

## GET INVOLVED, STAY INVOLVED

Your input is needed for a successful project. A thorough understanding of local and regional transportation needs along with community and environmental concerns is critical in designing a project that provides enhanced safety and mobility on Highway 14 and minimizes adverse social and environmental effects. Therefore, Mn/DOT encourages your participation and questions throughout the project development process. This project has and will continue to rely heavily on public involvement, including a project homepage on the web at, [www.dot.state.mn.us/d6/projects/hwy14](http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d6/projects/hwy14), public open houses, local community meetings, and a series of project mailings.



## PROJECT SCHEDULE

The schedule for the environmental review and preliminary design for the Highway 14 Project (listed below) is anticipated only. The actual duration will depend on many factors, but is anticipated to be complete in late 2010. 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 Highway 14 between Owatonna and Dodge Center. This timeline will allow the cities and counties an opportunity to incorporate the identified highway improvements into local long-range plans and enables them to guide development in a way that will reduce construction and right-of-way impacts. A summary of the project schedule is as follows:

- 2009 – Complete Final EIS
- 2009 – Complete Preliminary Geometric Layout
- 2009-2010 – Obtain Municipal Consent
  - Owatonna
  - Claremont
- 2010 – Right of Way Map Adopted by Local Units of Government



## PROJECT PARTNERS

Mn/DOT is pleased to work with Dodge and Steele Counties, the cities of Claremont, Dodge Center, and Owatonna, and the townships of Owatonna, Havana, Wasioja, and Claremont.

A Project Advisory Committee (PAC), made up of representatives from local units of government, has met several times to discuss various elements of the project. The PAC was formed at the onset of the project development process to provide two-way communication between local units of government and the constituents they represent.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Individuals interested in obtaining additional information are encouraged to visit the project web site listed above or by contacting the Mn/DOT Project Manager:

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# Highway 14 Improvement Project Owatonna to Dodge Center

FEBRUARY 2009

**Mn/DOT Identifies Preferred Alternative**  
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## Inside this Highway 14 Newsletter:

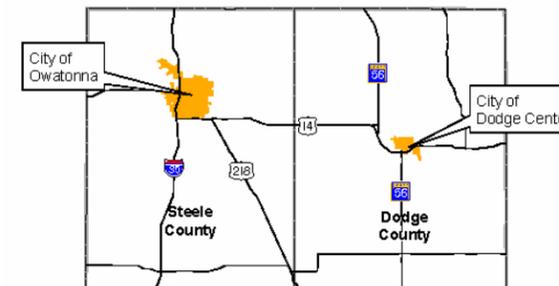
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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Mn/DOT District 6 and its consultant, Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. (SEH) is completing preliminary design work and preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the potential impacts related to capacity and safety improvements to an approximately 19 mile segment of Highway 14 in Dodge and Steele Counties, Minnesota.

### Study Area

The Highway 14 study area extends from Interstate 35 (I-35) in the City of Owatonna to the existing four-lane bypass near the City of Dodge Center.



## PROJECT PURPOSE & NEED

The four primary purpose and need objectives of the Highway 14 Improvement Project are identified below:

- ◆ Maintain highway mobility under future traffic conditions;
- ◆ Enhance system continuity and driver expectation by completing a continuous four-lane system along Highway 14;
- ◆ Foster economic growth along the corridor; and
- ◆ Improve travel safety for both local and regional trips.



(Photo looking west): Existing Highway 14 at-grade crossing of the DM&E Railroad, which is located east of Highway 218.



**Highway 14 Improvement Project – Owatonna to Dodge Center**

# Mn/DOT Identifies Preferred Alternative

The process of identifying a preferred alternative consisted of several steps including scoping a full range of alternatives, evaluating alternatives against the project purpose and need objectives, assessing potential impacts, and considering public and agency input/comments.

The identification of **Alternative 3 (South Bypass Alignment)** with the inclusion of Claremont Option 4 as the preferred alternative was made by Mn/DOT after careful consideration of the alternative's ability to meet the project purpose and need objectives (see below).

