

# DRAFT SECTION 4(F) EVALUATION

## STILLWATER CULTURAL LANDSCAPE DISTRICT

### I. DESCRIPTION OF SECTION 4(F) RESOURCE

During the cultural resource review for the St. Croix River Crossing Project during the Braun Facilitation Process phase and prior to the suspension of the project in 2001 (see Chapter 1 of the SDEIS), the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District was identified as a resource eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). National Register guidance defines cultural landscapes as follows:

A cultural landscape is a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources, associated with an historic event, activity or person. In the broadest sense, a cultural landscape is an expression of human adaptation to and use of the natural resources of an area.

In addition to buildings, structures, and objects, prominent landscape elements and historically important views fall within the definition of cultural landscapes because of the prominence of their scale or relevance to key contexts. The cultural landscape is a combination of settlement patterns, natural features, and cultural elements. Changing land uses and related activities have left an imprint on the landscape as people interacted with the natural resources available to them. It is the relationship among these resources over time that most often describes the “character” of a landscape.

### A. DETAILED MAP

Figure E-16 shows the relationship of the Build Alternatives to the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District.

### B. SIZE AND LOCATION

The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District is located in Stillwater in Washington County, Minnesota, and in St. Croix County, Wisconsin. In Minnesota, the boundaries of the district essentially coincide with the 1848 Original Town Plat (O.T.P.) for Stillwater and an adjacent strip of land along the waterfront extending south of town. The boundaries of the O.T.P are approximately Willard Street on the south (including part of the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property), 6th Street on the west, Maple Street on the north, and the St. Croix River on the east. The O.T.P consists of some 50 blocks of varying numbers of lots and sizes. Most lots were between 50 feet and 60 feet wide, and most blocks included 10 to 12 lots. The Cultural

**Figure E-16 – Location of Stillwater Cultural Landscape District and Build Alternatives  
(8.5x11 – b/w)**

Landscape District is approximately 260 acres. On the Wisconsin side of the St. Croix River, the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District boundaries follow the boundaries of Kolliner Park. The park property is located along the St. Croix River across from downtown Stillwater. The size of Kolliner Park varies from 49 to 58 acres, depending on the water level of the river. The Cultural Landscape District also includes the Lift Bridge and the earthen causeway that connects the bridge to the Wisconsin shore. The Lift Bridge is a two-lane highway bridge with no shoulders and a 5-foot sidewalk on the south side. At the location of the bridge, the St. Croix River is approximately 1,800 feet wide. The bridge itself spans approximately 1,050 feet across the river with the remaining distance covered by an earthen causeway. The Lift Bridge connects Stillwater, Minnesota, with the Town of St. Joseph, Wisconsin. Minnesota Trunk Highway (TH) 36 and Wisconsin State Trunk Highway (STH) 64 converge at the Lift Bridge over the St. Croix River.

The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District contains 250 properties that contribute to its significance, including residences and commercial buildings as well as public stairways, parks, and an archeological site. Among the 250 properties that contribute to the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, 12 individual properties and the 82-property Stillwater Commercial Historic District are listed on the NRHP. The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District also includes 187 properties that are noncontributing to the district's significance.

### **Minnesota Portion of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District**

The Minnesota portion of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District has been characterized as a museum of commercial and residential architecture from the second half of the nineteenth century. The peak period of construction in this portion of the district occurred between 1870 and 1900 when nearly 60 percent of the properties were constructed. The district includes examples of all the prominent architectural styles of the period as well as examples of rare and exotic styles, such as Islamic Revival.

To a remarkable degree, the physical fabric of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District continues to elicit its 19th and early 20th century heritage. Major landmarks and numerous, relatively unaltered buildings contribute to the visual cohesiveness of the district. A succession of bridges have crossed the St. Croix River at the center of the district, ending with the present metal truss Lift Bridge, which was built in 1931. Despite some losses of nineteenth century buildings due to fire or dismantling of industrial structures, the commercial core of the district remains a well-unified collection, and residential areas have seen relatively little alteration.

