

**MNDOT HISTORIC ROADSIDE DEVELOPMENT  
STRUCTURES INVENTORY**

AN-RMC-008  
CS 0202  
Daytonport Roadside Parking Area

<b>Historic Name</b>	Daytonport Roadside Parking Area	<b>CS #</b>	0202
<b>Other Name</b>	Itasca Wayside	<b>SHPO Inv #</b>	AN-RMC-008
<b>Location</b>	SW side of TH 10/TH 169 2 mi NW of Co Rd 83	<b>Hwy District Reference</b>	TH 10/169 Met W 219
<b>City/Township</b>	Ramsey, City of	<b>Acres</b>	16.5
<b>County</b>	Anoka	<b>Rest Area Class</b>	1
<b>Twp Rng Sec</b>	32N 25W Sec 19	<b>SP #</b>	0202-41
<b>USGS Quad</b>	Rogers	<b>SHPO Review #</b>	95-3525
<b>UTM</b>	Z15 E460440 N5010090	<b>MHS Photo #</b>	013505.11-22
<b>Designer</b>	Toltz King Duvall Anderson Assoc	<b>MnDOT Historic Photo Album</b>	
<b>Builder</b>	Minn Dept of Highways (MHD)		
<b>Historic Use</b>	Roadside Parking Area		
<b>Present Use</b>	Roadside Parking Area		
<b>Yr of Landscape Design</b>	Ca. 1940		
<b>Overall Site Integrity</b>	Very Altered		
<b>Review Required</b>	Yes		
<b>National Register Status</b>	Not Eligible, see Statement of Significance		
<b>Historic Context</b>			

**List of Standing Structures**

Feat#	Feature Type	Year Built	Fieldwork Date
01	Fireplace(s), Stone	1969	10-29-96
02	Drinking Fountain(s)	1969	
03	Picnic Table(s), Other	1969	
04	Marker	Ca. 1969	
05	Picnic Table(s), Other	Ca. 1985	
06	Picnic Shelter(s)	1995	
07	Restroom Bldg	1995	
08	Marker	1995	
Continued			
			<b>Prep by</b> Gemini Research Dec. 98 G1. 17
			<b>Prep for</b> Site Development Unit Cultural Resources Unit Environmental Studies Unit

<b>Final Report</b>	Historic Roadside Development Structures on Minnesota Trunk Highways (1998)
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**Continue Table of Site Structures**

<b>Feat#</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Year Built</b>	
09	Flagpole(s), Other	1995	
10	Other Feature	Ca. 1850	

NOTE: Landscape features are not listed in this table

■ BRIEF

The Daytonport Roadside Parking Area, also known as the Itasca Wayside and as Weigh Station Highway Park, is a 16.5-acre site located on the southwestern side of T.H. 10/T.H. 169 about two miles northwest of Co. Rd. 83 in the city of Ramsey near the Anoka-Sherburne county line. It is located in a wooded area on the eastern bank of the Mississippi River.

■ STANDING STRUCTURES

**Picnic Fireplaces.** Erected 1969 by the MHD. Designed by TKDA. The site has approximately seven low, rectangular picnic fireplaces made of brick and tan rockfaced limestone. Each is about 4' square and 18" high.

**Drinking Fountains.** Erected 1969 by the MHD. Designed by TKDA. The site has two concrete block drinking fountains that are about 3'3" tall and stand on concrete pads that are about 4' square. At least one other drinking fountain was removed in 1995.

**Circular Concrete Picnic Tables.** Erected 1969 by the MHD. Designed by TKDA. The site has eight circular, precast, concrete picnic tables with curved benches. Their overall diameter is about 11'. The tables are scattered in the picnic area that is accessed by the circular drive.

**Metal Marker.** Erected circa 1967-1972 by the Anoka County Historical Society in cooperation with the Minnesota Historical Society and the highway department. This black metal marker with gold lettering is located east of the restroom building. The text addresses the founding of a townsite named Itasca that was located on this site. (See text at the end of this document.) This marker replaces a previous metal marker that was erected in 1966. It was replaced because the text was revised.

**Rectangular Concrete Picnic Tables.** Erected circa 1985 by Mn/DOT. The site has two permanent, rectangular concrete and wooden picnic table sets.

