



## Highway 14 Improvement Project – Owatonna to Dodge Center

October 2011

The Minnesota Department of Transportation has completed an environmental study for the Hwy 14 improvement project from Owatonna to Dodge Center. The study includes approval of the environmental documentation from the federal and state governments and approval of a study layout to be used for creating construction plans. The approved environmental study and study layout are available on the project website:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d6/projects/hwy14/index.html>.

### Highway 14 Frequently Asked Questions

- **When will construction occur?** This project is not currently scheduled for construction. MnDOT identifies fully funded projects four years in advance of construction. MnDOT also identifies projects beyond four years as part of a Statewide 20-year Highway Investment Plan. Hwy 14 is part of this plan. A copy of the current 20-year plan can be viewed at: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/program/index.html>.
- **What rights do property owners have if their property is needed for future construction?** Property owners can request early acquisition, which may occur if certain hardship tests are met and if money is available in district right of way funds. Examples of hardship include medical or financial reasons. Please contact John Paulson in the district Right of Way office at [john.paulson@state.mn.us](mailto:john.paulson@state.mn.us) with questions.
- **Why do the study if construction funds are not available?** Completing the study allows MnDOT to be ready for construction if funds become available. A study for a project the size of Hwy 14 takes several years to complete. Additionally, a completed study allows local governments to better prepare long-range development and land-use plans.
- **Why do a second study after the 1993 study?** The 1993 study looked at Hwy 14 as an expressway from Owatonna to Dodge Center. In the early 2000s the vision of Hwy 14, after corridor planning studies were completed, changed to a freeway. An expressway is a high-speed roadway with at-grade crossings. A freeway is a high-speed roadway with interchanges. The change of Hwy 14 from expressway to freeway was significant enough to warrant a new study. Reasons to change Hwy 14 to a future freeway include:
  - Traffic growth increasing more rapidly than expected.
  - Segments of Hwy 14 being built as a freeway east and west of the corridor.
  - Increased safety problems with at-grade high speed four-lane divided highway intersections resulting from posted speeds increasing from 55 mph to 65 mph.
- **What will happen now that the study is completed until construction funds are available?** The District is evaluating several different pre-construction activities for reducing cost and schedule delays and making the corridor more construction ready including:
  - Identify potential muck sites - Muck is a type of soil full of organic material. Areas of muck require deeper excavation than typical soils in order to provide a more solid, stable base for a new road.
  - Clean-up of contaminated sites - The environmental documentation identified possible contaminated sites. MnDOT will complete further evaluation of these sites and clean them up.

The District will also be working with Dodge and Steele counties to officially map the project route. The official map identifies the land needed for the project. It assists local planning and zoning authorities in preserving right of way for the future project.

For More  
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