

Complete Scoping/Scoping Decision Document
Complete Draft EIS
Complete Final EIS and Design
Construction

2006
2007
2008
Not Funded



Highway 14 Improvement Project – Owatonna to Dodge Center

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

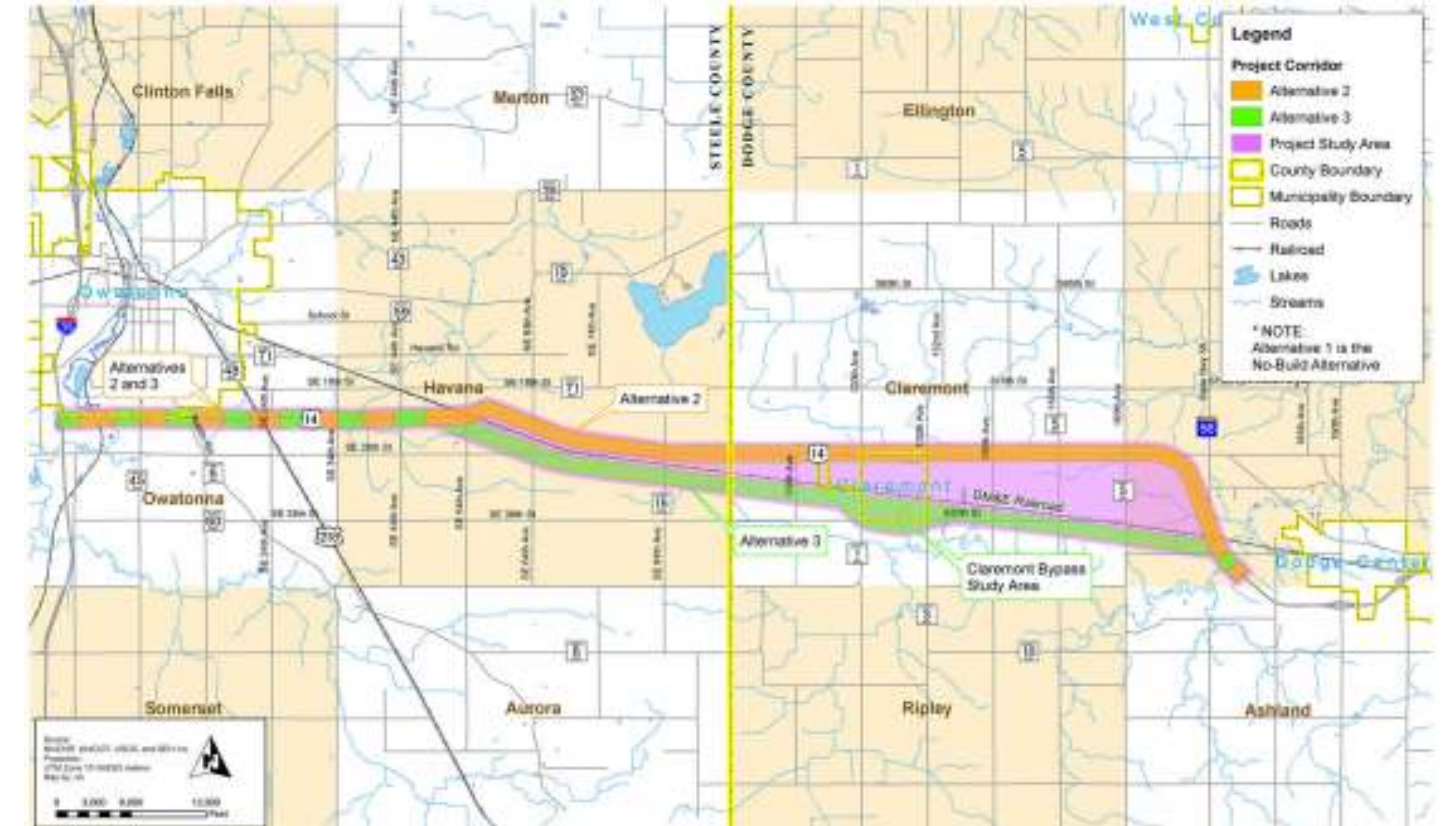
Individuals interested in obtaining additional information are encouraged to visit the project web site at www.dot.state.mn.us/d6/projects/hwy14. Individuals wishing to discuss the project should contact the following person:

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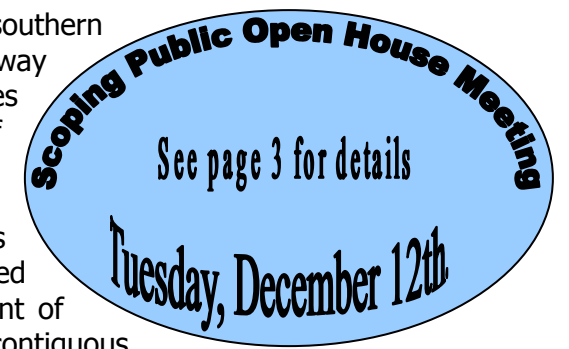
WHAT IS BEING STUDIED?