**Maintain Highway Mobility:** Alternative 3 provides the most efficient travel through the study area by providing a limited access high-speed route and because the distance of the corridor is shorter than other alternatives considered. Also, it provides a better long-term solution for local operational issues because the existing highway alignment has the ability to serve as a parallel route for local and agricultural related traffic, therefore eliminating the need to upgrade other existing roads to serve these needs.

**Improves Travel Safety:** Alternative 3 improves travel safety through the construction of a four-lane freeway section that remains south of the railroad corridor, which eliminates several existing public and private at-grade railroad crossings.

**Enhances System Continuity:** Alternative 3 is consistent with the design of Highway 14 both east and west of the study area as it will be a four-lane freeway section that will remain south of the railroad corridor.

**Fosters Economic Development:** Alternative 3 with the inclusion of Claremont South Bypass Option 4 avoids dividing the City and provides Claremont with desirable future land development opportunities.

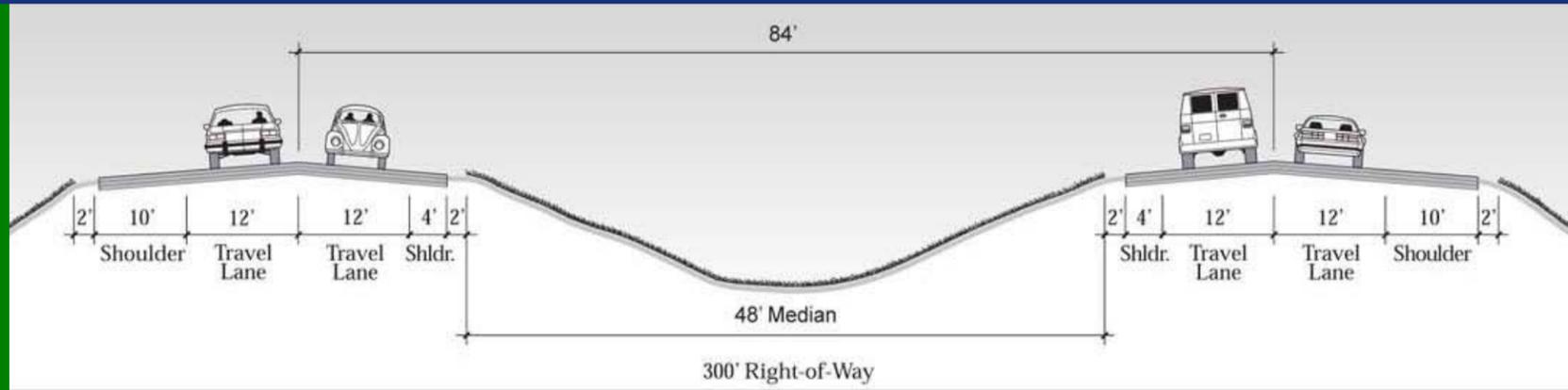
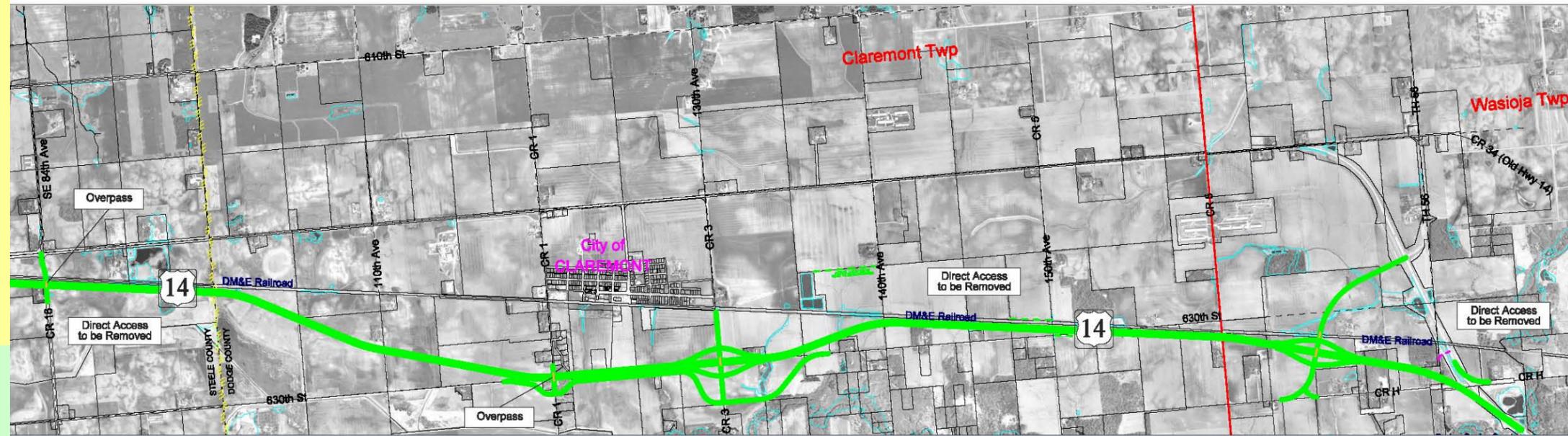
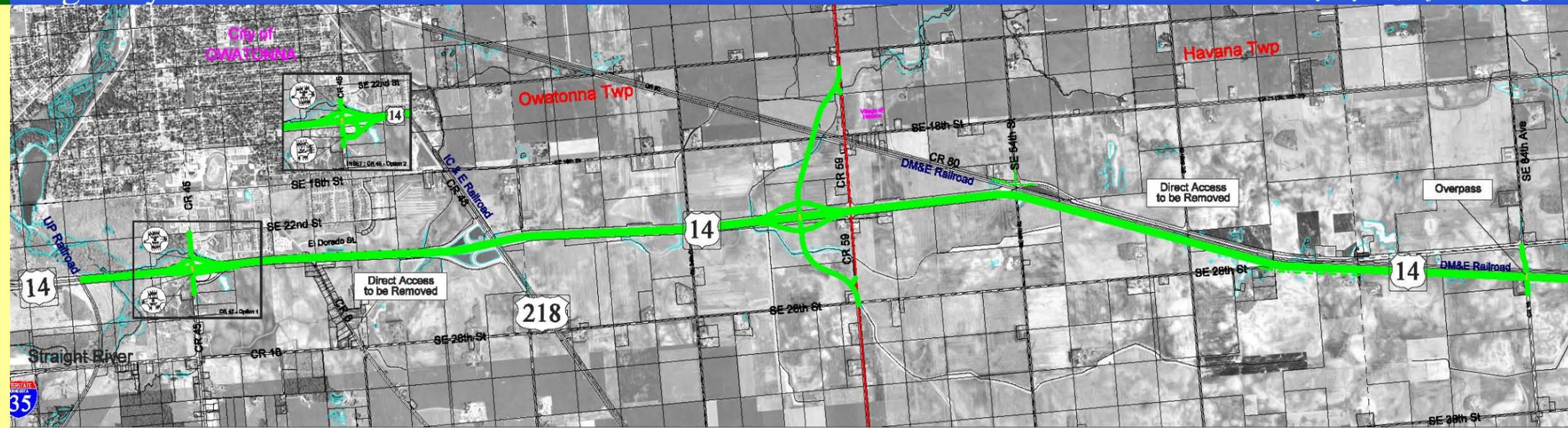
All potential social, economic, and environmental impacts documented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) were also considered along with input from municipalities, local, state, and federal agencies, and the public.

- ❖ Social, economic, and environmental impacts are not substantially greater or less than other alternatives/options considered.
- ❖ Alternative 3 had the highest benefit-cost ratio indicating the benefits of the project outweigh the costs.
- ❖ Alternative 3 has a lower estimated construction and right-of-way cost.
- ❖ Alternative 3 with Claremont Option 4 received the greatest amount of support from the public and local governmental units during the comment period.

Interchange design options within Alternative 3 were also considered. Steele County Road 59 Option 1, which shifts the interchange west of the existing intersection was identified as part of the preferred alternative. The two interchange options at Steele County Road 45 in the City of Owatonna will be further considered in the more detailed preliminary design phase.

# Highway 14 Preferred Alternative

Preliminary Layout (subject to change)



Proposed 84' Centerline Spacing Rural Section  
(Design Speed = 70 mph)  
**Highway 14 Improvement Project – Owatonna to Dodge Center**

