

SCOPING MEETING HANDOUT

St. Croix River Crossing Project

Tuesday December 2, 2003

4:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Houlton Elementary School

#70 County Road E
Houlton, WI

Wednesday December 3, 2003

4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Washington County Government Center

South Building
14949 62nd Street North
Stillwater, MN

Purpose of Scoping Meeting

This Scoping Meeting provides an opportunity to comment on the St. Croix River Crossing Project during the **Scoping Phase**. The project area extends generally from the Highway 5 interchange with Highway 36 in Washington County, Minnesota across the St. Croix River to 150th Avenue on Highway 35/64 in Wisconsin. A Scoping Document (available at these meetings for review as well as the Mn/DOT website (<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix>) and local libraries) documents the 5 build alternatives and No Build alternative (shown on reverse side) being considered for advancement into the next phase – the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) preparation phase. The draft Scoping Decision Document (bound behind the Scoping Document) presents the preliminary recommendations about which alternatives should be studied in the SEIS. The DOTs (and FHWA) want to hear your concerns about the alternatives, and gather information you may have about the project area.

A short taped presentation gives an introduction to the project, preliminary layouts of the alternatives are available for review, and comment forms and a court reporter are provided for your written or verbal input. Representatives from the DOTs and the FHWA are available to discuss the project and answer questions. **Please complete and return the attached comment sheet before December 10, 2003.**

Purpose and Need for the Project

Several factors combine to create a need for the project:

- **Delays to river crossing traffic** caused by high traffic volumes, close intersection spacing, restricted geometrics and operation of the Lift Bridge.
- **Geometric and physical restrictions** limit opportunities to improve transportation operation and management in downtown Stillwater.
- **Crash rates** on two segments (one each in MN and WI) that exceed the statewide averages (the MN segment has nearly double the severity rate of the statewide average; the WI non-fatal injury rate is 60% higher than the statewide average).
- **Traffic volumes** exceed the existing vehicle capacity for the current river crossing and roadway approaches, and lead to periodic daily vehicular congestion in both the Minnesota and Wisconsin Lift Bridge approaches.
- **System connections** are disrupted several times per year because of bridge closures due to flooding, maintenance activities and vehicle incidents.
- **Increasing average delay, queue lengths and daily hours of congestion.** The Twin Cities Regional Travel Demand Model indicates an increase in traffic of up to 50% in 2030 in downtown Stillwater, on the river crossing and on the roadway approaches

Contacts

Further information regarding the proposed project can be found on the project website (<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix>) or obtained from:

