

ST. CROIX CROSSING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

St. Croix Crossing Workshop:

**A Discussion of Growth, Transit,
Pricing and Demand Management**

December 13, 2004

Sponsored by:

Center for Transportation Studies,
University of Minnesota

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ST. CROIX CROSSING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

I. EXECUTIVE ORDER 13274

In September 2002, President Bush issued Executive Order 13274 to enhance environmental stewardship and streamline the decision-making process and review of high-priority transportation infrastructure projects. As part of Executive Order 13274 (EO), the Secretary of Transportation (Secretary) was directed to establish a list of high-priority transportation infrastructure projects to receive expedited agency review; this list of high-priority projects is to be periodically amended by the Secretary. Under Section 2(c) of the EO, for projects on the Secretary's list, federal agencies "shall to the maximum extent practicable expedite their reviews for relevant permits or other approvals, and take related actions as necessary, consistent with available resources and applicable laws, including those relating to safety, public health, and environmental protection".

In October 2002, seven transportation construction projects were identified as high-priority projects by the Secretary to undergo expedited environmental review. This list of transportation infrastructure projects included the St. Croix River Crossing Project between Stillwater and Oak Park Heights, Minnesota and the Town of St. Joseph, Wisconsin.

The EO also directs the establishment of an interagency task force (Task Force) to "promote interagency cooperation and the establishment of appropriate mechanisms to coordinate Federal, State, tribal, and local agency consultation, review, approval, and permitting of transportation infrastructure projects". This Task Force consists of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, Transportation, Interior, Defense, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, Chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality. The Task Force is directed to submit to the President a report at least once a year providing a progress update on each high-priority project as well as other recommendations to assist in the implementation of the EO.

Additional information regarding Executive Order 13274, including the complete list of high-priority transportation infrastructure projects, can be found at:

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/stewardshipeo/index.htm>

II. ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING PROJECT STAKEHOLDER PROCESS

In September 2002, the facilitation firm RESOLVE was selected by a multi-agency and stakeholder panel to facilitate a project decision for a proposed St. Croix River Crossing through mediation. RESOLVE developed a dispute resolution process that centered on a "Stakeholders Group," composed of representatives of the diverse interests in the project area (see Table 1). This process, known as the "Stakeholder Resolution Process," responded to the need for a new start to the project, and a new approach to address the environmental, historical and transportation concerns surrounding the project.

**TABLE 1
LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL GROUPS
INVOLVED IN THE STAKEHOLDER GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Washington, D.C.
City of Oak Park Heights	Oak Park Heights, MN
City of Stillwater	Stillwater, MN
Federal Highway Administration.....	St. Paul, MN
Friends of the St. Croix	Marine on St. Croix, MN
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy	St. Paul, MN
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources	St. Paul, MN
Minnesota Department of Transportation	St. Paul, MN
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office.....	St. Paul, MN
National Park Service	St. Croix Falls, WI
New St. Croix Bridge.....	Stillwater, MN
Preservation Alliance of Minnesota.....	Minneapolis, MN
Sierra Club	Minneapolis, MN
St. Croix Alliance for an Interstate Bridge	New Richmond, WI
St. Croix County Transportation Committee	Hammond, WI
St. Croix River Association	Stillwater, MN
Stillwater Area Chamber of Commerce.....	Stillwater, MN
Stillwater Heritage Preservation Commission	Stillwater, MN
Stillwater Lift Bridge Association, Inc.	Stillwater, MN
Town of St. Joseph.....	Town of St. Joseph, WI
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	St. Paul, MN
U.S. Coast Guard	St. Louis, MO
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Chicago, IL
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Bloomington, MN
Western Wisconsin Realtors Association	River Falls, WI
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources	Eau Claire, WI
Wisconsin Department of Transportation.....	Eau Claire, WI
Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office.....	Madison, WI

The purpose of the Stakeholder Resolution Process was established in an Operating Agreement¹ developed by RESOLVE. The purpose of the Stakeholder Resolution Process as agreed by the Stakeholder Group was:

- To facilitate a common understanding of the transportation, environmental and historic preservation issues among the government and non-government stakeholders;

¹ Operating Agreement for the St. Croix Crossing Problem-Solving Process. RESOLVE. June, 2003.

- To define the various solutions (including transportation alternatives) to these issues by exploring the advantages and disadvantages of each solution;
- To arrive, if possible, at a consensus; and
- To reach agreement among permitting/cooperating/core agencies on the components of the SDEIS for the long-term bridge project and on the related regulatory conclusions, among them: Section 7 of the Wild and Scenic River Act, Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act, and local concurrence.

The Operating Agreement for the St. Croix River Crossing Stakeholder Resolution Process was formally accepted by the Stakeholder Group in June 2003. This Operating Agreement also guides the manner in which meetings are to be conducted, establishes procedures, and sets milestones for deciding on a preferred alternative and project mitigation. A copy of the Operating Agreement is available in Appendix B of the August 2004 Supplemental Draft EIS.

Formal facilitated Stakeholder meetings began in June 2003. The Stakeholder Group met approximately monthly through the publication of the Supplemental Draft EIS and will continue to meet through the publication of the Supplemental Final EIS. The date and purpose of each Stakeholder Group meeting is listed in Table 2. All Stakeholder Group meetings were held in Stillwater, Minnesota at the Stillwater City Hall.

**TABLE 2
LIST OF STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETINGS**

Date	Purpose
6/10/03	Agreement on the stakeholder process purpose and operating protocols; scheduling and relationship to the NEPA process; identify each Stakeholder's perspective; identify data needs for the problem solving process.
6/30/03	Discussion of purpose and need for the project; summary of project history; initial discussion of options, ideas, and alternatives that may satisfy the project criteria.
7/22/03	Discussion of purpose and need for the project; presentation of river crossing alternatives and existing information about each alternative.
9/23/03	Discussion of options and alternatives; narrow options to those that should be included in the Amended Scoping Document.
10/28/03	Discussion of the purpose and need for the project, examine the design elements of the river crossing alternatives.
11/25/03	Discussion of methods for analyzing river crossing alternatives.
1/06/04	Discussion of comments received during the scoping period; bridge type/design options associated with each alternative; review and discussion of impacts associated with each alternative in the 2004 AFSD; update from sub-committees.

**TABLE 2 (continued)
LIST OF STAKEHOLDER GROUP MEETINGS**

Date	Purpose
1/27/04	2004 AFSDD update; discussion of Washington and St. Croix Counties land use plans; TH 36 update and discussion; discussion of mitigation process; discussion of National Park Service Section 7 evaluation.
2/24/04	2004 AFSDD update; discussion of schedule; impact assessment (e.g., natural environment, cultural resources, cumulative impacts) to date; Lift Bridge discussion.
5/04/04	Review environmental assessment information; discussion of alternatives – potential to avoid impacts, potential to minimize impacts.
6/22/04	Discussion of June 15 and June 21 public information meetings.
7/27/04	Discussion of SDEIS Build Alternatives and potential mitigation items.
10/26/04	Discussion of comments received on the SDEIS and discussion of a Preferred Alternative package.
10/27/04	Continued discussion of comments received on the SDEIS and discussion of a Preferred Alternative package.

Stakeholder members also volunteered for involvement with subgroups to address specific issues related to the project (e.g., bridge type, cultural resources, cumulative impacts, public information, water resources). The purpose of the subgroups was to provide the lead agencies with input on issues of concern, analysis methodology, and preliminary conclusions. The subgroups did not conduct the analysis, but rather provided insight to the lead agencies as the analysis was conducted.

Additional information regarding the Stakeholder Group and the St. Croix River Crossing problem-solving process can be found on the web at <http://www.resolv.com/stcroix.html> or by a link from the Mn/DOT Project Website at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix/> or the Wis/DOT Website at <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/d6/index.htm>.

