



Highway 14 Improvement Project -

Owatonna to Dodge Center
Mn/DOT District 6

What is being studied?

Mn/DOT, along with its consultant, Short Elliott Hendrickson Inc. (SEH), is completing preliminary design work and preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts related with capacity and safety improvements to Highway 14 between Owatonna and Dodge Center.

On February 20, 2007, Mn/DOT issued the *Highway 14 Scoping Decision Document (SDD)*. The SDD concluded that Alternative 1 (No-Build), Build Alternative 2 (existing alignment) and Build Alternative 3 (south bypass alignment) will be retained for detailed review and analysis in the Draft EIS. See figure on the reverse side.

As documented in the SDD, the highway improvements must meet the needs identified below.

- **Maintain highway mobility under future traffic conditions**
- **Enhance system continuity by completing a four-lane system along Highway 14**
- **Foster economic growth along the corridor, and**
- **Improve travel safety**

Access & Interchange Location Study

The proposed vision for this segment of Highway 14 is a controlled access freeway design, which means public access to Highway 14 would be restricted to interchanges only with all other access prohibited. Based on an analysis of travel patterns and existing and forecast traffic volumes, the following interchange locations are identified below.

- **Steele County Road 45 (existing) – design modifications**
- **Highway 218 (existing) – no design changes**
- **Steele County Road 59 Area – new interchange**
- **Claremont area – new interchange**
- **Highway 56 area – new interchange**

Beginning in December 2006, a series of planning workshops, held in coordination with the Highway 14 Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings, explored over 20 interchange options for the two build alternatives. An evaluation process was used to compare the beneficial and adverse effects of each interchange option. This screening process was used to reduce the number of possible interchange options.

All retained options were then presented at a public information meeting on April 19, 2007, at Triton High School. The intent of the meeting was to receive input that would be used to modify the alternatives before they were assessed in the Draft EIS. The *Highway 14 Improvement Project – Owatonna to Dodge Center Access and Interchange Location Study* report is available for review on the Highway 14 project website.

Project Design and Documentation Update

The project team is currently collecting, analyzing, and documenting potential social, economic, and environmental (SEE) impacts associated with the build alternatives for the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS will summarize the results of all studies, reviews, consultations and coordination conducted.

Field investigations/reviews for cultural resources (historic/archaeological sites), contaminated properties, wetlands and farmland impacts are either concluded or near completion.

In June, a joint meeting was held with the city of Owatonna and Steele County to discuss interchange, access and local roadway connections associated with the proposed improvements. A similar meeting between the city of Claremont and Dodge County is being planned for September. Town hall meetings were also held in July and August in each of the four townships to identify additional farmland, farm operation, access, and right of way impacts with town boards and residents.

The Draft EIS is scheduled to be completed in late 2007. Based on the analysis from the Draft EIS, a preferred alternative will be selected and a Final EIS will be prepared that will further evaluate the potential SEE impacts of the preferred alternative and describe any mitigation commitments.

Get Involved, Stay Involved!

Mn/DOT encourages 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, local government meetings, and a series of project newsletters.

Schedule/Next Steps

Following is a schedule of the key project tasks:

- Complete Draft EIS (End of 2007)
- Select Preferred Alternative (Early 2008)
- Complete Final EIS/Design (End of 2008)
- Construction (Not Funded)

Contact:

For further information, please feel free to contact the following individual.

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