



Highway 169 Preliminary Design & Environmental Documentation

Elk River

Spring 2007

<http://projects.dot.state.mn.us/srf/169elkriver/>

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Thank you for your interest in the Elk River Highway 169 Preliminary Design and Environmental Documentation project! This is the first of several newsletters that you will receive throughout the project process. Each newsletter will provide an update on progress that has been made and opportunities to provide feedback.



Why is this design being completed?

The Highway 169 corridor is an important north-south route in central Minnesota, which connects the central lakes region with the greater Twin Cities as well as the cities of Elk River, Zimmerman, and Princeton. Traffic on the Highway 169 corridor is expected to continue growing. This growth combined with the presence of intersections (roads and driveways) and a mix of vehicle types (commuter, trucks, SUVs pulling boats/campers, and RVs) results in delays, longer travel times, and an increasing number of crashes. The Highway 169 Preliminary Design and Environmental Documentation will identify improvements for the Highway 169 corridor to address safety and mobility issues.

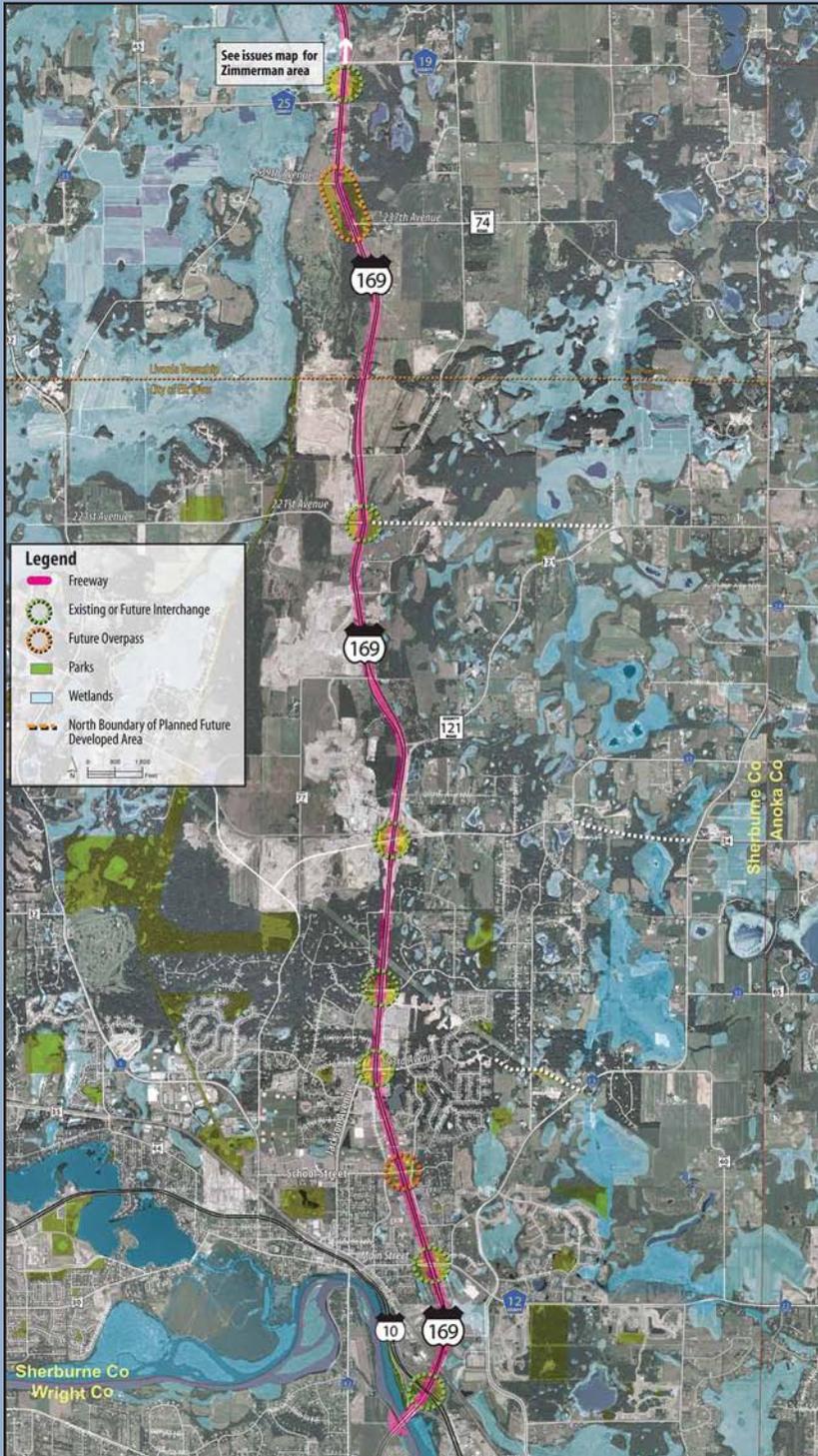
What will the project accomplish?

The purpose of this design project is to advance the long-term vision for Highway 169, established in previous studies, which recommends that Highway 169 transition from an expressway facility with intersections to a limited-access freeway. The design will identify the highway and access design for the Highway 169 corridor between Highway 10 in Elk River and 227th Avenue in Zimmerman. The study area has been divided into two areas: an Elk River portion from Highway 10 to County Highway 25 and a Zimmerman portion from County Highway 25 to 277th Avenue. The study team will identify a preferred alternative, including designs for interchanges, overpasses, and a system of frontage and backage roads along Highway 169. The study will not address local city street improvements other than identifying how local roads will connect to Highway 169. Preliminary engineering will be completed for the preferred alternative, and potential impacts will be evaluated during the environmental documentation process. The completion of this design and environmental documentation will allow communities and agencies to incorporate the Highway 169 design into their long-term plans and begin implementing it at every opportunity.



Corridor Vision

The vision for Highway 169 in Elk River includes removing intersection and driveway access to Highway 169 in order to improve safety and mobility. The intersections and driveways will be replaced with a system of interchanges, overpasses, and frontage and backage roads. The specific locations and configurations of overpasses and interchanges, as well as the frontage and backage road system, will be identified as part of this process.



Project Location: *Map Also Available on Website.*

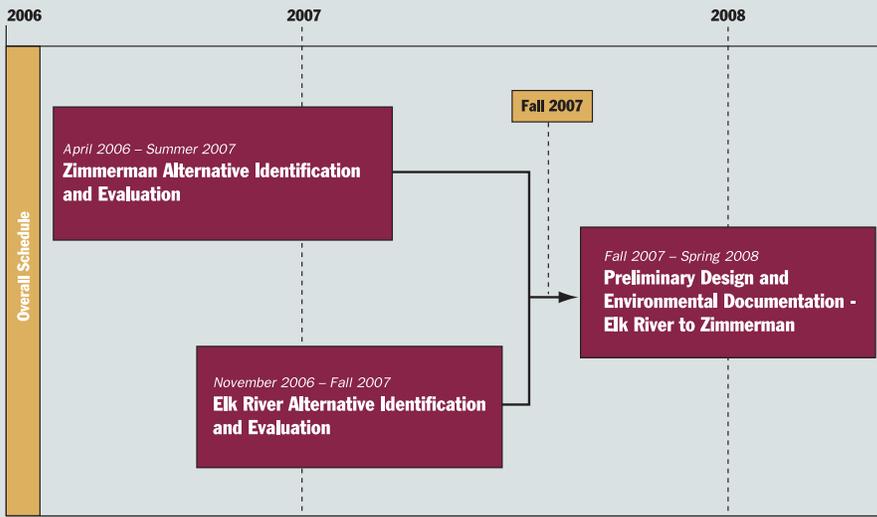
Schedule

What is the timeline for completing the study and construction?

It is anticipated that a preferred alternative for Highway 169 in Elk River will be selected by the end of 2007. After a preferred alternative has been identified, preliminary engineering work and environmental documentation will be completed. The design and documentation process for Highway 169 in Elk River is scheduled to be completed by the fall of 2008. However, adequate funding for construction of the recommended improvements is not currently available. Mn/DOT's funding program, which identifies funding for improvements up to the year 2030, does not presently include any improvements to the Highway 169 corridor in Elk River. **Recommended improvements will be constructed in phases after 2030 or as funding becomes available.**

Get Involved





How can I participate in the Elk River Highway 169 planning process?

There are a number of opportunities for you to receive more information and provide input on the Elk River Highway 169 Preliminary Design and Environmental Documentation process. Additional project information can be found on the project website at <http://projects.dot.state.mn.us/srf/169elkriver/>. The project website is updated frequently to include new information and announce upcoming opportunities for public involvement.

Several public open house meetings will also be held at key points in the study process. We hope that you will attend to learn more about the project and to provide valuable input. The first open house will be held in the on May 17, 2007, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Elk River City Hall

Corridor Partners

Mn/DOT is pleased to work with the following local project partners: Sherburne County, City of Elk River and Livonia Township

The study team will also work with local elected officials, federal and state permitting agencies, affected property owners, and the general public throughout the study process.

Mn/DOT Contact:

You can contact the Mn/DOT project manager with any questions or comments you have regarding the project:

Jim Hallgren, Mn/DOT Project Manager
Phone: (218) 828-5797
james.hallgren@dot.state.mn.us

An important step in the study process is identifying project area issues and needs. Interchange and frontage road alternatives will be evaluated based on how well they respond to these issues and needs. A brief summary of issues identified during the design process is included below:

- **Key Route in Transportation System:** Highway 169 plays an important role in the state's transportation network by providing for the movement of goods and people through Minnesota. The importance of Highway 169 is recognized at both the state and federal level as it serves commuters, recreational users, and truck traffic.
- **Congestion and Delay:** Traffic volumes in the study area have increased substantially in recent years due to increases in travel demand, population, and employment in the corridor. As volumes continue to increase on Highway 169, congestion and delay at intersections and access points will worsen.
- **Safety:** Safety on Highway 169 is a concern due to high traffic volumes and speeds combined with intersections and a mix of large and small vehicles. From 2003 to 2005 about 320 crashes occurred on Highway 169 from Highway 10 to County Highway 25 one involved a fatality and 111 involved injuries. The crash and severity rates on Highway 169 from Highway 10 to County Highway 25 are higher than the statewide average.
- **Access:** The nine-mile segment of Highway 169 through Elk River includes 23 intersections that provide access to driveways and other roadways. The intersections disrupt Highway 169 mobility/traffic flow and create safety problems.
- **Multi-Modal Users:** Highway 169 serves many trucks and large recreational vehicles. Approximately six percent of daily traffic on the corridor consists of truck traffic. Improvement options will need to consider truck and large vehicle movements as well as bicyclists and pedestrians that need to safely cross Highway 169.

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Project Goals

1. Enhance safety and mobility on Highway 169.
2. Ensure safe and efficient mobility for the traveling public in areas surrounding Highway 169.
3. Avoid or minimize significant environmental impacts, identify any regionally significant environmental and historical resources, and enhance current resources elements when possible.
4. Minimize social costs or expected future public expenditures for infrastructure.
5. Coordinate study decisions with local, regional, and state plans.
6. Encourage strong agency and interjurisdictional participation and seek consensus on a preferred alternative.

Project Information

Open House:

Elk River City Hall:

13065 Orono Pkwy NW
Elk River, MN 55330-5600
(763) 635-1000

Date: May 17, 2007

Time: 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Contact:

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