III. ANTICIPATED GROWTH IN MINNESOTA AND WISCONSIN

Both Washington and St. Croix counties are planning for growth in the next 15 to 20 years, continuing the gradual trend of urbanization of the past twenty or more years. This future growth is anticipated regardless of any changes that may result from a new St. Croix River Crossing. The recent public process used to create the St. Croix County Development Plan included considerable public discussion regarding the amount of residential growth, particularly involving conversion of agricultural land to residential use. The plan reflects an agreement that it is appropriate that this growth occur, particularly in the western part of the county where the quality of agricultural land is poorer.

Washington County Existing Land Use: Existing land use in Washington County is described in the Washington County Comprehensive Plan (1997 update). Bounded on the east by the

St. Croix River and on the south and southwest by the Mississippi River, Washington County is a partly rural county located in the Twin Cities seven-county metropolitan area. According to the county's Comprehensive Plan, land use in Washington County is changing rapidly as development moves eastward. Suburban development is clustered along the western side of the county. Sewered development exists in the suburban communities of Hugo, Forest Lake, White Bear Lake, Oakdale, Woodbury, Lake Elmo, Cottage Grove, Newport, and St. Paul Park. Developed areas (which are also sewered) along the eastern side of the county adjacent to the St. Croix River include the communities of Stillwater, Oak Park Heights, Bayport, and Afton.

Analysis of land conversion in the County's Comprehensive Plan notes that in the twenty years between 1970 and 1990, 15,481 acres of vacant and agricultural land were converted to other uses; a rate of 774 acres per year in the ten year period. Between 1990 and 1997 (the latest year for which data is available), an additional 28,580 acres of agricultural or undeveloped land were converted to non-agricultural uses, a rate of 4,083 acres per year, over five times the rate of the two preceding decades. Residential land use shows a similar pattern increasing from 19,833 acres in 1970 to 31,483 acres in 1990, a rate of 583 acres per year, while residential use increased from 31,483 acres in 1990 to 45,089 acres in 1997, at a rate over three times that of the preceding decades. Commercial and industrial uses increased from a combined 5,412 acres in 1990 to 6,963 acres in 2000.

Washington County Residential Development Patterns: Between 1990 and 2000, Washington County realized a healthy share of regional growth: 12 percent of the metro area's building permits were issued to projects located in the county. Communities such as Woodbury, Oakdale, Stillwater and Cottage Grove developed an urban character in this timeframe and are expected to continue to do so in the future. Future population growth would concentrate in these communities and others such as Forest Lake, Hugo and Bayport. Other communities such as Afton, Scandia, May and Denmark Township and eastern Cottage Grove are expected to grow slowly and maintain a more rural character.

Similar patterns can also be seen in the number of residential units constructed in the same decades as recorded in the U.S. Census. Most of the selected communities have seen a sizable share of growth in the last 10-15 years, with ranges of 17-25 percent of their housing stock constructed between 1990 and 2000. The high rate of new construction for Washington County overall stands apart from the growth in these communities clustered next to the river – for example, the City of Bayport experienced very little new housing construction since 1990, accounting for only 6 percent of the total housing units.

St. Croix County Existing Land Use: Within the project area, the unincorporated area of Houlton is home to 26 businesses, a Hudson School District elementary school and a veteran's building. Retail stores and service businesses, including banks, kennels, auto dealers, real estate agents and a mini storage facility are currently found in the area. The majority of the land pattern in the Town of St. Joseph is rural, or rural residential. However, the Village of Somerset and the City of New Richmond and Hudson are also host to a broad diversity of land uses, serving as prime locations for commercial and industrial uses given the availability of municipal services.

Analysis of land use in unincorporated areas of St. Croix County between 1973 and 1993 prepared for the St. Croix County Development Management Plan (March 21, 2000), show a trend of urbanization and land conversion from agricultural uses to primarily low-density residential character. According to the available data, two general trends in land development can be illustrated. First, between 1973 and 1993, approximately 5,000 acres were added to the incorporated areas of the county. While the data does not distinguish between different types of land use within the incorporated area, it is assumed that land added to the incorporated area would be developed as urban. This assumption is made due to the access to municipal services (water and sanitary sewer) in incorporated areas. The second trend within the data illustrates the conversion of approximately 25,600 acres of the county's agricultural land and 3,000 acres of the county's wetlands to other uses. These uses have been categorized into three general types—a) residential; b) transportation and utilities; and c) industrial, commercial, recreational, government and institutional—which have increased by 3, 1, and 0.6 percent respectively.

The St. Croix County Development Management Plan concludes that changes in various land uses have had a major impact on St. Croix County's landscape over the past twenty years. The most noticeable change, according to the plan, has occurred in the western part of the county where agricultural land has been converted to residential use. The plan states that, given observed demographic trends, communities in western St. Croix County are expected to experience continued pressure for residential growth. As a result, it is anticipated that agricultural land uses in western St. Croix County will continue to decline as they have since the 1970s.² With respect to this trend, it is noteworthy that agricultural land in western St. Croix County (Town of St. Joseph, Somerset, and Hudson Townships, in particular) is generally less productive in comparison with the agricultural land in the rest of the county.

St. Croix County Residential Development Patterns: Since 1990, it is clear that the rate of urbanization occurring in western Wisconsin communities has also increased. However, the share of metro area growth occurring in these areas remains more or less the same as it has been over the last 30 years. Since approximately 1995, net migration has been the primary driver accounting for population growth in St. Croix County, rather than natural increase alone.

In reviewing Census data for St. Croix County housing construction, recent growth patterns indicate a greater comparative rate of new construction on the Wisconsin side of the river than in Washington County.

While the County overall has experienced steady rates of new construction in the 1980s and the 1990s, certain local jurisdictions grew more in the 1990s than at any time previously. Examples of this trend are the Village of Somerset, the Town of Star Prairie and the Town of Hudson, with 40 percent or more of their housing stock constructed between 1990 and 2000. All of the localities in the area grew notably, with rates of increase between 18 and 30 percent in the same 10-year time frame.

Discussions with Local Government and Planning Officials: Planners, town and village clerks and other local officials from communities in Washington County and St. Croix County

² This pattern of declining agricultural land use is noted in the St Croix County Development Management Plan Trends Analysis section and in a University of Wisconsin Madison PATS study.

were invited to participate in a discussion of current and future land use patterns, to facilitate collection of local level data on building activity and to serve as a forum to discuss the proposed new river crossing's influence on these trends and patterns.

The meeting was held on February 19, 2004 at the St. Croix County Government Center. Discussion of metro area growth trends affirmed patterns of growth on the outer edges of the 13-county area, three of which are Polk, Pierce and St. Croix Counties in Wisconsin. While building permit data collected from the U.S. Census shows that the majority of building activity (78.4 percent of new housing starts) was undertaken within the 7-county area, which includes Washington County, a growing proportion was occurring in the remaining 5 "collar" counties, which includes the three Wisconsin counties mentioned above. Each community represented gave a report on rates of building permit issuance within their boundaries. Wisconsin communities noted steady rates of growth over the last few years, whereas Minnesota communities had a wide diversity of experience, from relatively rapid growth (Baytown Township), steady growth (e.g., May Township) and static/ limited growth (Bayport).

Future Population and Households: Substantial increases in population and households are anticipated between 2000 and 2030, as shown in Table 3. The new households will generate additional demands on existing road infrastructure and school districts, and private purchasing power to growing commercial markets, especially in the two largest counties, Washington and St. Croix.

**TABLE 3
FUTURE POPULATION GROWTH BY COUNTY**

County	Population 2000	Future ⁽¹⁾ Population 2030	Change 2000-2030	Households 2000	Future Households 2030	Change 2000-2030
Chisago	41,101	69,520	28,419	14,517	27,620	13,103
Washington	201,130	344,280	143,150	71,462	138,680	67,218
Polk	41,319	52,257	10,938	16,254	22,803	6,549
St. Croix	63,155	106,026	42,871	23,410	42,799	19,389
Pierce	36,804	45,850	9,046	13,015	17,891	4,876

⁽¹⁾Data sources: Census data was used for year 2000 population and households. Metropolitan Council prepared forecasts of population for Washington County. Polk, Pierce and St. Croix County population forecasts were published by the Wisconsin Department of Administration in January of 2004. Chisago County projections prepared by the State Demographic Center, MN Planning.