A variety of notable properties lie within the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District (see Figure E-17). These landmarks are particularly significant because of their visual prominence, design, or associations with key historic contexts. The Lift Bridge is considered to be one of the landmarks that dominates the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. The St. Croix Lumber Mills (individually listed on the NRHP) is another visual landmark within the district and is strongly associated with the lumber era. Two other areas of visual prominence are Main Street and Lowell Park. Main Street, which is within the Stillwater Commercial Historic District, strongly evokes the primary period of Stillwater's eminence, the 1860s through the 1910s.

**Figure E-17 – Location of Other Historic Resources (8.5x11 – b/w)**

Lowell Park, which also falls within the Stillwater Commercial Historic District, spans the principal downtown area and serves as the gateway to Stillwater from the east.

The Minnesota portion of the district also includes an archaeological site occupying the northern portion of the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property adjacent to the river just south of downtown Stillwater. Established in 1853 as Hersey, Staples & Company, the lumber milling operation was one of the earliest, most successful and longstanding Stillwater businesses associated with logging along the St. Croix River and its tributaries. The company was in operation until 1906. Remnants of the company's office/store main sawmill, planing mill, a retaining wall, and chimney still remain. This site has been determined individually eligible for the NRHP.

The west side of TH 95 from the location of the present River Oasis Café north to the Wolf Brewery was the site of a former neighborhood of dwellings and businesses referred to as "Slab Alley". This series of approximately 20 structures included working class dwellings inhabited during the height of the lumber boom prior to 1870. Although the dwellings were removed by TH 95 construction in 1934, the back lots of these properties have a high potential for intact archaeological features and have the potential to be eligible for the NRHP. This area is currently undergoing testing to determine eligibility.

### **Wisconsin Portion of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District**

The Wisconsin portion of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District is defined by the boundaries of Kolliner Park, a recreational area owned by Stillwater but currently closed for public use. This area was originally developed for industrial use by the early Stillwater lumber industry. Lumbering operations on the Kolliner Park property began in 1870 and continued until 1905, when the East Side Lumber Company shut down its mill. Following a fire in 1911, the owners of the East Side Lumber Company donated their property to the city in 1917 for recreational use and to retain the natural view from Stillwater.

In 1923, the city began developing the northern portion of the property into a Tourist Camp. The Tourist Camp, which provided camping facilities for auto tourists, was not only a way to promote tourism along the St. Croix River but was also a reflection of the rise in popularity of the automobile in America. In 1931, the American Legion Post 48 raised funds to construct a public bathing beach (known as Legion Beach) on the southern portion of the property, which included a bathhouse and a caretaker's home.

The entire property was named Kolliner Park in the 1970s. In 1979, the city closed the park and gated its entrance because of increased vandalism at the park and traffic congestion at the east end of the Lift Bridge. Today, Kolliner Park contains only archaeological remains from the Tourist Camp and Legion Beach. (Any archaeological remains of the East Side Lumber Company were disturbed with the construction of the Lift Bridge causeway and approach roadways in 1931.) Archaeological remains from the Tourist Camp include the remnants of the camp kitchen foundation and the spring filter. The Legion Beach site includes archaeological remains from the bathhouse foundation and the caretaker's home.

The Kolliner Park property represents the city's desire in the early decades of the 20th century to transform the St. Croix River banks from a lumber-related use to a recreational and tourist-related resource. While this property is not eligible for listing on the NRHP individually, it is considered a contributing element of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District.

### **Lift Bridge**

The Lift Bridge provides a physical connection between the Minnesota and Wisconsin banks of the St. Croix River and symbolizes the connection that has existed between these banks since the early 1870s, even though the Lift Bridge was not built until 1931.

The Lift Bridge also represents a rare surviving example of the vertical-lift highway bridge construction of the Waddell and Harrington type. Only six vertical-lift highway bridges were built in Minnesota and Wisconsin prior to World War II, and the Lift Bridge is one of two surviving examples. In recognition of its importance as a rare type of engineering construction, the Lift Bridge was listed on the NRHP in 1989.