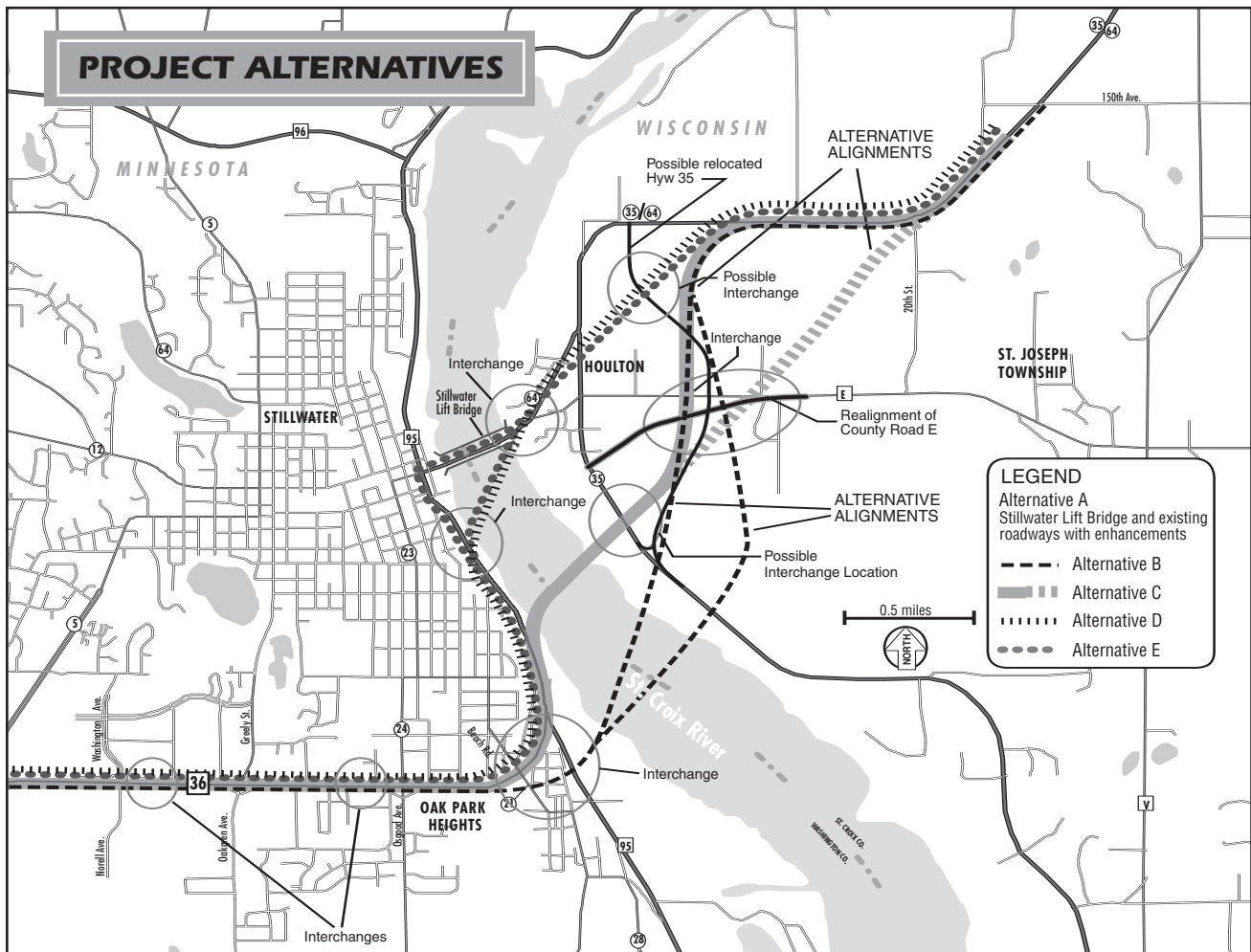
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Project Alternatives

Five build alternatives and a “No Build” alternative (shown and described below) are discussed in the Scoping Document. These alternatives have been identified by the Stakeholder Group as part of the Stakeholder Problem Solving Process. Alternative A does not include a new river crossing. Alternatives B through E include a new river crossing and improvements to the approach roadways in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

- No Build – No new river crossing is built and no improvements are made to the transportation system.
- Alternative A continues use of the Lift Bridge and seeks to improve mobility through transit and emergency vehicle advantages, new transit options, use of advanced technology, regional policy changes and reconstruction of Highway 65 in Wisconsin.
- Alternative B includes a new four-lane bridge located the furthest south from the Lift Bridge of the four new bridge alternatives.
- Alternative C includes a new four-lane bridge located midway between the alignment of Alternative B and the Lift Bridge.
- Alternative D includes a new four-lane bridge located nearest to the Lift Bridge of the four new bridge alternatives.
- Alternative E utilizes the existing Lift Bridge as a two-lane one-way roadway for westbound traffic, and includes a new one-way bridge south of the Lift Bridge (at the location of the new bridge of Alternative D) for two lanes of eastbound traffic.



Comment Form

St. Croix River Crossing Project – Please complete and return before December 10, 2003

1) Given the existing resources that could be impacted by this project (social, economic and environmental), indicate the alternative(s) that **SHOULD BE STUDIED** in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement by selecting YES after the Alternative listed below. If an Alternative **SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED FURTHER**, select NO. If you are unsure, select UNSURE. Please provide input about your selection in the space after each alternative.

YES NO UNSURE

Reasons why this Alternative **SHOULD** or **SHOULD NOT** be studied further.

Alt. A

Alt. B

Alt. C

Alt. D

Alt. E

2) What issues beyond those presented in the 2003 Amended Scoping Decision Document need to be studied in the Supplemental EIS?

3) Other comments?

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