Future Land Use Trends: The proposed project would occur in the context of a trend of urbanization taking place independently, but to varying degrees, throughout the entire five-county study area. Table 4 provides an estimate of the change in developed land area in these counties over time.

**TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND PROJECTED AMOUNTS OF DEVELOPED
LAND BY COUNTY**

County	EXISTING ⁽¹⁾		PROPOSED BY COUNTY PLAN ^{(1), (2)}		CHANGE	
	Acres	% Total	Acres	% Total	Acres	% Total
Chisago	16,980	(6%)	36,790	(13%)	19,810	(7%)
Washington	36,895	(14%)	73,135	(27%)	36,240	(13%)
Polk	37,074	(6%)	43,855	(7%)	6,781	(1%)
St. Croix	50,258	(11%)	60,900	(13%)	10,642	(2%)
Pierce	11,280	(3%)	33,839	(9%)	22,559	(6%)

⁽¹⁾ Due to varying formats used to present information related to land uses within the county plans, the following techniques were used to estimate areas developed: Chisago and Pierce Counties – hand estimates from scaled maps; Washington and St. Croix Counties – GIS database and Comprehensive Plan documentation; Polk County – Comprehensive Plan documentation.

⁽²⁾ Years associated with future land use vary by timeframe of County Land Use Plan: Chisago, 2020; Washington, 2015; Polk 2020; St. Croix 2020; Pierce 2010.

IV. ORIGIN-DESTINATION STUDY

Origin-destination (O-D) travel surveys were conducted near the Lift Bridge (July - August 1998) to obtain information regarding travel patterns of motorists using the Lift Bridge. Detailed results of the surveys are documented in the technical memorandum entitled *St. Croix River Crossing Study – Stillwater Bridge Origin-Destination Survey*, September 25, 1998 prepared as part of the Braun facilitation process. Survey results (Table 5) indicate the following travel patterns:

- The river crossing serves local communities³. Seventy percent of weekday trips on the bridge (55 percent of weekend trips) begin and/or end in the surrounding, local communities.
- A substantial amount of Lift Bridge traffic has no local destination (regional-regional). Forty-five percent of weekend bridge trips begin and end outside the local area, and have no intermediate destination in the local area (30 percent on weekdays).
- A trip is more likely to be regional-local on weekdays (60 percent of trips) than weekends (45 percent). The lower percentage on weekends is due to the recreational component of trips going to lake areas in Wisconsin on weekends.
- A trip is more likely to be regional-regional on weekends (45 percent of all trips) than weekdays (30 percent).

³ For the purposes of this study, “local” is defined as trips beginning or ending in Houlton, New Richmond, Somerset, Bayport, Oak Park Heights, or Stillwater. All other origins or destinations were defined as “regional.”

- Stillwater is the largest, single Minnesota area of origin/destination on both weekdays and weekends.
- Houlton, Somerset, and New Richmond are the largest Wisconsin areas of origin/destination on weekdays. Somerset is the largest single Wisconsin trip generator/attraction on weekends, reflecting its recreational nature.

**TABLE 5
SUMMARY OF STILLWATER BRIDGE ORIGIN-DESTINATION RESULTS**

Trip Type⁽¹⁾	Weekday Percent of Total Trips	Weekend Percent of Total Trips
Regional-Regional	30	45
Regional-Local	60	45
Local-Local	10	10

⁽¹⁾ "Local" origins or destinations were defined to include trips beginning or ending in the communities of Stillwater, Oak Park Heights, Bayport, Houlton, Somerset, or New Richmond. All other origins or destinations were defined as "regional."

Trip Purposes: The O-D survey also collected information on trip purpose (Table 6). Results showed the following:

- On weekdays, worktrips account for nearly half of all trips, and almost 60 percent of peak-period trips.
- On weekends, over half of all trips are social/recreational, followed by shopping trips.
- On weekdays and weekends, about 15 percent of travelers make intermediate stops in the communities near the Lift Bridge (Houlton, Stillwater, Bayport, and Oak Park Heights). Within this 15 percent, trip purposes include shopping (37 percent) and social/recreational trips (20 percent).

**TABLE 6
TRIP PURPOSES**

Trip Type	Weekday		Weekend
	Percent of Total Trips	Percent of total during peak periods	Percent of Total Trips
Work	46	57	NR ⁽¹⁾
Social/Recreational	19	NR ⁽¹⁾	56
Shopping	14	NR ⁽¹⁾	22

⁽¹⁾ NR = Not Reported

These results are not substantially different than origin-destination statistics gathered for the 2000 Twin Cities Metro Area Travel Behavior Inventory.

V. ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

In addition to the No-Build Alternative, five alternatives (Alternatives A, B, C, D and E) were studied during the Scoping Phase and are described in the 2003 Amended Scoping Document (ASD). Alternative A, a TSM/TDM Alternative, is described below. The 2004 Amended Final Scoping Decision Document (AFSDD) identified the alternatives to be studied in the August 2004 Supplemental Draft EIS (SDEIS). The four alternatives studied in the 2004 SDEIS, Alternative B-1 (the south option of Alternative B), Alternative C, Alternative D, and Alternative E, are described in Section V.C (St. Croix River Crossing Supplemental Draft EIS Alternatives).

A. 2003 AMENDED SCOPING DOCUMENT ALTERNATIVE A – TSM/TDM ALTERNATIVE

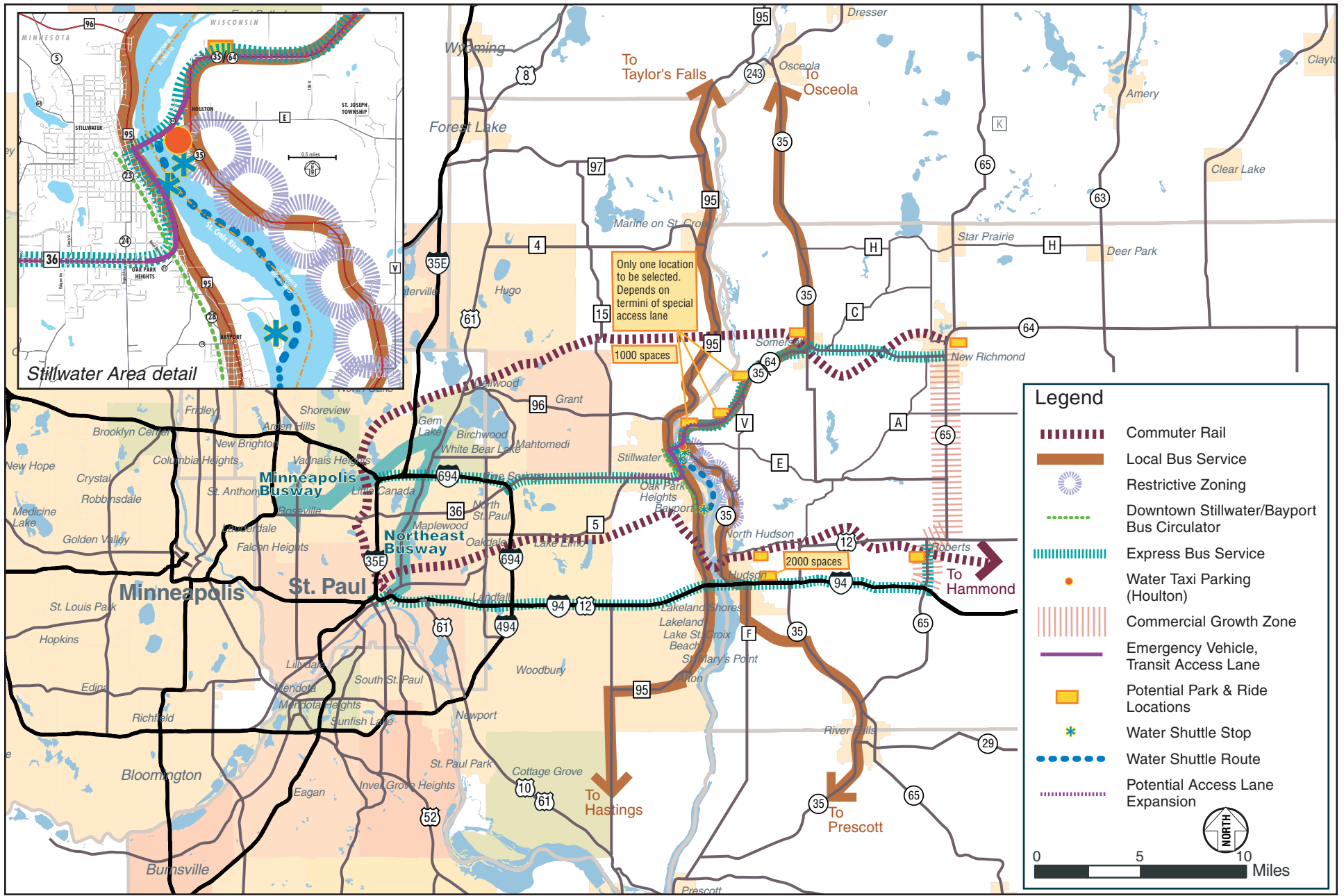
A TSM/TDM Alternative was proposed for the St. Croix River Project based on items identified by the Sierra Club in their July 2003 proposal “New Horizons – A St. Croix National Scenic and Recreational Riverway Transportation and Development Proposal”. A copy of this proposal is included as Attachment A at the end of this handout.

