retail community. The elimination of traffic signals located on Highway 36, also part of this project, is expected to increase traffic volume by 55% -- a positive increase in market potential for existing and future businesses. Residents living in Stillwater, which is home to more than 1,000 businesses that employ over 10,000 workers, have been working to make this bridge a reality for decades. MnDOT estimates that the project would directly produce 1,407 new jobs per year while indirectly producing 1,563 a year -- a total of 2,970 jobs each year after the project's completion.

Thank you for your consideration of this Sixth District transportation project. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Legislative Director, Jessica Taylor, at 202-225-2331 with any questions.

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Member of Congress

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I-94 Westbound Lane Addition and Eastbound Reconstruction Project: This project will promote economic prosperity while alleviating safety concerns along Interstate 94 (I-94). As you may know, I-94 is a heavily traveled commercial route from Fargo, ND to the Twin Cities, and serves as the primary commuter route through Central Minnesota. Since the route contains significant truck deliveries as well as commuter traffic, it is important that traffic flows as smoothly as possible. Congestion resulting from the current traffic flow adds cost to the products being transported, limits economic development, and creates serious safety issues throughout the corridor. This project seeks to increase capacity and decrease safety concerns by adding one travel lane in each direction between Albertville and Rogers in Central Minnesota. MnDOT has identified I-94 as a high priority interregional corridor and has recognized that this project will significantly reduce congestion, while providing economic, transit, environmental, and safety benefits.

Thank you for your consideration of this Sixth District transportation project. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Legislative Director, Jessica Taylor, at 202-225-2331 with any questions.

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Sartell System Wide Improvements Project: The proposed project would consist of constructing 50th Avenue (County Road 120 to Heritage Drive) and Roberts Road (322nd Street to Pinecone Road and from Heritage Drive to County Road 1), which are two major collector roadways. The area is comprised of approximately 600+ acres of property set aside for medical, professional and retail use. For years, Sartell has been one of Minnesota's leading communities for medical services and the City expects that these road improvements will attract and maintain the economic development already anticipated. By providing more access to medical, bioscience and retail lots in this rapidly growing community, Sartell expects to increase high paying and technical jobs in the area.

Thank you for your consideration of this Sixth District transportation project. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Legislative Director, Jessica Taylor, at 202-225-2331 with any questions.

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University Drive Bridge/Corridor Expansion Project: This grant would allow St. Cloud to construct and widen a 1.2-mile segment of the existing University Drive corridor to a four-lane facility, including a major bridge expansion and roundabouts at three intersections. The City expects that this project will create approximately 680 jobs and will provide opportunities for exponential growth in the southeast portion of the City as well as neighboring lands in Haven Township. Travel time between the City and the St. Cloud Regional Airport will be significantly reduced, helping to increase airport traffic and attract economic development in St. Cloud. And, when paired with the future and planned extension of University Drive and the interchange connection to TH 10 and Sherburne CSAH 7, commercial and industrial development along the Highway 10 corridor is expected to flourish.

Thank you for your consideration of this Sixth District transportation project. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Legislative Director, Jessica Taylor, at 202-225-2331 with any questions.

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Michele Bachmann
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TH 15/33rd Street South Interchange ROW and Construction in St. Cloud and Waite Park: The City of St. Cloud's number one transportation priority is to purchase right-of-way land and construct a TH 15/33rd Street South interchange in St. Cloud and Waite Park. The interchange project is part of an overall plan for a future beltway around the St. Cloud Metropolitan Area. This project will provide access to the existing 33rd Street South, which is planned for expansion to 4 lanes from TH 15 to Stearns CSAH 75. The project will minimize crashes and fatalities and provide south St. Cloud access to TH 15 to relieve the currently congested Stearns CSAH 75/2nd Street South.

Thank you for your consideration of this Sixth District transportation project. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Legislative Director, Jessica Taylor, at 202-225-2331 with any questions.

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