The Lift Bridge is also considered to be one of the most prominent landmarks along the St. Croix River and within Stillwater. The Lift Bridge is valued by many tourists and residents of Stillwater as an historical and cultural asset to the area.

The periods of significance defined for the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District include the following:

- Industry (Lumber), 1860s – 1914. Lumbering and its associated activities began infusing the district in the early 1860s with its historic significance. When the boom site closed in 1914, the dominant lumbering period, upon which the district's significance is based, essentially ended;
- Social History, 1839 –1940. In Stillwater, responses to the lumber industry economy, as well as less direct decisions by various social groups (i.e. church establishment or school openings), provided an important component of the development of the district;
- Architecture, 1848 – 1927. Extant properties in the proposed district include one house dated 1848-49. While construction dates have not all been verified, a pattern of development emerges with peak decades of the 1870s and 1880s. Construction continued throughout the nearly eight decades, and numerous styles are still present. The district includes numerous Greek Revival, Italianate, and "Greek-Italianate" (houses displaying characteristics of both styles) residential styles, which directly reflect the early boom period. In addition, examples of the Queen Anne, Shingle, Stick, and Colonial Revival styles abound within the district. Beginning in the 1890s, new construction lessened, but significant or contributing examples were still built, culminating with the Lowell Inn in 1926-27; and

- Community Development, 1839 – 1939. Community development dated from the time of early settlement (1839) and continued for 100 years. Waterfront improvement plans for Lowell Park date from 1911, and included 1916 landscape architectural plans by Morrell and Nichols, 1923 plan revisions to accommodate the proposed Lift Bridge (completed in 1931) and other changes, and 1930s public works projects along the St. Croix River.

The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District is considered to be a significant historical resource that is eligible for listing on the NRHP. The district is considered significant and eligible for listing under National Register Criteria A and C. The district and its development is directly associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history (Criterion A), including lumbering and logging. In addition, the district embodies the distinctive characteristics and appearance of the periods of development (Criterion C).

### C. OWNERSHIP AND TYPE

The properties within the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District are owned by a variety of private and public entities. It should be noted that the entire Kolliner Park property is owned by the City of Stillwater. The Lift Bridge is jointly owned by Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT, with maintenance and operation of the bridge being the responsibility of Mn/DOT. The earthen causeway is owned by Wis/DOT.

### D. FUNCTION OF AND/OR AVAILABLE ACTIVITIES

The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District includes commercial buildings in downtown Stillwater, numerous residential homes, city parks, and the Lift Bridge. Tourism has become an increasingly important industry in the area due to the area's historical associations and picturesque setting. Recreational activities occur at city parks within the district (i.e., Lowell Park, Pioneer Park, and Kolliner Park). A future Stillwater park, to be donated to the city, is also located within the district. Commercial, retail, and business activities are concentrated in the downtown area.

### E. DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING AND PLANNED USES

Historic resources, specifically the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, are an important element of the City of Stillwater. Part of the city's appeal and attractiveness to residents and tourists is its historic resources. The city is committed to preserving its historic resources and has established a heritage preservation commission. The purpose of the commission is to safeguard historic resources, and to foster and promote the preservation and continued use of historic sites.

### **Role of Stillwater Cultural Landscape District in Local Plans**

Although local plans predate the Cultural Landscape Investigation studies (August 1999 and October 1999), certain components of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District are addressed by the local plans.

Local plans emphasize the importance of continuing to preserve the historic character of Stillwater. The Stillwater Downtown Plan (December 1988) is a comprehensive plan that examined the economics, land use, urban design, traffic, parking, and utilities of the downtown area. The goals and objectives of the plan call for preserving the image and identity of Stillwater as an historic rivertown. These goals include the preservation of significant downtown structures, including the Lift Bridge.