This TSM/TDM Alternative, referred to as Alternative A in the 2003 Amended Scoping Document (ASD), was developed based on the concepts identified in the Sierra Club proposal. Alternative A entails the permanent rehabilitation and continued vehicle use of the Lift Bridge. Needed mobility will be provided through a combination of transit and emergency vehicle advantages, new transit travel options, use of advanced technologies to enhance mobility, and regional policy changes. The items listed below are shown on Figure 1.

Transit and Emergency Vehicle Advantages: The following transit and emergency vehicle advantages are proposed as part of Alternative A to address safety and mobility issues, and to encourage transit use in this travel corridor.

- Exclusive transit and emergency vehicle lanes will be provided on the Minnesota and Wisconsin approaches to the Lift Bridge to bypass traffic queues. To provide a greater transit advantage, these lanes will be available to carpools and vanpools.
- Additional and expanded park-and-ride facilities will be provided in the Wisconsin cities of Houlton and Hudson.

Advanced Technology Options: The use of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) to provide enhanced mobility in this corridor for transit and emergency vehicles is proposed as a critical component of Alternative A.



Scoping Alternatives: Alternative A - Major Transportation Elements

Figure 1

- Opticon emitters (devices that communicate between vehicles and receivers at other fixed points) will be used by emergency vehicles to ensure immediate access onto the Lift Bridge, thereby avoiding any queued traffic. Providing a transit and emergency vehicle preferential access lane (as discussed under the “Transit and Emergency Vehicle Advantages” heading presented previously) is required for this element to be practicable.
- This same device may communicate with gate arm devices (limiting Lift Bridge entry) as well as to the Lift Bridge operator. In this way, the Lift Bridge operator may judge the ability of lowering the Lift Bridge to provide access to an emergency vehicle, should such access be necessary.

New Transit Travel Options: The options described below are assumed as part of Alternative A, in addition to transit service options currently available and/or planned for in the region.

- Water transit service will be provided on the St. Croix River using passenger-only water shuttles. This service will primarily serve a major employer in Bayport (Anderson Windows). Water transit stops will be provided at Houlton (with connections to a park-and-ride facility), Stillwater and Bayport.
- Express bus service will be extended into St. Croix County, Wisconsin.
 - One route will operate between New Richmond, Wisconsin through Somerset, Houlton and Stillwater along STH 64 to I-694, where service can connect to busways to St. Paul and Minneapolis or be through-routed. This express bus will use the transit-advantage lane at the Lift Bridge as discussed above.
 - A second route will operate along I-94 between Hudson and St. Paul providing connections to other services.
- Park-and-ride lots to support these services are suggested at New Richmond, Somerset, and Roberts, Wisconsin.
- North-south bus transit will be added on TH 95 between Taylors Falls and Hastings, and along STH 35 between St. Croix Falls and Prescott. Stops at cities along the way including Stillwater, Bayport, Afton, Hastings, Prescott, River Falls, Hudson and Houlton.
- A circulator shuttle will run between Stillwater and Bayport, Minnesota.
- Two commuter rail lines will serve St. Croix County and the Twin Cities.
 - One line will operate from Hammond, Wisconsin to downtown St. Paul with stops at Roberts, Hudson and the suburbs of St. Paul. Park-and-ride lots to support this service will be provided at Hammond, Roberts (shared with the St. Croix Express Bus), and Hudson. The lot at Hudson will be a separate lot from the one described under the heading “Transit and Emergency Vehicle Advantages”, as that lot would likely be located too far away from the commuter line to be serviceable.

- A second line will operate between Houlton, New Richmond and downtown St. Paul with stops at Somerset and the suburbs of St. Paul. Park-and-ride lots to support this service will be located at New Richmond and Somerset (shared with the St. Croix Express Bus).

Widening STH 65 from Two Lanes to Four Lanes: This action would involve widening from two lanes to four lanes, an eleven-mile stretch of road from I-94 to New Richmond in central St. Croix County. This would require the expansion of the scope of the SDEIS to include this area and similar expansion of the Project Area. Little information is currently known about the impacts that this action would have, although all impacts resulting from this action would be addressed in the SDEIS to the same level of detail as other actions if this action were to be included as part of Alternative A.

Regional Policy Changes: Regional policy changes to support Alternative A would be necessary. These policy changes are summarized here and include:

- Designation of STH 65 as a “Corridor Commercial Growth Zone” between Houlton and I-94. This would include expanding STH 65 to a four-lane facility.
- Restrictive highway zoning of STH 35 between Houlton and North Hudson, including possible Scenic Byway designation.
- Full partner status for St. Croix County in the planning and research processes of the Metropolitan Council.
- Revised St. Croix County Comprehensive Plan ensuring adequate protection of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and its watershed.
- Implementation of a comprehensive bicycle system in St. Croix County.

Mn/DOT AND Wis/DOT Statutory Authority: A number of the measures listed above and shown on the attached Figure 1 are beyond the statutory authority of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation, would require enabling legislation and, when necessary, appropriations from the legislature. The transit and emergency vehicle advantages and advanced technology options (listed first) are within the statutory authority of the Minnesota and Wisconsin Departments of Transportation.

B. REVISIONS TO ALTERNATIVE A

Following publication of the 2003 ASD and for the 2004 Final Amended Scoping Decision Document (AFSDD), Alternative A was revised during the travel demand forecasting process to define the alternative to best meet future travel demands in a cost-effective manner. These modifications were recommended by a Peer Review Panel and accepted by the Stakeholders and DOTs. These modifications were as follows:

- Two commuter rail lines – These were eliminated upon recommendation of the Peer Review Panel because ridership forecasts were very low (300 total daily riders on two lines), due to

competition with express bus routes for the same potential transit users. The costs for two commuter rail lines were also excessively high and not justified by the forecast low ridership numbers.