**Picnic Shelters.** Erected 1995 by Mn/DOT. At the western edge of the site near the bank of the Mississippi are two recent picnic shelters. They are mildly Prairie Style with hipped roofs supported by brick piers. Within each are two rectangular concrete picnic tables. The new shelters are located near the site of previous picnic shelters built in 1969.

**Restroom Building.** Erected 1995 by Mn/DOT. The principal feature on the site is a large concrete block restroom building with a hipped and gabled roof. It stands on the northern side of the circular drive, and replaces the rest area's previous restroom building, which was located several feet to the northeast.

**Great River Road Marker.** Erected 1995. A rectangular metal marker is located at the western end of the sidewalk in front of the restroom building. The text of the marker addresses the geological history of the area. (See text at the end of this document.)

**Oxcart Trail Remnant.** Circa 1850s. Southwest of the restroom building is the remnant of an oxcart trail (AN-RMC-007) that was part of the so-called "Red River Trails," a system of 19th century trails that generally ran between St. Paul and Pembina in the northwestern

corner of the state. It is a grass-covered, slightly-depressed line that runs from northwest to southeast through the western and southern portions of the rest area.

#### ■ OTHER LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND PLANTINGS

Daytonport Roadside Parking Area is an irregularly-shaped site located on the southwestern side of T.H. 10/T.H. 169. An asphalt-paved, curb-lined road enters the site from the north and travels first through an asphalt-paved, curb-lined parking area. Adjacent to this parking area are modern light posts, a propane tank within a chain-link fence, and a telephone booth. The drive then travels south to a second, southern asphalt-paved, curb-lined parking area in front of the restroom building. The drive continues to circle westward through the site's picnic area. At the center of the circular drive is a large, open grassy lawn.

In front of the restroom building are an asphalt-paved parking area and a concrete sidewalk, flagpoles, and three modern light poles. The site also contains several modern portable picnic tables.

The property has gentle hills, grassy lawns, and mature deciduous trees. There is an oval group of bushes north of the northern parking lot. There are evergreens planted along the T.H. 10/T.H. 169 shoulder east of the site. Mn/DOT planted replacement plantings such as spruce, poplar, maple, ash, linden, and various shrubs in 1976-1978.

No original planting plan has been located.

#### ■ SETTING

The site is located in a hilly, wooded setting on the eastern bank of the Mississippi. (The rest area has 350' of river frontage.) There are fairly thick woods to the north, west, and south of the site. T.H. 10/T.H. 169 is located east of the site and private residential properties are located to the north, south, and west. In the T.H. 10/T.H. 169 median east of the site is a highway weigh station.

#### ■ INTEGRITY

##### **Alterations**

The metal marker was replaced circa 1967-1972 when the text was revised. The rest area received major improvements in 1969 and in 1995 (see Historical Background below.) Plantings were replaced in 1978.

In general, the site's integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association have been impaired by the 1969 and 1995 alterations which transformed the site from a rustic, unpaved wayside rest into a site that more resembles a modern rest area with expanses of asphalt paving and poured concrete. The site retains integrity of location and setting.

##### **Notes on Condition**

The picnic fireplaces need repair. They are missing brick and stone and have been poorly remortared. The site is otherwise in good condition.

■ **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

In 1939, the Roadside Development Division improved a 6.9-mile stretch of T.H. 10 past this site (S.P. 0202-07). At that time, there was a small highway weigh station in the T.H. 10 median, but no rest area at this site.

A roadside parking area was apparently developed here sometime before 1961. It may have been built in the 1940s, either just before or just after World War II. Neither the Nichols nor Olson historic photo albums include this site. A 1961 highway department document indicates that in 1961 this site had an entrance marker, approach marker, parking area, drinking water, 12 tables, eight fireplaces, six garbage cans, two council rings, and two toilets ("Roadside Development" 1961). The loop drive dates from the original site design.

The MHD improved the rest area in 1969 (S.P. 0202-14) as part of a large statewide rest area improvement project that was funded in part by Federal Highway Beautification funds. The project was designed by Toltz, King, Duvall, Anderson, and Assoc. of St. Paul. The 1969 work included adding a 35' by 35' restroom building with flush toilets, a brick-faced drinking fountain and a bench in front of the building, and precast concrete picnic tables. Privies were removed, a masonry fireplace was repaired, the gravel parking areas and loop drive were paved with asphalt, and the entrance was moved 600' to the northwest along T.H. 10/T.H. 169. The improved rest area was opened to the public in June 1970. Replacement plantings and fencing were installed in 1976-1978.

In 1995, the rest area was improved again (S.P. 0202-75). A new restroom building, two picnic shelters, flagpoles, and the Great River Road marker were constructed. Other improvements included the repaving of the parking areas and drives.

The site has apparently been called the Itasca Wayside and the Weigh Station Highway Park at some time in the past.

■ **PREVIOUS SHPO REVIEWS**

In 1995, a Section 106 review was conducted in preparation for new construction at the rest area (SHPO Rev. 95-3525). In a letter to J. Hudak dated Sept. 5, 1995, the Minnesota Historical Society concluded that NO properties eligible for the National Register were located within the project's Area of Potential Effect (Gimmestad 1995). The documents that chronicle this Section 106 review contain several items of correspondence between Mn/DOT and SHPO staff and various reports.

■ **STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Daytonport R.P.A. is a wayside rest with a complex site design. This property has been evaluated within the historic context "Roadside Development on Minnesota Trunk Highways, 1920-1960." It is recommended that the property is NOT ELIGIBLE for the National Register under this historic context due to loss of integrity. The National Register eligibility of the oxcart trail remnant was apparently not clarified in a 1995 cultural resource review of the rest area. Instead, the construction limits of the planned improvements were altered to avoid the trail remnant (see Previous SHPO Reviews above). Further archaeological evaluation may

be necessary to determine the National Register eligibility of the trail segment in the event of future construction activity in the vicinity.

■ OTHER COMMENTS

T.H. 10/T.H. 169 is a busy divided highway past this site. However, the rest area is situated so that its major areas of activity are far enough away from the highway that the noise and movement of the traffic are not intrusive.

This portion of T.H. 10/T.H. 169 has been designated part of the Great River Road.

The text of the Itasca Village marker is specifically associated with this site and mentions a trading post "800 feet east of here." The text of the Great River Road marker is not specifically associated with the site of the wayside rest.

It is recommended that the text of the Itasca Village marker be updated for cultural sensitivity.

■ REFERENCES

Atwood, George H. "The Old Village of Itasca." Unpublished manuscript. Anoka County Historical Society, April 1963.

"Daytonport Rest Area." Department of Transportation Project Development Report and Location/Design Study Report. December 3, 1976.

Gilman, Rhoda R. and Patricia Smith. "Oliver Hudson Kelley: Minnesota Pioneer, 1849-1868." *Minnesota History*, Fall 1967.

Long, Barbara Beving. Minnesota History/Architecture Survey Form for Daytonport Safety Rest Area. July 1995.

"Roadside Development Projects." Minnesota Department of Highways. Dec. 31, 1961. Mn/DOT Site Development Unit Files.

Roberts, Timothy E. "Daytonport Safety Rest Area on T.H. 10 Anoka County: Cultural Resource Investigation." Prepared for Mn/DOT by Rivercrest Associates. July 1995.

"Seattleites Help Dedicate Rest Area." *Elk River Star News*, June 18, 1970.

Site plans. Minnesota Department of Highways. 1969.

Stockhausen, Sharron. "Anoka County History: Itasca -- The First Settlement In Area." *Anoka County Union*, Jan. 13, 1995.

■ **ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND MARKER TEXTS**

**Early History of the Site**

In the mid-19th century, a Winnebago village was located about one-half mile down river from this site. In 1849, a trading post was built near the current rest area site by T. A. Holmes and James Beatty, who traded with the Winnebago.

The trading post was located along one of the Red River Oxcart Trails, which linked St. Paul with Pembina, North Dakota. This trail system was an important overland route to move fur pelts from Canada and northern Minnesota to St. Paul, and trade goods the opposite direction. In July 1855, approximately 300 oxcarts passed through this spot on their way to St. Anthony and St. Paul (Atwood 1963). Subsequent wagon roads and railroads were established along portions of the Red River Trail system. For example, Minnesota's first government road, constructed from St. Paul to Fort Ripley (north of Little Falls on the Mississippi) in 1852, passed through this site.

The townsite of Itasca was platted on the rest area site in 1852. It competed for trade with the thriving village of Dayton, which was located on the western bank of the river and was linked to Itasca by ferry. Governor Ramsey, one of the Itasca townsite proprietors, named the community in honor of Lake Itasca. A brief attempt was made to move the capital from St. Paul to Itasca, but the effort failed when the issue was defeated in the legislature. Oliver Hudson Kelley, founder of the National Grange, was also instrumental in attempting to develop the town. Convinced that Itasca would become a thriving port city, Kelley homesteaded land just to the north. (Site of the current Oliver Kelly Farm, an MHS historic site.) The Itasca townsite had several commercial buildings and residences by 1865, when Kelley noted (with some exaggeration) that there were "a thousand houses, an immense military depot, and hundreds of boats lying at the levee" (Gilman and Smith 1967:332).

Itasca's prosperity began to decline in 1856 when the Winnebago were moved to a reservation on the Blue Earth River in southern Minnesota. Businesses lost competition to Dayton and began to close in the early 1860s. The railroad arrived in 1864 (the depot was located across T.H. 10/T.H. 169 northeast of the current rest area) but did not reverse the decline. In 1879, the Itasca Post Office, the town's last sign of life, was closed.

**Text of Metal Marker**

"Itasca Village Townsite"

"Itasca grew up around an Indian trading post which was established 800 feet east of here in 1849 by Thomas A. Holmes and James Beatty. At the suggestion of Territorial Governor Alexander Ramsey, the settlement was named in honor of Lake Itasca, the source of the Mississippi River. In 1852 a substantial hotel was built, the village was platted, and Itasca boasted the first post office in present Anoka County. There was even an unsuccessful attempt to locate the territorial capital here.

"Itasca was a stopping place on the heavily traveled Red River Oxcart Trail between Pembina, North Dakota, and the steamboat landing in St. Paul. In 1857 cargoes of fur, buffalo robes, and meat valued at \$120,000 arrived at St. Paul, and in 1858 more than 600 carts plied the trade. Traces of the old trail can be seen a few feet west of this marker.

"The village's prosperity began to wane in 1856, when the removal of the roving Winnebago Indians from the Long Prairie Reservation took away the mainstay of local trade. The merchants began to leave, and by the early 1860s the town was virtually deserted.

"Itasca remained a post office until 1879, and it was the first mailing address of the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, better known as the National Grange. This farm organization was founded by Oliver H. Kelley, who opened a Grange office in his home near here in 1868. For two years he mailed through the Itasca post office vast amounts of literature encouraging farmers to join the Grange."

"Erected by the Anoka County Historical Society 1966 [sic]" [Minnesota Historical Society seal and Minnesota Department of Highways seal]

**Text of Great River Road Marker**

At the top of the sign is written "Great River Road Minnesota" with a steamboat symbol.

"Ice Age Souvenir. 20,000 years ago, a great sheet of ice, the Superior lobe, covered this area. At its farthest advance, it formed the St. Croix moraine, a series of high hills to the west, south, and east. When it melted it left behind vast deposits of gravel, sand and clay.

"The Anoka Sand Plain. After the Superior lobe retreated, another glacier, the Grantsburg sublobe, moved in from the southwest filling the lowlands with ice. Again the climate warmed, melting the ice and creating a lake that covered most of Anoka County -- including this spot. Fine sand, carried in the melt water, settled to the bottom. The lake disappeared when its water found an outlet into the Mississippi River, leaving the Anoka sand plain an expanse of sand measuring 22,000 square kilometers (850 square miles).

"Dunes and Bogs. Beginning about 8,000 years ago, drier weather and wind formed sand dunes in some areas of the Anoka plain. Dunes often rise 9 meters (30 feet) or more above the surrounding land. Meanwhile low-lying areas of the glacial lake basin are gradually filling up with organic matter and evolving into bogs." There are two maps on this side of the marker.

On the other side of the marker is an illustration of a melting glacier and a caption that reads:

"Kettle Lake and Outwash Plains. As the glaciers retreated they left behind huge blocks of ice buried by gravel, sand and clay. When the blocks melted, they left depressions known as kettles. Melting ice created thousands of kettle lakes in Minnesota. In many places melting glaciers also deposited 'outwash' plains of sand."