The 1995 Stillwater Comprehensive Plan (1995-2020) reinforced the goals and objectives set forth in the Stillwater Downtown Plan. This plan also stressed the importance of preserving Stillwater's historic character. Objectives of the plan include preserving the Downtown Stillwater Commercial Historic District and adjacent historic properties. The plan also identifies the importance of preserving locally-designated historic properties and those listed on the NRHP.

The 1998 Stillwater Master Plan for Kolliner Park suggested reconstruction of the Legion Bathhouse and Beach as an improvement alternative for the park.

The 1998 Stillwater Master Plan for the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property<sup>1</sup> proposes that the property be transformed into a waterfront park. The proposed park concept is designed to create a recreational area that takes advantage of the site's existing natural features (e.g., views and access to the St. Croix River), while at the same time cleaning up the existing nuisance areas on the site.

## F. ACCESS AND USAGE

The two main Minnesota vehicle access routes to the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District are via TH 36 and TH 95. TH 36 is a major four-lane, east-west thoroughfare that extends from the northern suburbs of St. Paul to Stillwater. TH 95 is a two-lane, north-south highway which generally follows the western shore of the St. Croix River and functions as an important link between communities scattered along the river.

Wisconsin STH 64 and STH 35 are the key highway corridors providing vehicle access from Wisconsin to the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. STH 64 is a two-lane, east-west highway which traverses the state from the Houlton area east to the City of Marinette, on the shore of Lake Michigan. STH 35 is a two-lane, north-south roadway that extends from the Illinois/Wisconsin border to the City of Superior in northern Wisconsin.

TH 36 and TH 95 merge just south of downtown Stillwater. TH 95 becomes Stillwater's Main Street which is the primary arterial of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. TH 36 turns off of Main Street at Chestnut Street where it proceeds east over the St. Croix River on the Lift Bridge. At the state line, Minnesota TH 36 becomes Wisconsin STH 64.

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<sup>1</sup> The Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property is referred to as the Aiple Property in the 1998 Master Plan (Aiple Property and Kolliner Park Master Plan, City of Stillwater, December 1998).

The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District experiences a very high level of pedestrian traffic. Sidewalks are adjacent to all local streets within the district. Pedestrian counts collected in the summer of 1998 indicated that over 1,200 pedestrians crossed the Main Street and Chestnut Street intersection during the peak weekend hour. About 400 pedestrians crossed this intersection during a weekday p.m. peak hour.

#### G. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SIMILAR RESOURCES

The Stillwater Commercial Historic District is listed on the NRHP and lies within the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. The Stillwater Commercial Historic District includes Stillwater's central business district and stretches from Nelson Street on the south to Commercial Street on the north along Main Street, and from the St. Croix River on the east to the alley just west of Main Street (see Figure E-14). The Stillwater Commercial Historic District includes 82 properties, which are a collection of late nineteenth century commercial structures representing the economic development of Stillwater. Of these 82 properties, 63 properties are considered to contribute to the Stillwater Commercial Historic District's significance.

There are no other similar landscape districts within the general project area.

#### H. APPLICABLE CLAUSES AFFECTING OWNERSHIP

As the proposed project is federally-funded and the district is a resource eligible for listing on the NRHP, the district is subject to the provisions of Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as amended. In addition to this Section 4(f) Evaluation, the project is also being reviewed under Section 106.

There are no other applicable clauses affecting the ownership of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District.

Within the locally- and nationally-designated Stillwater Commercial Historic District (which is within the boundaries of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District), any historic landmark alterations or construction/improvements over \$500 are subject to review by the Stillwater Heritage Preservation Commission. Land use activities within the Stillwater Commercial Historic District are also regulated by city zoning ordinances and setback requirements.

#### I. UNUSUAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District is unusual in that, as a cultural landscape, there is great significance in the association between the elements of the district and their larger setting, as well as the relationship of the district as a whole within its setting of the St. Croix River Valley. The combination of the natural landscape with constructed components establishes the distinctive visual and historic character of the district that makes it eligible for listing on the NRHP. From this perspective, visual changes are likely to affect the integrity of the district as a whole.

## **II. IMPACTS ON SECTION 4(F) RESOURCE**

### **A. NO-BUILD**

The No-Build Alternative has the potential for long-term adverse impacts on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. The increased traffic congestion and noise through downtown Stillwater threatens the historical ambience of the district. Continued and increased congestion in Stillwater also may affect the number of tourists visiting the district. Pedestrian access and safety are also likely to decrease, further dissuading people from visiting the area.

### **B. BUILD ALTERNATIVES**

The following is a discussion of impacts of the Build Alternatives on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. Chapter 11 of the SDEIS discusses the preliminary assessment of effects of the Build Alternatives under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended). A summary of the preliminary assessment of effects on the Landscape District for each Build Alternative is included below. Formal determination of effects will be made by FHWA following completion of remaining information, public input received throughout the comment period, and further discussion with consulting parties. Refer to Chapter 11 of the SDEIS for additional information.

#### **Alternative B-1**

The Alternative B-1 bridge would lie outside of the district boundaries. However, there would be limited views of the bridge from some parts of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District as the bridge would be located at the southern periphery of the district's viewshed. The Alternative B-1 bridge would not physically or visually sever important parts of the district from any other part of the district.

With the Lift Bridge converted to a pedestrian/bicycle facility, Alternative B-1 would have a beneficial impact on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, specifically downtown Stillwater, in terms of transportation-related impacts through reduced congestion, air pollution, noise impacts, and improved pedestrian safety. The new river crossing will divert TH 36 through-traffic out of the downtown Stillwater area. Currently, TH 36 through-traffic is contributing substantially to traffic congestion and delays in downtown Stillwater. By providing a new river crossing for through-trips, Alternative B-1 will improve access for tourists wishing to visit the downtown Stillwater area.

However, with the Lift Bridge open to local vehicular traffic, traffic congestion and delays would persist with Alternative B-1 in downtown Stillwater. Although the congestion would be less compared to the No-Build Alternative, intersections in downtown (Nelson and Main Street; Chestnut and Main Street) would still operate at level of service F. Traffic congestion associated with local use of the Lift Bridge would also likely contribute to decreased pedestrian safety and access downtown.

The Section 106 preliminary assessment of effects indicated that Alternative B-1 would have an adverse effect on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. Under Alternative B-1, the change in Lift Bridge ownership from Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT to another owner could have an adverse effect on long-term maintenance and/or rehabilitation. Without a specific plan to identify actions and funding, the Lift Bridge's long-term management could be at risk.

The view toward Downtown Stillwater would be lost to vehicular traffic with the change of access on the Lift Bridge if the Lift Bridge is converted to a pedestrian/bicycle facility. This approach and view are important to our understanding of Stillwater and its relationship to the river, and would be reduced with the loss of vehicular access. However, the distance of the Alternative B-1 bridge from Downtown Stillwater and the rest of the Landscape District would ensure that there is no effect on the setting of the District, views of the river from the District, or views of major landmarks in the Landscape District as a result of the new bridge.

Alternative B-1 would have no effect on the Hersey & Bean site. Alternative B-1 also does not require any roadway changes or right-of-way acquisition in the immediate area and would have no effect on the Slab Alley site.

### **Alternative C**

The Alternative C bridge would lie outside of the district boundaries. However, there would be limited views of the Alternative C bridge from some parts of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District as the bridge would lie at the southern periphery of the district's viewshed. The Alternative C bridge would not physically or visually sever important parts of the district from any other part of the district.

As described for Alternative B-1, the Hersey & Bean site (located on the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property) could potentially be used as a construction staging area. Similar to Alternative B-1, the preliminary assessment of effects indicates that Alternative C would also not have an effect on the the Hersey & Bean site. Activities associated with removal of unnecessary pavement on the STH 64/County Trunk (CTH) E approach roadway to the Lift Bridge, associated with conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility, are also not anticipated to affect archaeological sites in Kolliner Park. Refer to the discussion of Alternative B-1 above for additional detail on these two resources.

Alternative C would have a beneficial impact on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, specifically downtown Stillwater, in terms of transportation-related impacts through reduced congestion, air pollution, noise impacts, and improved pedestrian safety. The new river crossing will divert TH 36 through-traffic out of the downtown Stillwater area. Currently, TH 36 through-traffic is contributing substantially to traffic congestion and delays in downtown Stillwater. By providing a new river crossing for through-trips, Alternative C will improve access for tourists wishing to visit the downtown Stillwater area. However, as described for Alternative B-1, continued use of the Lift Bridge for local vehicular traffic with Alternative C would contribute to traffic congestion in downtown Stillwater. See the discussion of Alternative B-1 for the effects of traffic congestion in downtown Stillwater as it relates to the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District.

The Section 106 preliminary assessment of effects has indicated that Alternative C would have an adverse effect on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District. Under Alternative C, as under Alternative B-1, change in ownership from Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT to another owner could have an adverse effect on long-term bridge maintenance and/or rehabilitation. As described for Alternative B-1, the view toward Downtown Stillwater would be lost to vehicular traffic under Alternative C with the change of access on the Lift Bridge if the Lift Bridge is converted to a pedestrian/bicycle facility. This approach and view are important to our understanding of Stillwater and its relationship to the river, and would be reduced with the loss of vehicular access.

Alternative C would also change the perception of the river from the Landscape District, by foreshortening the view of the broad sweep of the river valley and bluffs with a bridge. In addition, the change in ownership and lack of assurances for long-term management of the Lift Bridge under Alternative C would have an adverse effect on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District.

Alternative C would have no effect on the Hersey & Bean site. Alternative C also does not require any roadway changes or right-of-way acquisition in the immediate area and would have no effect on the Slab Alley site.

### **Alternative D**

The Alternative D bridge would lie within the district boundaries. There would be direct views of the bridge from some parts of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District as the bridge would lie within the middle of the district's viewshed. The Alternative D bridge would physically and visually sever downtown Stillwater from the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property and the southern half of Kolliner Park. The Alternative D bridge would result in direct physical impacts to three contributing elements of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District: the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility, Hersey & Bean site, and Kolliner Park.

Activities associated with removal of unnecessary pavement on the STH 64/CTH E approach to the Lift Bridge and construction of the new STH 64 roadway are not anticipated to affect archaeological sites in Kolliner Park on the Wisconsin shore of the river.

Alternative D would have a beneficial impact on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, specifically downtown Stillwater, in terms of transportation-related impacts through reduced congestion and improved pedestrian safety. The Alternative D river crossing would divert TH 36 through-traffic out of the downtown Stillwater area. Currently, TH 36 through-traffic is contributing substantially to traffic congestion and delays in downtown Stillwater. By providing a new river crossing for through-trips, Alternative D would improve access for tourists wishing to visit the downtown Stillwater area.

Alternative D would affect the immediate setting of the Landscape District, with the new bridge and its three-level interchange becoming a major visual element in the District. Views from Lowell Park and the Wisconsin bluffs toward Stillwater would be obscured by the new bridge and associated infrastructure along the shore of the river. Both the TH 95 and Lift Bridge entries into the District would change drastically. The TH 95 entry would be marred by major infrastructure construction and road changes that would alter the experience of arrival into the

Cultural Landscape District. While the *Economic Analysis* indicated that the loss of through traffic should not affect the destination shopping activity in downtown, the loss of 28 parking spaces could exert a negative effect on downtown retailing. Downtown Stillwater is a primary component in the Cultural Landscape District and its economic vitality is important. The construction of the new bridge, with its touchdown point on the Lift Bridge causeway, changes the setting of the Lift Bridge and perceptions of bicyclers and pedestrians as they experience the Lift Bridge crossing.

Thus, Alternative D would change the perceptions of the river, of the setting of the Lift Bridge, and views across the river to both Minnesota and Wisconsin. Loss of vehicular traffic on the Lift Bridge, roadway entrance alterations and loss of parking in downtown under Alternative D would change traditional entries and have an adverse effect on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District.

The Alternative D bridge and approach roadway cross through the Hersey & Bean site (located on the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property) and have the potential to destroy portions of historic material on the site. Alternative D would have an adverse effect on the Hersey & Bean site.

If the Slab Alley property is found eligible, this site would likely suffer an adverse effect under Alternative D. (Based on site boundaries as understood at this time). Alternative D would require the taking of property, including the River Oasis Café and nearby areas, that would be affected during construction.

### **Alternative E**

The impacts of Alternative E on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District and Hersey & Bean site would be similar to those described for Alternative D, with the exception of increased traffic-related impacts in downtown Stillwater.

Alternative E could have a negative impact on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, specifically downtown Stillwater, in terms of transportation-related impacts, although not to the same degree as the No-Build Alternative. The Alternative E river crossing would divert eastbound TH 36 through-traffic out of the downtown Stillwater area, whereas westbound TH 36 through-traffic would continue to travel through downtown. This westbound traffic from Wisconsin through downtown Stillwater would contribute to congestion and pedestrian safety concerns.

Under the Section 106 preliminary assessment of effects, Alternative E would have similar effects as described above for Alternative D. Alternative E would change the perceptions of the river, of the setting of the Lift Bridge, and views across the river from both Minnesota and Wisconsin. Traffic changes on the Lift Bridge, roadway entrance alterations and loss of parking in downtown under Alternative E would have an adverse effect on the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District.

The Alternative E bridge and approach roadway cross through the Hersey & Bean site (located on the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property) and have the potential to destroy portions of historic material on the site. Alternative E would have an adverse effect on the Hersey & Bean site.

If the Slab Alley property is found eligible, this site would likely suffer an adverse effect under Alternative E. (Based on site boundaries as understood at this time). Alternative E would require the taking of property, including the River Oasis Café and nearby areas, that would be affected during construction.

### C. POTENTIAL MITIGATION ITEMS

Potential mitigation items applicable to all Build Alternatives are summarized in the introduction to the Section 4(f) evaluations and described in Chapter 14 of the SDEIS. While these mitigation items are intended to address impacts of a new river crossing, the mitigation items themselves may have potential impacts on the Cultural Landscape District. Upon identification of a Preferred Alternative, a mitigation package will be identified by the lead agencies from the list of mitigation items as well as additional mitigation items identified by agencies or the public during the SDEIS comment period. Additional potential impacts associated with the mitigation package items for the Preferred Alternative will be presented in the Supplemental Final EIS.

### III. AVOIDANCE ALTERNATIVES

All Build Alternatives avoid removal of the Lift Bridge. However, use of the Stillwater Cultural Landscape District, would result from the disposition of the Lift Bridge, a contributing element of the district, or through a river crossing alignment within the district. The Stillwater Cultural Landscape District is physically avoided by the Alternative B-1 river crossing and Alternative C river crossing because their alignments are located outside the Cultural Landscape District. However, use of the Lift Bridge, and therefore the Cultural Landscape District, would result from conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility or continued operation of the Lift Bridge for local vehicular traffic. Operation of the Lift Bridge for local vehicular use or conversion to a pedestrian/bicycle facility would require a new owner to assume responsibility for the Lift Bridge. Moreover, conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility would require minor modifications to Lowell Park to prevent vehicular use of the Lift Bridge. Thus, although Alternatives B-1 and C are physically outside of the district, Alternatives B-1 and C cannot avoid use of the Cultural Landscape District because the Lift Bridge would be removed from the state trunk highway system and either maintained for local vehicular traffic or converted to a pedestrian/bicycle facility under these two alternatives.

Alternative D cannot avoid use of the Cultural Landscape because the river crossing location is located within the district. Moreover, conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility is the only option regarding the disposition of the Lift Bridge with Alternative D. Thus, Alternative D also cannot avoid use of the Cultural Landscape District with conversion of the Lift Bridge to a pedestrian/bicycle facility.

Alternative E also cannot avoid use of the Cultural Landscape District because the river crossing location is located within the district. However, the Lift Bridge would remain on the state trunk highway system for two lanes of one-way westbound traffic with Alternative E, thereby avoiding use of the Lift Bridge.

As described in the Introduction to the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluations, a process involving recommendations from a large number of agencies and other stakeholders as part of the Stakeholder Resolution Process was conducted to determine the disposition of the Lift Bridge in relation to the requirements of Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and Section 7(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

#### IV. MEASURES TO MINIMIZE HARM

A limited number of potential mitigation items applicable to all Build Alternatives have been identified by FHWA, Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT (see Chapter 14) to address adverse effects to historic properties. This limited number does not reflect a lesser commitment to providing mitigation for these types of impacts, but rather, a less advanced discussion of mitigation. Additional mitigation measures will be identified and considered prior to determining a mitigation package for the Preferred Alternative. Public comment regarding appropriate mitigation measures for the impacts discussed in Chapter 11 is encouraged during this process.

Two mitigation items, described below and in Chapter 14, are proposed in regards to the Lift Bridge, a contributing element of the Cultural Landscape.

- **Endowment for Lift Bridge operations and maintenance:** The endowment would provide funds for purposes of operating and maintaining the Lift Bridge should ownership of the Lift Bridge be transferred to a local government or non-profit entity. This fund would be administered by the new owner upon transfer of ownership and subject to appropriate conditions determined prior to ownership transfer. This potential mitigation item would only apply to Alternatives B-1, C, and D where the Lift Bridge is removed from the trunk highway system. Under Alternative E, the Lift Bridge would remain on the trunk highway system under the ownership of Mn/DOT and Wis/DOT.
- **Development and implementation of Lift Bridge Management Plan:** The Lift Bridge Management Plan would provide guidance regarding governance, operation, maintenance, and long-term preservation strategies for the Lift Bridge. As a mitigation item, funds would be provided for consultant fees to assist in completion of the management plan. As a mitigation item, funds would be provided for consultant fees to assist in completion of the management plan; the DOTs or a new owner would be responsible for implementation of the plan.

The Hersey & Bean site (located on the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property), as stated for Alternatives B-1 and C (see Section II), could potentially be used as a construction staging area. Detailed construction staging plans will be developed with the selection of a Preferred Alternative. If Alternative B-1 or Alternative C is selected as the Preferred Alternative, and it is

determined that the Hersey & Bean site would be used for construction staging, historic features of the archaeological site would be protected through the use of fences or other means of minimizing potential impacts. The Hersey & Bean site could also be impacted with the development of the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property as a municipal park, a potential mitigation item. If this plan to develop the site into a park is included as part of the mitigation package with the identification of a Preferred Alternative and development proceeds, the park plans should be reviewed by Mn/DOT CRU and SHPO for any potential effects to the archaeological resources (or effects to the Cultural Landscape District).

The Hersey & Bean site (located on the Stillwater Municipal Barge Facility property), as stated for Alternatives D and E (see Section II), would be adversely effected through construction of either of these two alternatives. These impacts from Alternatives D and E are being reviewed under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and are discussed in Chapter 11 of the SDEIS.

## **V. COORDINATION**

Extensive agency coordination has occurred throughout the SDEIS process, as described in the Introduction to the Draft Section 4(f) Evaluations. Coordination related to discussion of impacts and proposed mitigation items has occurred with federal, state, and local government agencies and non-governmental groups as part of the Stakeholder Resolution Process. In addition, agency coordination is underway to develop a Section 106 Amended (or new) Memorandum of Agreement. To date, no agreement has been reached.