- Express bus routes – Increased from two proposed routes (included in the initial proposal) to five based on the demand for this service and origin-destination patterns shown in the travel demand forecast model.
- Park-and-Ride lots – Increased from proposed two locations to six locations based on demand forecast by the travel demand model and upon recommendation of the Peer Review Panel.
- Widening of STH 65 – The initial proposal included widening an 11-mile segment of STH 65 from two lanes to four lanes from I-94 to New Richmond to attract trips from the Stillwater crossing to the I-94 crossing. Travel demand forecasting showed that traffic patterns would not be sensitive to the widening (i.e., STH 65 with two lanes demonstrated existing excess capacity, therefore a four-lane road would not attract additional trips). In addition, proposed expansion of this roadway would potentially increase environmental impacts and complicate environmental documentation without providing a transportation benefit. Therefore, this element was dropped from further consideration.

These recommendations improved the alternative's ability to meet transportation needs, reduced potential environmental impacts, and reduced potential costs for the alternative.

A variation of Alternative A, Alternatives A₂ and A₃, were modeled to include a "value pricing" toll for single-occupant vehicles (Alternative A₂) and to represent the forecast with tolling and population and employment reductions (Alternative A₃). These variations and forecast results are described below in Section VI (Alternative A Forecast Results).

Workshop and Feasibility Study: While Alternative A was determined to not meet the purpose and need of the project with publication of the 2004 AFSD, travel demand forecasts completed for the St. Croix River Crossing Project indicated a potential market for transit both within St. Croix County and between western Wisconsin and Minnesota in the Twin Cities area. In the St. Croix River Crossing Supplemental Draft EIS, FHWA, Mn/DOT, and Wis/DOT agreed to address potential transit markets, routes and modes, and transit opportunities in a separate evaluation process with a workshop and feasibility study.

C. ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT EIS ALTERNATIVES

The St. Croix River Crossing Project 2004 Supplemental Draft EIS considered a No-Build Alternative and four Build Alternatives. The Build Alternatives are shown in Figure 2. The project improvements would extend from the Trunk Highway (TH) 5/TH 36 interchange on TH 36 in Minnesota to the 150th Street overpass on STH 35/64 in Wisconsin. The total distance for the Build Alternatives is approximately 6.7 miles.

Alternative B-1: Alternative B-1 consists of a four-lane river crossing and approach roadways in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Alternative B-1 river crossing is located approximately 7,550 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Minnesota shoreline and approximately 6,450 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Wisconsin shoreline.

Alternative C: Alternative C consists of a four-lane river crossing and approach roadways in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Alternative C river crossing is located approximately 4,450 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Minnesota shoreline and approximately 3,600 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Wisconsin shoreline. The proposed Wisconsin approach roadway would follow one of two alternative alignments.

Alternative D: Alternative D consists of a four-lane river crossing and approach roadways in Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Alternative D river crossing is located approximately 1,900 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Minnesota shoreline and approximately 160 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Wisconsin shoreline.

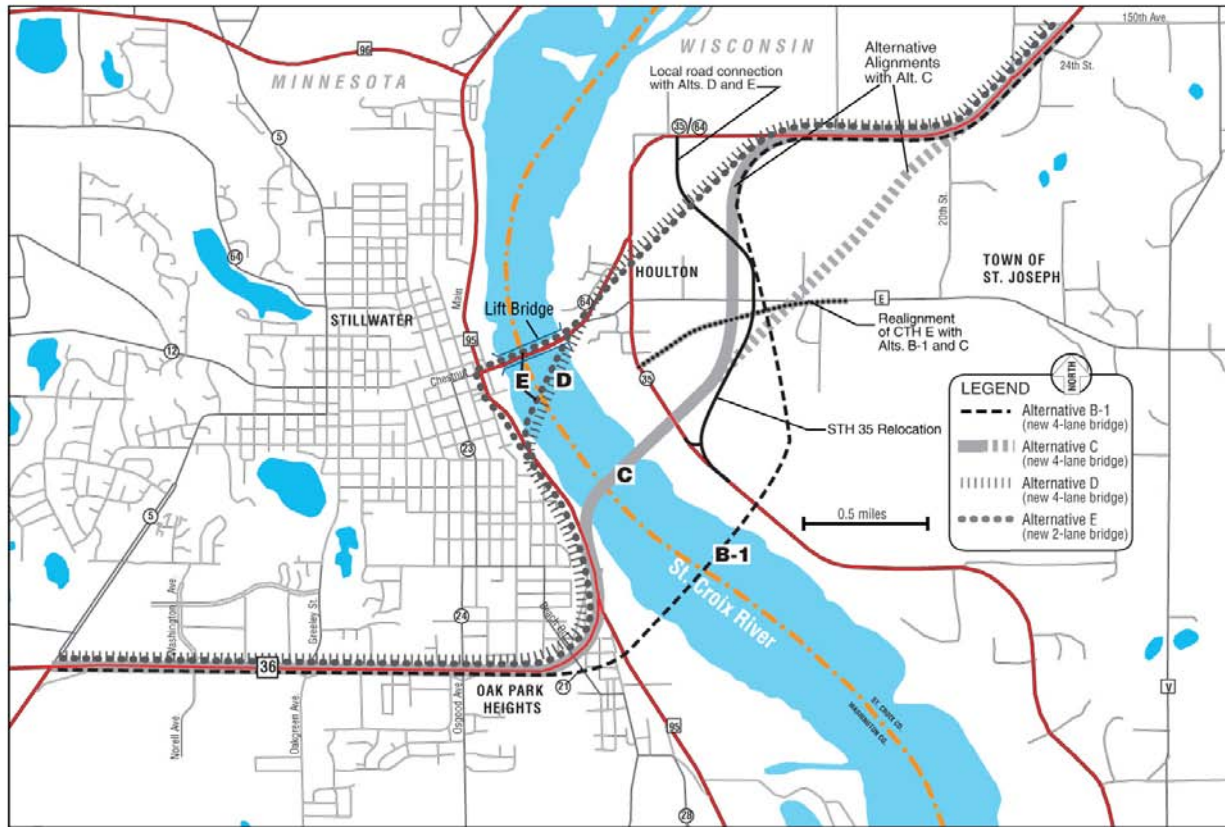
Alternative E: Alternative E consists of a new river crossing for one-way eastbound traffic and rehabilitation and continued use of the Lift Bridge for one-way westbound traffic. The Alternative E river crossing is located approximately 2,000 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Minnesota shoreline and approximately 200 feet south of the Lift Bridge along the Wisconsin shoreline.

Future Use of the Lift Bridge: One of three options in regards to future use of the Lift Bridge would apply to the Build Alternatives:

1. Continued limited vehicular use of the Lift Bridge for local traffic (i.e., no semi-trucks) (Alternatives B-1 and C);
2. Conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility (Alternatives B-1, C, and D); and
3. Continued use of the Lift Bridge for vehicular traffic for two lanes of one-way westbound traffic from Wisconsin (Alternative E). The Lift Bridge would remain on the trunk highway system.

Continued vehicular use of the Lift Bridge for local traffic or conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility is equally applicable to Alternative B-1 and Alternative C. However, this scenario is only being studied under Alternative B-1 for the SDEIS (sub-Alternatives B-1_a – Lift Bridge as a pedestrian/bicycle facility and B-1_b – Lift Bridge for local traffic). The traffic operations and related results (e.g., noise impacts, air quality impacts) from Alternative B-1 could be assumed to be similar for Alternative C. Conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility is the only option applicable to Alternative D.

**FIGURE 2
ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSING SUPPLEMENTAL DRAFT EIS BUILD
ALTERNATIVES**



Preferred Alternative: The Preferred Alternative river crossing to be presented in the Supplemental Final EIS is Alternative B-1, with the Lift Bridge being closed to vehicular traffic and used as a pedestrian/bicycle facility.

