What is the purpose of this project?
The purpose of this project is to assess and prioritize area needs and improvements along Highway 316 from the north junction of US 61 to Tuttle Drive in Hastings.

MnDOT anticipates making pavement upgrades to Highway 316 from the north junction of Highway 61 to the south junction of Highway 61 in 2021. The pavement is deteriorating and needs a routine repair to obtain its intended service life. At the same time, MnDOT wants to make other improvements to help with safety and traffic flow for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

What are the possible safety improvements?
Highway 316 is a heavy-use corridor, with vehicles, freight, pedestrians and bicyclists all sharing the road and competing for space. It is difficult to access Highway 316 during peak hours, especially on the north end of the evaluation area. The steady flow of traffic results in increased delay times and queuing on side streets and in turn lanes. Left turns are difficult to make into and out of side streets within the evaluation limits. This is the cause of many rear-end crashes on Highway 316.

Possible safety improvements include:
- adding designated facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists,
- adding pedestrian crossings, and
- modifying the road to reduce close-calls and crashes and improve traffic movements that feel unsafe.

Will this project make it easier to cross Highway 316?
There are no walking or bicycling facilities along portions of Highway 316 within the evaluation limits, yet the demand is there. The project team knows new or upgraded designated facilities, identified crossings and connections for pedestrians and bicyclists are a high priority for the community. Therefore, the project team is looking at ways to improve mobility and accessibility within this area for non-motorized users.

Will this project reduce the speed on Highway 316?
The project team knows that Highway 316 feels unsafe due to vehicle speeds, especially to walkers and bicyclists. MnDOT is looking at ways to design the road to slow down drivers and to separate pedestrians and bicyclists from vehicle traffic.

Will this project provide better access to homeowners’ driveways?
The project team has heard from the community that it is difficult to access homes, neighborhoods and businesses within the evaluation area. Access is a high priority on this project. However, possible solutions need to be buildable and consider all users.

Does this project include adding roundabouts to Highway 316?
The project team is exploring roundabouts, traffic signals, and restricted access, among other traffic control options to improve traffic flow and make Highway 316 more accessible.

Will this project make improvements at the intersection of Highway 61/316?
Improvements to the intersection at Highway 61/316 will occur at a different time under a separate project.
Why doesn’t MnDOT reroute Highway 316 to bypass Hastings?
Due to limited funding, MnDOT is focused on preserving the existing roadway system with major mobility improvements being planned on the most highly traveled routes. The volume and growth on Highway 316 does not warrant the level of investment needed to construct a bypass. While various studies completed over a decade ago considered rerouting Highway 316 in an east-west fashion to connect with County Road 46 may fit better with the travel patterns assumed in those studies, much has changed since that time. The replacement of the Hastings Bridge, which expanded the bridge from two to four travel lanes, along with the completion of the Wakota Bridge and I-494/Highway 61 Commons, have provided significant capacity and mobility improvements and have made or maintained these as highly preferred routes.

Additionally, traffic behavior analytics have significantly evolved in the last decade, allowing for a higher degree of accuracy in measuring the origins and destinations of traffic. The most recent traffic and travel pattern data indicates that an overwhelming majority (nearly 80%) of motorists are traveling:

1. within Hastings (local traffic),
2. between Hastings and Red Wing, and
3. to and from places to the north of Hastings along the Highway 61 corridor, reaching to St. Paul.

A much smaller proportion of this traffic mix (less than 25%) travels through Hastings to and from the south using the east/west routes of County Road 46 or Highway 55. These results show that construction of a bypass for Highway 316 would not significantly alleviate traffic volumes on the north-south segment of this highway through the city. That existing route would remain the most direct and efficient for the vast majority of through traffic. Therefore, an east-west highway-level facility bypass is not being explored in this scoping process.

How much of the budget is reserved for road resurfacing?
The total project budget from the north junction of Highway 61 to the south junction of Highway 61 is $8.2 million.

- The stretch of Highway 316 from the north junction of Highway 61 to just south of Tuttle Drive has a budget of $1.4 million for pavement repair ($860,000) and other improvements ($540,000), such as adding a shared-use trail.
- The stretch of Highway 316 from the south junction of Highway 61 to just south of Tuttle Drive has a budget of $6.8 million for pavement repair and related improvements.

MnDOT and the City of Hastings are open to finding additional funding to support additional infrastructure improvements, but the cost and impacts must be considered.

When will we see the improvements?
MnDOT anticipates making pavement upgrades to Highway 316 from the north junction of Highway 61 to the south junction of Highway 61 in 2021. Other safety and traffic operations improvements from the north junction of Highway 61 to just south of Tuttle Drive would be made at the same time.

How can the public participate in this project?
The project team continues to seek to understand all of the ways people use Highway 316, including where they go and how they get there. Go to mndot.gov/metro/projects/hwy316 to learn more about the project and to see upcoming events and contact information.

The next public open house will be held in summer 2018. Watch for an announcement on the project website and MnDOT’s social media pages.