



October 21, 2016

To the Star Tribune Editors:

On behalf of the North Metro Mayors Association, we want to express our congratulations to the cities of Maple Grove and Brooklyn Park. They merit recognition following the Oct. 20 ribbon cutting ceremonies celebrating the connection of TH 610 to I-94, a project that has its origins in the foresight of city leaders as far back as the 1960s.

The city councils along the 610 corridor, from Maple Grove to Blaine, protected much of the right of way for decades. They stuck to their vision of a better regional transportation system and we all benefit today.

The cities implemented their large vision in sections. They found partners in the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the counties, the Minnesota Legislature, and Congress. They persisted, with a lot of help from their neighbors, including Champlin, Osseo, Spring Lake Park, Blaine, Mounds View, Hennepin County, and Anoka County. Maple Grove and Brooklyn Park earned the right to celebrate the latest piece of the puzzle. It's desperately needed to serve the thousands of new jobs and houses that have erupted in the 610 corridor since the vision first took hold.

But, we aren't done, yet. Connection of TH610 does not mean the project is completed. There is still another \$45 million in state, county and city funds needed to complete the city and county road improvements needed to make the west end connections to TH 610 work efficiently and safely. The "TH 610 Completion Project" is but one of several large projects in the north suburbs and one of many across Minnesota waiting for funds that currently are not in the pipeline. Action by the 2017 Legislature is essential to timely completion. Persistence still matters.

Sincerely,



Mayor Kathi Hemken
City of New Hope
NMMA President



Mayor Dave Bartholomay
City of Circle Pines
NMMA Vice President