VI. ALTERNATIVE A FORECAST RESULTS

In addition to the baseline forecast produced for Alternative A, two specialized forecasts were analyzed to address specific questions regarding Alternative A:

- If the current legislative prohibition of tolls for the TH 36/STH 64 crossing were removed, what level of tolling would be required to maintain traffic volumes at current (2003) levels?
- Furthermore, if projected St. Croix County population and employment projections could be reduced (i.e., if development were to occur in Washington and Chisago counties in Minnesota instead of St. Croix County in Wisconsin), what level of development must be shifted to maintain traffic volumes at current (2003) levels?

The travel demand forecast results for these conditions of Alternative A are shown in Table 7, with A₁ representing the baseline forecast for Alternative A discussed above, A₂ representing the forecast with tolling, and A₃ representing the forecast with tolling and population and employment reductions.

**TABLE 7
EXISTING AND 2030 AVERAGE DAILY VEHICLE CROSSINGS FOR
ST. CROIX RIVER CROSSINGS ⁽¹⁾**

Alternative	US 8 - Taylors Falls	STH 243 - Osceola	TH 36/STH 64 - Stillwater		I-94 - Hudson	TOTAL
			Lift Bridge	New Bridge		
Existing (2000)	14,900	4,400	16,300	(2)	77,000	112,600
2030 No- Build	23,500	9,500	21,700	(2)	140,700	195,400
2030 Alt A ₁ ⁽¹⁾	23,600	9,300	21,200	(2)	139,100	193,200
2030 Alt A ₂ ⁽¹⁾	23,400	8,700	16,300	(2)	137,500	185,900
2030 Alt A ₃ ⁽¹⁾	24,800	7,700	15,700	(2)	135,300	183,500
2030 Alt B-1 _a	21,700	6,600	(3)	50,100	120,200	198,600
2030 Alt B-1 _b	21,600	6,400	8,300	43,300	119,300	198,900
2030 Alt C	21,300	6,400	(3)	52,400	119,400	199,500
2030 Alt D	21,300	6,200	(3)	51,000	119,000	197,500
2030 Alt E	22,800	8,000	12,000	22,000	131,600	196,900

Notes:

- (1) Includes alternatives not carried through the SDEIS and revisions to alternatives following final scoping decision document.
- (2) There is no new bridge in the existing condition, 2030 No Build Alternative or Alternative A.
- (3) The Lift Bridge is not used to carry motor vehicular traffic in these alternatives.

One of the key components of Alternative A is the introduction of additional transit service to the St. Croix Valley.

Preliminary forecasts for Alternative A included two commuter rail routes as previously shown in Figure 1. Forecast results showed market overlap between the express bus and commuter rail routes, with the faster speed, higher service frequency and better transit connectivity of the bus routes making the bus options more attractive to riders. The commuter rail routes were eliminated from the final modeling runs since they would have had a significantly negative effect on the benefit-cost ratio of Alternative A.

To maintain 2030 volumes at approximately current levels, Alternative A₂ required “value pricing” (tolls) for single-occupant vehicles as follows:

- \$2.25 AM Peak (approx. 7:00 – 9:00 a.m., westbound)
- \$3.60 PM Peak (approx. 3:00 – 6:00 p.m., eastbound)
- \$1.60 (remainder of the day, both directions)

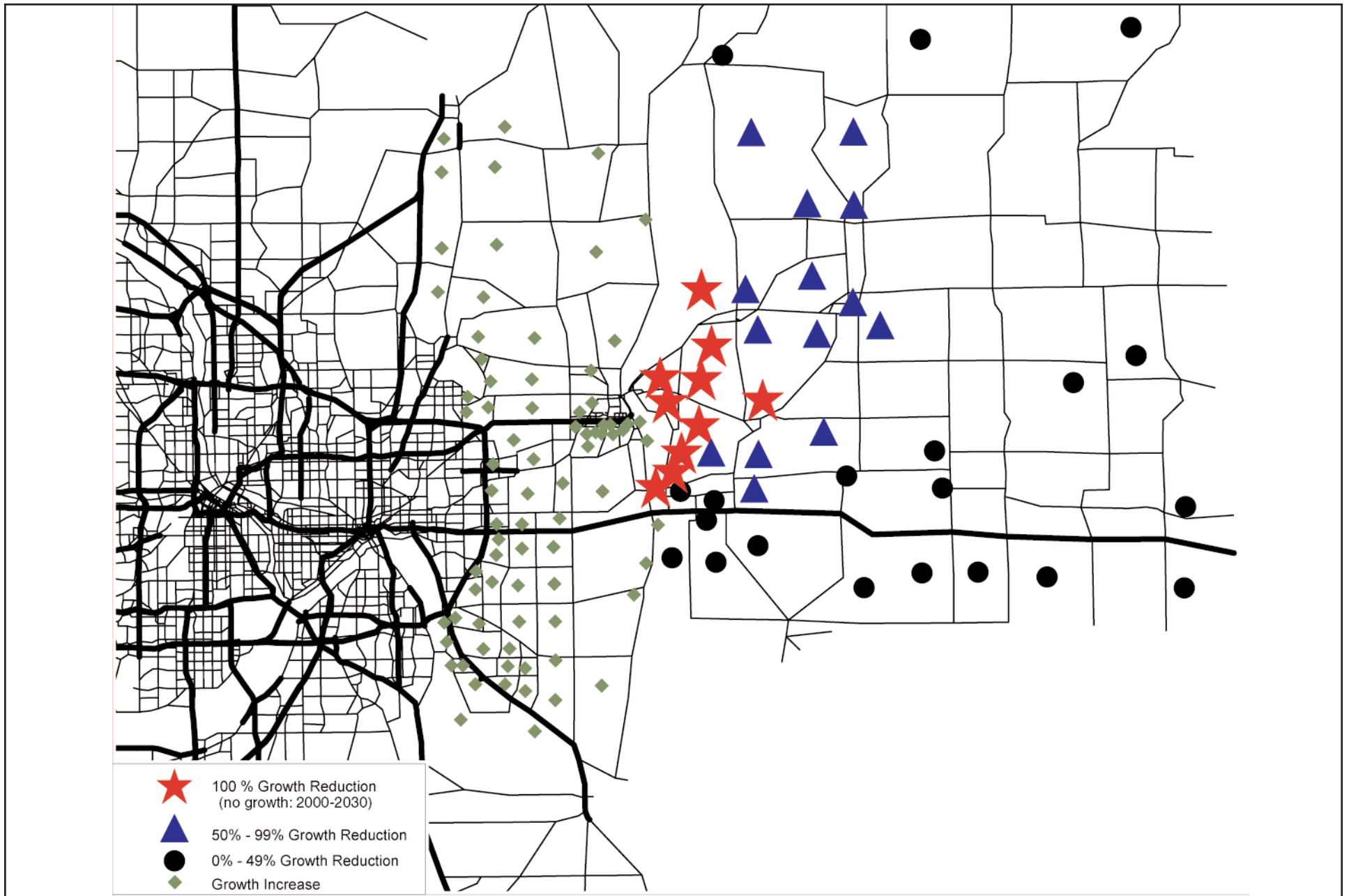
Maintaining current volumes through alteration of land use patterns (Alternative A₃) would require relocation of 20,000 people and 1,900 jobs currently projected in 2030 for St. Croix County, Wisconsin to Washington and Chisago counties in Minnesota. These land use changes would reduce required tolls to approximately 60 percent of A₂ pricing. Figure 3 shows the location where population and employment were removed in Wisconsin and where they were added in Minnesota for the purposes of modeling sub-alternative A₃.

The travel mode choices for all four Twin Cities Regional St. Croix River crossings for Alternative A are shown in Table 8, with A₁ representing the baseline forecast for Alternative A discussed above, A₂ representing the forecast with tolling, and A₃ representing the forecast with tolling and population and employment reductions.

Mode choices for Alternative A₁ indicate there is a potential market between western Wisconsin and Minnesota in the Twin Cities region with 4,900 person trips using transit daily. Results for Alternative A₂ suggests that tolling at the TH 36/STH 64 crossing would reduce the total number of person trips, and increase high-occupancy vehicles (car pooling) and transit use. The land use changes required under Alternative A₃ would further reduce the total daily volume of person trip crossings, while keeping high occupancy vehicle person-trips at similar levels and reduce both single-occupant vehicle person-trips and transit use from baseline (A₁) levels. Table 9 shows that the transit market share would range from 6.0 to 12.5 percent of all trips with reasonable walk-accessible connection to transit (park-ride availability or no more than 1/3rd mile walk at the origin, and no more than 1/3rd mile walk at the destination. This would be significantly higher than the estimated 1.9 percent regional total.

**TABLE 8
MODE CHOICES FOR 2030 TOTAL PERSON-TRIP CROSSINGS (DAILY VOLUMES)**

	Single-Occupant Vehicles (person trip-crossings)	High-Occupancy Vehicles (person trip-crossings)	Transit (person trip- crossing)	Total (person trip- crossings)
Existing (2003)	69,900	69,100	n/a	139,000
2030 No-Build	133,800	140,000	n/a	273,800
2030 Alt A ₁	132,500	137,400	4,900	274,500
2030 Alt A ₂	125,400	140,800	7,000	270,000
2030 Alt A ₃	124,200	137,200	3,900	265,300



Maximum Growth Redistribution
 St. Croix Crossing Workshop

Figure 3

*from 2004 Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
 Travel Demand Forecast Technical Memorandum*

**TABLE 9
TRANSIT RIDERSHIP RESULTS FOR ALTERNATIVE A**

	Total Transit Riders	Transit Riders Crossing River	Percent of “Transit Accessible” Trips using Transit Total / Work Trips⁽¹⁾
Without ‘Value Pricing’ (A ₁)	7,800	4,900 (3,150 at Hudson, 1,750 at Stillwater)	6.0% / 10.2%
With ‘Value Pricing’ (A ₂)	10,325	6,950 (3,675 at Hudson, 3,275 at Stillwater)	12.5% / 21.1%
With ‘Value Pricing’ and Growth Redistribution (A ₃)	7,275	3,925 (2,500 at Hudson, 1,425 at Stillwater)	11.6% / 16.5%

⁽¹⁾ Park-ride or less than 1/3rd mile walk origin plus less than 1/3rd mile walk at destination

Estimated Effect of Accessibility-Based Growth Redistribution on River Crossing Volumes: As described in the St. Croix River Crossing Travel Demand Forecast Technical Memorandum, an estimate of growth redistribution based on changes in accessibility was made for each of the alternatives. Future residential (and retail employment) growth in TAZs in western Wisconsin was made a function of the number of jobs accessible within a given time to that TAZ. The number of jobs would, in theory, fluctuate by alternative and therefore the amount of growth would vary by alternative. Any reduction in growth in Wisconsin was added to Minnesota TAZs to maintain the regional control totals.

Year 2030 travel demand forecasts were prepared for each of the growth redistribution alternatives, with the results shown in Table 10. In each case, a small reduction in the number of river crossings is forecast. The reduction is small for several reasons:

1. Depending on the alternative, the reduction in traffic due to lower growth can be offset by new, previously unserved (or latent or induced) demand – trips that desire to cross the river but do not do so under constrained alternatives.
2. A significant portion of the river crossings are trips from outside of the study area and therefore not affected by changes in growth redistribution or congestion reduction.
3. Despite the high growth rate in the study area, approximately half or more of the demand and land development exists today, diluting the reduction in growth as a percentage of total demand and development.

The No-Build river crossing volumes would show the highest decrease under a growth redistribution forecast, logical since this alternative represents the highest levels of congestion and growth redistribution. The reduction under this scenario is 10.8 percent under this alternative, which would not be enough to reduce demand to acceptable levels of service. With

Alternative A₂, the effect of the growth redistribution is mitigated by definition – the toll/price to cross the Stillwater Bridge is adjusted to keep demand approximately at current levels. With the other build alternatives, the differences in accessibility are generally small, resulting in small growth redistributions and small differences in demand.

The results of this analysis must be considered with caution. The methodology to estimate the growth redistribution has not been validated by actual experience. In addition, this type of analysis should have a more extensive equilibration in which the results of these runs are used to recalculate the growth redistribution. However, the results of such an equilibration would show that the case analyzed is a worst-case since the accessibility is measured based on full-development congestion levels. As a practical matter, the analysis does not significantly alter the comparisons among alternatives.

**TABLE 10
YEAR 2030 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC FOR REDISTRIBUTED
GROWTH DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO**

	Stillwater Bridge			All Crossings		
	Base	Redistributed	Percent Change	Base	Redistributed	Percent Change
2030 No-Build	23,100	20,600	-10.8%	195,400	182,400	-6.7%
2030 Alt A ₂	16,300	15,700	-3.7%	185,900	178,400	-4.0%
2030 Alt B-1 _a	52,000	52,000	0.0%	198,600	198,500	-0.1%
2030 Alt D	51,000	50,900	-0.2%	197,500	197,000	-0.3%
2030 Alt E	34,500	34,200	-0.9%	196,900	195,100	-0.9%

Note: Alternative C was considered as the baseline for full development and therefore not subject to redistributive effects. Alternative B-1b did not have any redistributive effects based on its accessibility levels.

VII. TRAVEL DEMAND FORECAST SUMMARY

The major findings of the travel demand forecasts for the St. Croix River Crossing Project are summarized below. Additional information can be found in the St. Croix River Crossing Travel Demand Forecasts Technical Memorandum – June 17, 2004, available in Adobe Acrobat format on the project website (<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix>).

Major Findings and Conclusions

- Average annual daily traffic volumes on the Lift Bridge have remained essentially unchanged since 1990 at approximately 15,000-16,000 vehicles per day. This lack of growth in traffic is attributable to the lack of excess capacity on the bridge. During the same period, traffic on adjacent bridges has grown at an annual rate of 3.5 to 3.8 percent.
- The Lift Bridge has an estimated practical daily capacity of 11,500 vehicles. The year 2000 demand of 16,300 vehicles per day exceeds this capacity and results in approximately four hours of congestion per day.

- The population of the St. Croix County area (including River Falls and southern Polk County) increased from 78,000 to 96,000 between 1990 and 2000 – a 2.1 percent annual rate. St. Croix County itself had the second highest rate of growth of any county in Wisconsin during the 1990s.
- Development in western Wisconsin and Washington County in Minnesota is expected to continue as the Twin Cities metropolitan area grows. Population is forecast to increase from 297,000 to 503,000 in Washington County (Minnesota) and St. Croix County, southern Polk County and River Falls (in Wisconsin) by the year 2030.
- Traffic volumes are forecast to increase on the existing bridge to 21,700 vehicles per day by 2030 (see Table 7). This additional traffic will increase the amount of congestion to over six hours per day. The number of crossings of the St. Croix River (at TH 8, STH 243, TH 36 and I-94) is expected to grow from 112,600 to 195,400 vehicles per day. The volume crossing on the I-94 bridge at Hudson would exceed capacity approximately four hours per day.
- Alternatives to reduce travel demand, including transit services and HOV facilities, could reduce the overall river crossings in 2030 from 195,400 to about 193,200. The reduction at the Lift Bridge would be about 400 vehicles per day. As a result, congestion levels would not be significantly affected.
- A new four-lane river crossing south of Stillwater would carry volumes of approximately 50,000 to 52,000 vehicles per day depending on the specific alignment (Alternatives B-1, C and D). Of the approximately 30,000 additional vehicles crossing at Stillwater, about 20,000 would be traffic using the I-94 bridge under the No Build, up to 5,000 would be new (previously unserved) trips across the river, and about 5,000 would be attracted from the TH 8 and TH 243 bridges. The Stillwater crossing would have adequate capacity to serve the demand, and the reduction in demand on the I-94 bridge would alleviate the forecast congestion on that bridge.
- If the Lift Bridge remained open to vehicular traffic along with a new four-lane bridge, it would carry about 8,000 vehicles per day, primarily diverted from the demand on the new bridge.
- A “Twin Bridge” alternative (Alternative E - two lanes westbound on the existing bridge, two lanes eastbound on a new bridge) would carry approximately 34,500 vehicles per day. When compared to the No Build, the additional 12,800 would include 1,500 in new (previously unserved) demand, a diversion of 9,100 vehicles from the I-94 crossing plus 1200 vehicles from the TH 8 and STH 243 bridges. Congestion would be reduced but not eliminated on I-94 and in Stillwater.
- Alternatives B-1_a, C and D have the greatest effect on reducing traffic through downtown Stillwater on a daily basis compared to the No Build. Alternatives B-1_b, which includes traffic on the existing bridge, has a lower reduction in traffic, and Alternative E results in a lower reduction in traffic through downtown Stillwater.

- Alternatives B-1_a, B-1_b, C and D result in the highest decreases in regional vehicle hours of travel (VHT). Alternative E reduces VHT as well, but the reduction is about 45-55 percent lower than of the other build alternatives. Vehicle miles of travel (VMT) is also reduced more for the B, C and D alternatives, where reduction in circuitous travel exceeds the increase in travel due to increased accessibility. However, these two factors offset each other for Alternative E.
- The development forecasts used for this analysis were based on an assumption that a new river crossing would exist. Sensitivity tests show that a reduction in accessibility among alternatives could result in lower development levels, although the reduction is small for any alternative involving new capacity across the river. The reduced demand would not sufficiently reduce demand on the existing Stillwater or I-94 bridges to eliminate the need for a new crossing.

St. Croix River Crossing Project Website

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/stcroix/>

Appendix A

Sierra Club Proposal

New Connections

A St. Croix National Scenic and Recreational Riverway Transportation and Development Proposal



NEW CONNECTIONS

**A ST. CROIX NATIONAL SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL RIVERWAY
TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**



July 9, 2003

Contact: MAT HOLLINSHEAD, 651-698-0260 or hollinsheadml@comcast.net

1. **Permanent rehab and continued vehicle use of the Historic Lift Bridge.** Use of a thin, visually compatible marked height screen, or possibly even an infrared beam across the approach routes, on each side of the river to stop any trucks or other vehicles too high to fit through the bridge spans before such vehicles [reach] the bridgehead, so as to eliminate this source of damage to the bridge. Any vehicle triggering the height screen would be subject to a substantial fine and citation. Turn around space or route would be provided at the height screen location to ensure the oversize vehicle could exit the area in the direction it arrived, or another direction other than the bridge, without adding to traffic congestion;
2. **Emergency and transit vehicle access lanes.** Exclusive westbound, Wisconsin approach lane and eastbound, downtown Stillwater bypass lane for emergency vehicles, buses, carpools and factory shuttles to access the Historic Lift Bridge whenever there is a back-up. The Wisconsin lane would be built in existing excess right-of-way; the downtown Stillwater lane would be built, with historic landscaping and streetscape upgrades and amenities, where surface parking now occupies the riverfront. Structured parking for downtown Stillwater would replace the lost surface parking, with a net gain in efficiency and access for restaurant and business customers.
3. **Transponder/[Opticom]** inside emergency and transit vehicles allowing the vehicle itself, or the driver if necessary, to open the access lane gate as the vehicle reaches the lane entry point. The lanes would begin sufficiently up the hill on the Wisconsin side and south along the river on the Minnesota side so that, when used in combination with shoulders prior to the restricted lane entrance, will ensure no waiting regardless of the length of traffic back-up.
4. **Park-and-Ride facilities** on the Wisconsin side of the St. Croix River at Hudson and Houlton to accommodate 2000 cars and 1000 cars, respectively, when opened. Reserved space in the Houlton park-and-ride for Andersen Corp workers with a prioritized land transit service through Stillwater, and water transit service direct, connecting to the Bayport plant at shift changes;
5. **Riverway Water Transit.** The St. Croix, being a navigable waterway under Coast Guard regulation, should be exploited for water born north-south or diagonal transit routes, with appropriate marketing, infrastructure and incentives. Over time, behavior can develop that recognizes and appreciates the river as a more direct, more scenic transportation option for selected categories of trips;
6. **Negotiated agreement with the Coast Guard** regarding Lift Bridge operations, allowing for lowering the lift when it is open if an emergency vehicle approaches; the emergency vehicle would radio the bridge operator from a distance sufficient that the bridge would be down by the time the emergency vehicle, using the restricted access lane, reached the bridgehead.
7. **Rush Hour Transit Access.** During peak time, at the morning rush westbound, the evening rush eastbound, the eastbound vacation traffic on Friday and holiday afternoons and the westbound vacation traffic on Sunday and holiday afternoons, transit runs would be timed with the normal lift bridge schedule so as to arrive, via the restricted access lanes described under #2 above, at the bridgehead when the bridge is down and accessible to vehicles;
8. **Metro Transit express bus route extensions to St. Croix County** with appropriate marketing, incentives, convenience and comfort to achieve ridership sufficient to provide alternatives for commuters to the Twin Cities downtowns. These bus lines would serve the park-n-ride ramps/lots described under #4 above, but might also reach directly to New Richmond, Roberts

and other key connection points in the interior of St. Croix County. Bus and emergency vehicle priority access to the bridge from either side at peak times—on the Minnesota side, by routing buses along the shore connecting to the existing Highway 36 opposite the Oasis Café; on the Wisconsin side, by designating one lane as priority for a certain distance near the bridge during peak times; on both sides, the use of meters to give preference to priority vehicles;

9. **St. Croix Valley Transit Authority (SCVTA)** to establish and operate transit connections between St. Croix Falls and Hastings, on the Minnesota side, between Osceola or Taylor’s Falls and Prescott on the Wisconsin side, between Minnesota and Wisconsin using existing bridges, and between high trip generators on both sides of the river using waterbuses and water taxis;
10. **St. Croix Valley Transportation Management Organization**, similar in scope and mission to those in downtown St. Paul, downtown Minneapolis, the I-494 corridor, and the Midway area of St. Paul. Allowing carpools and vanpools preferential bridge access at the traffic meters at either end of the Lift Bridge, and also priority parking in the park-n-rides;
11. **Designated Wisconsin Highway 65 development corridor commercial growth zone**, with Expansion of St. Croix County Highway 65 to four lane status between I-94 and New Richmond and appropriate land use designations accommodating planned commercial growth;
12. **Restrictive Highway 35 zoning between Houlton and North Hudson, including possible Scenic Byway designation.** Compatible residential development would be permitted, but commercial would be directed as described in #10 above or to other suitable areas such as existing New Richmond or Somerset commercial zones;
13. **Full partner status for St. Croix County** in the planning and research processes of the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities;
14. **Mode choice and land use incorporated as inputs or independent variables to Met Council traffic modeling** algorithms rather than the secondary. dependant or excluded variables they are now;
15. **Implementation the St. Croix Valley Development Design Study of 2000, by Peter Calthorpe Associates**, sponsored by the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities. Accelerated development of examples for downtown Stillwater, with transit circulator serving structured parking, historic district and other local sites as appropriate (see Gatlinburg, TN); possibly building on existing tourist trolley.
16. **Revised St. Croix County Comprehensive Plan** that ensures adequate protection of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and its watershed;
17. **Commuter rail service**, using existing rail bridges north of Stillwater and/or at Hudson, between Twin Cities and New Richmond and/or Hammond, with park-and-rides at station areas, local feeder transit and shuttles
18. **Comprehensive bicycle system.** For three-season recreation and commuting, expand St. Croix County Bicycle Plan to a comprehensive system of lanes, trails and paths, with emphasis on connections between western St. Croix County and Minnesota. Bicycles and cyclists could use all the transit options described above to cross the river.