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) District 6 Rochester Office, along with its consultant, Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH), is doing initial design work and preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the potential for social, economic, and environmental impacts related with capacity and safety improvements to Highway 14. The limits of this important project extend from the existing four-lane highway bypass near Dodge Center to Interstate 35 (I-35) in the City of Owatonna.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Highway 14 is a principal east-west highway extending through southern Minnesota. In addition, Mn/DOT has designated this segment of Highway 14 as a Medium Priority Interregional Corridor (IRC), which recognizes the highway's statewide and regional importance. The overall goal of the IRC system is to preserve and enhance the state's primary highways so that people and goods are able to move in an efficient, safe, and predictable manner between regional trade centers such as Rochester, Owatonna, and Mankato. Upon the completion of the planned reconstruction of Highway 14 between Waseca and I-35, the segment of highway between Owatonna and Dodge Center will be the only non-contiguous four-lane section of Highway 14 between the City of Mankato and the City of Rochester.





Highway 14 Improvement Project – Owatonna to Dodge Center

WHY ARE IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED?

Capacity, safety, and system continuity improvements are necessary along this segment of Highway 14 to accommodate the forecast traffic demands on the highway. Transportation improvements will also help foster economic development along the corridor and throughout the region.

The average annual daily traffic (AADT) on Highway 14 is forecast to increase from 7,800 AADT (2005) to 17,000 AADT by 2030 and from 12,100 AADT (2005) to 27,500 AADT by 2030 in the City of Owatonna. Traffic demand will far exceed the existing highway's capacity and severely degrade travel conditions in the area.



Improving travel safety is a priority objective of Mn/DOT in managing the state highway system. Over a five-year period (2001-2005), this segment of Highway 14 had 195 reported crashes, and 9 of those involved fatalities. The distribution of crashes along the Highway 14 corridor between Owatonna and Dodge Center does not lend itself to isolated safety improvements. Therefore, the proposed improvements need to address safety conditions along the entire corridor rather than localized improvements (specific intersections). The goal of this project is to provide a roadway that is safe and efficient for all roadway users. The project will also provide system continuity by connecting two previously or soon to be completed sections of four-lane freeway.

WHAT IS THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS?

The Highway 14 Improvement Project – Dodge Center to Owatonna Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Decision Document (SD/DSDD) has been completed. The purpose of the SD/DSDD is to identify all reasonable alternatives and evaluate the alternatives as they relate to effectiveness in solving the purpose and need of the project and potential social, economic, and environmental impacts. The document will assist Mn/DOT in selecting alternatives that will be further evaluated in the detailed environmental documentation process. This project will require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which will provide analysis of potential impacts and will be used to select the preferred alternative.

WHAT IS AN EIS?

An EIS is a legal, full disclosure document that identifies the anticipated impacts from a proposed action and the mitigation commitments. The Highway 14 EIS will be written in two phases: the Draft EIS and Final EIS.



The Draft EIS discusses the alternative(s) that were identified for further study in the Scoping Decision Document (SDD) and summarizes the results of all studies, reviews, consultations, and coordination conducted regarding the social, economic, and environmental impacts of those alternatives. A preferred alternative will be selected from a range of alternatives, including the No-Build Alternative, based on the analysis presented in the Draft EIS. The Final EIS further evaluates the preferred alternative and describes mitigation commitments.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Get Involved, Stay Involved!

We encourage your participation and questions throughout the project development process. This project will rely heavily on public involvement, including a project homepage on the web at www.dot.state.mn.us/d6/projects/hwy14, public open houses, and a series of project newsletters.

The SD/DSDD is now available for public review and comment. The comment period is open until **December 22, 2006**. Copies of the Highway 14 SD/DSDD have been made for public review and can also be reviewed on the project web site at www.dot.state.mn.us/d6/projects/hwy14. Written comments should be sent to Richard Augustin at the address listed on the next page.

We encourage you to attend and offer your input at the Project Scoping Open House Meeting scheduled on **Tuesday, December 12, 2006, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.** The meeting will be held at **Triton High School located at 813 West Highway Street in Dodge Center**. The format of the meeting will be an open house, with a brief presentation at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will provide attendees the opportunity to view aerial photographs and assist Mn/DOT in identifying issues and unique areas of concern within the project study area. Mn/DOT District 6 staff, along with their consultant, SEH, will be available to answer questions and receive your comments and input.



A PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) HAS FORMED

The PAC was formed to provide two-way communication between the local units of government and the constituents they represent. To date, the PAC has met twice and will continue to meet periodically throughout the project development process to review and comment on technical information presented by Mn/DOT. The PAC members will include representatives from the following local governments:

- Dodge County
- City of Dodge Center
- City of Owatonna
- Wasioja Township
- Owatonna Township
- Steele County
- City of Claremont
- Claremont Township
- Havana Township
- Mn/DOT

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The project schedule listed below is anticipated only. The actual duration of the environmental review for the project will depend largely on the number of alternatives evaluated and the number of environmentally sensitive areas identified during the process. No funding for construction has been identified at this time. A summary of the schedule is as follows: