

# **APPENDIX A**

## **Public Participation**

- Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
- Public Outreach Meeting Summaries
- Comments on Alternatives
  - City of Nicollet
  - City of Courtland
- Communications
  - Press Release
  - Fact Sheet
  - Newsletter

# **APPENDIX A**

## **Public Participation**

### **Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

- February 11, 2002
- September 5, 2002
- February 10, 2003
- March 10, 2003



# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
February 11, 2002  
2:00 to 4:00 PM  
Courtland Community Center

<b>ATTENDEES</b>	Blue Earth County	Alan Forsberg
	Blue Earth County	Colleen Landkamer
	Brown County	Charles Guggisberg
	Brown County	Andrew Lockner
	Brown County	Wayne Stevens
	Nicollet County	Mandy Landkamer
	Nicollet County	Tina Rosenstein
	Nicollet County	Mike Wagner
	Courtland	Bob Schabert
	Courtland/Nicollet	Dan Wietecha
	Courtland Township	Florence Arbes
	Mankato	Ken Saffert
	New Ulm	Joel Albrecht
	New Ulm	Steve Koehler
	Nicollet Township	John Prosch
	Region 9 Dev. Comm.	Wes Judkins
	Mn DNR	Victoria Poage
	MPCA	Jim Seaberg
	MN State U - Mankato	Perry Wood
	Mn/DOT District 7	Mark Scheidel
	Howard R. Green Co.	Howard Preston
	Howard R. Green Co.	Biz Colburn
	Howard R. Green Co.	Lynn Kiesow
	Howard R. Green Co.	Scott Reed

## INTRODUCTIONS

Mark Scheidel welcomed everyone to the Advisory Committee kick-off meeting, and introductions were made.

Dick Bautch discussed the interregional corridor (IRC) development process. He said the IRC process was initiated through Moving Minnesota. The purpose of an IRC study is to identify a Vision for the corridor. He added the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) had ultimate control over improvements to the corridor, but no control of development and improvements outside of the corridor right-of-way. He noted Mn/DOT and local entities needed to work together on IRC studies to develop good land use planning and consistent roadway networks.

Joel Albrecht noted the termini of the study is at TH 14/15 outside of New Ulm. He asked if the study would help in determining the City's needs. He said New Ulm has developed all land within the City boundaries, and annexation is currently being discussed. He asked if this study would indicate if a bypass of New Ulm was needed, and if so on which side of town would the development occur. Knowing the answer would assist the City in land development plans. It was noted that this study would not provide the City with a transportation plan for their planning.





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
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## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Howard Preston said the Advisory Committee was made up of political and technical representatives from the cities, counties, and townships along the TH 14 Corridor. He said the role of the committee was to provide input during the study process and act as a communication link to their constituencies. He added the public would also have two opportunities to obtain information and give input during the study process through the Public Information Open Houses scheduled for April 2002 and February 2003.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Howard Preston described the TH 14 Corridor as a medium priority interregional corridor connecting New Ulm and Mankato, both secondary trade centers, with a performance goal of 55 miles per hour or better. Mn/DOT has rated the current performance of this corridor at or above target and the future performance as below target with moderate signal risk. He said the purpose of the interregional corridor system was to move traffic while considering safety.

Joel Albrecht asked how Mankato and New Ulm were determined to be secondary trade centers, and how that definition affected funding priorities. In response, Dick Bautch said funding was based upon the performance of the corridor. He said primary trade centers were defined as locations currently meeting MPO status.

Alan Forsberg said Mankato would be reviewed after the census to determine if trade center status has changed. Dick Bautch added that the entire system would be reviewed in 2003 to determine any changes to trade centers and corridor priorities.

Howard Preston said Mn/DOT recommended dividing the corridor into segments to give guidance to the level of access and to allow some measure for expected crash rates. Crash rates are different in urbanized and rural areas. Access is defined as all private and public driveways and public roadways. He discussed the existing speeds throughout the corridor, noting speed reductions in Nicollet and Courtland affected the Mn/DOT performance goal of 55 miles per hour for a medium priority IRC. A traffic volume map was also presented showing 2000 volume counts and 2025 projected volumes created by using linear regression of historical counts.

Howard Preston discussed crash data collected along the corridor. He said two segments, TH 15/CSAH 21 to CSAH 37 and CSAH 37 to CSAH 12 were operating above the expected crash rate, but below the critical rate. Crash rates were also collected for select intersections on the corridor. He said three intersections, TH 15/CSAH 21, CSAH 37, and TH 111/CSAH 23 were both above the expected crash rate and the critical rate. He said these intersections would be studied in more detail.

## **MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS**

Howard Preston presented the concept of level of service (LOS) for a roadway. He said the LOS C/D boundary would be used as the index of congestion for the 14 West IRC. LOS will be quantified by geometry, volumes, and percentage of no passing zones in rural sections.





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
February 11, 2002  
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## **ORIGIN-DESTINATION STUDY**

Howard Preston said an important part of this study was to determine if cities along the corridor should be bypassed. An origin-destination (O-D) study will be done for the 14 West IRC in early May when the days are longer and school is still in session. An O-D study is a snapshot in time. A map was presented with three locations where O-D information will be collected. A firm from Texas will be using cameras to take pictures of license plates at the selected locations. The photos will be compared to determine if the vehicle destination was to or through a city.

Alan Forsberg said TH 68 acts as a pair to TH 14, and improvements may attract traffic. He recommended adding a data collection point on TH 68.

Joel Albrecht said the City of New Ulm was in the process of annexation, and they needed to determine which direction to focus growth. He would be interested in the cost to add data points to determine if a bypass of New Ulm is necessary and if so, where the best location is for the bypass.

It became clear from the input of the committee that the New Ulm bypass question was more important than originally thought-for this project and for other reasons. Mark Scheidel said Mn/DOT would consider adding data collection points at TH 15 and TH 68. Additional funding will have to be identified and some of the partners expressed interest in this regard.

## **LAND USE PLANS**

Mark Scheidel initiated discussion of land use issues along the corridor. Development of the 14 West IRC Corridor Management Plan will involve access management, which will have effects on land use decisions. Scheidel noted transportation and land use decisions should be made in tandem; transportation decisions should not drive land use decisions, and land use decisions should not drive transportation decisions. Scheidel said that Nicollet County has developed a land use model that effectively manages uncontrolled subdivision development.

Tina Rosenstein indicated since 1981, Nicollet County has not allowed any subdivision development outside of city boundaries; if a subdivision is proposed in rural areas near a city, it would only be approved if the city annexed the subdivision area. This would require the city to provide the necessary infrastructure to properly support the subdivision. In this manner, Nicollet County had preserved much of its agricultural land.

## **IDENTIFY CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION ISSUES**

Howard Preston presented a map showing issues previously identified along the corridor. He asked the Committee for additional concerns.

Alan Forsberg said a connection of TH 14, TH 68 and, TH 60 was being considered on the West side of Mankato.

Mike Wagner noted the difficulty with wetlands in realigning the corridor. He said there is a need for a four-lane corridor to New Ulm. He added New Ulm was the largest City in Minnesota not being served by a four-lane facility. Over 800 trucks are currently based in New Ulm therefore he suggested documenting truck O-D in the study. Another issue is the DM&E switching in New Ulm.





## 14 West IRC

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Alan Forsberg said that roadway improvements are an economic development tool in rural areas. People in the area want development to take place outside of the metro area. He is hopeful that development may be attracted to TH 14 when improvements are made.

### NEXT MEETINGS

A **Public Information Open House** is scheduled for:

**April 23, 2002 – *Re-Scheduled for May 21, 2002***

**4:30 – 7:00 PM**

**Courtland Community Center**

The next Advisory Committee meeting will be scheduled in September 2002. A meeting notice will notify the Advisory Committee of the date, time, and place.





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
September 5, 2002  
1:30 to 3:30 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

<b>ATTENDEES</b> Blue Earth County	Alan Forsberg, County Engineer
Brown County	Colleen Landkamer, County Commissioner
Nicollet County	Charles Guggisberg, County Commissioner
	Wayne Stevens, County Engineer
	Judy Hanson, County Commissioner
	Tina Rosenstein, Environmental Serv. Dir.
	Mike Wagner, County Engineer
Courtland	Bob Schabert, Mayor
Courtland/Nicollet	Dan Wietecha, City Administrator
Mankato	Ken Saffert City Engineer
New Ulm	Joel Albrecht, City Council
	Steve Koehler, City Engineer
Nicollet	R. Mark Blais, Mayor
Nicollet Township	John Prosch, Supervisor
Region 9 Dev. Comm.	Wes Judkins, Planning Director
MPCA	Jack Fitsimmons, TAC Chair
MN State U - Mankato	Jim Seaberg, Transportation Planning
Mn/DOT District 7	Perry Wood, Professor/Planner
	Mark Scheidel, Project Manager
	Rebecca Arndt, Public Affairs
	Matt Schellhammer, Intern
Howard R. Green Co.	Howard Preston
.	Biz Colburn
	Lynn Kiesow

## INTRODUCTIONS

Mark Scheidel welcomed everyone and Advisory Committee members introduced themselves.

Howard Preston reviewed the schedule for the project. Currently, the Corridor Management Plan (CMP) is being developed. Consideration is being given to moving the Scoping process up earlier than planned because the project is ahead of schedule in identifying needs and developing alternatives. Mr. Preston said the purpose of Scoping is to determine if there is a need for the project, identify a universe of alternatives to address the needs, and identify the most important environmental issues to be studied in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The Project Team has determined that there is a need and is in the process of identifying and evaluating the alternatives.

## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE – MAY 21, 2002

Over 100 people attended the Public Information Open House held on May 21, 2002 at the Courtland Community Center. Biz Colburn presented the summary of written, verbal, and map comments from the public meeting. The key issues identified were:

- Bypasses of Courtland and Nicollet, with preference for a south bypass of Nicollet and north bypass of Courtland
- A four-lane roadway is preferred for mobility and safety reasons.
- Add passing zones for safety and mobility reasons





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
September 5, 2002  
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- Increased truck traffic along the roadway raise concerns about safety because the trucks travel too fast and it is difficult to cross the highway.
- Fix the intersection of TH 14/TH 15.
- Sense of urgency to move forward with the 14 West IRC as soon as possible.

Nicollet County and the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet are working together to plan for the future of their communities. Once a plan of action is developed, the two cities and county will work together to preserve right-of-way for the preferred alternative.

## **Trucking Companies Questionnaire for TH 14**

Mark Scheidel said that additional public comment came from area trucking companies as a result of the TH 14 Trucking Companies Questionnaire completed by the Region 9 Development Commission.

Wes Judkins, Planning Director of the Region 9 Development Commission, summarized the results of the survey. There were ten trucking companies that responded to the questionnaire. These are just the trucking companies along the corridor, not all companies that use trucks on TH 14. Six of the ten trucking companies were from New Ulm, one from Waseca, two from Mankato and one from North Mankato. These ten companies account for about 120 trips per day on TH 14 and these trips are spread throughout the day and throughout the week. Other than TH 14, these trucking companies typically use TH 15, TH 99, TH 13, I-35, TH 169, and TH 22. Truckers said there were bottlenecks along the whole TH 14 corridor from Mankato to New Ulm. Safety and lack of passing zones were the key issues.

Howard Preston noted that none of the trucking companies indicated use of TH 68 for their trips.

This segment of TH 14 has 20% heavy trucks using the roadway, compared to the statewide average for similar type roadways of 7%-8%.

## **IDENTIFICATION OF DEFICIENCIES**

Howard Preston reviewed the summary of deficiencies along the TH 14 Corridor. Level-of-service is a function of the roadway section, traffic volumes, terrain, and percentage of no passing. The LOS C-D boundary was selected as the goal for this corridor. Currently, two segments do not meet this goal and in the year 2025, all segments would be deficient.

Evaluation of safety included comparing the existing crash rate with the critical rate along the segments and at intersections. Currently, no segments are above the critical rate, but the severity rate between TH 15 and CH 37 is above the statewide average. Three segments experienced a higher percentage of passing related crashes than the Mn/DOT state average, but all these segments have limited no passing, therefore motorists are passing in areas where passing is allowed.

The three intersections that have a higher than expected crash rate and a higher than expected severity rate are the TH 14 intersections with TH 15/CH 21, CH 37, and TH 111/CH 23. Transportation System Management (TSM) strategies would be recommended at these locations to improve safety before funding could be obtained for complete reconstruction of the corridor.





Current and future mobility was measured against Mn/DOT's mobility goal of 55 mph for medium priority interregional corridors. Currently, four segments do not meet this threshold. By the year 2025, seven of the eight segments would be deficient.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES**

Howard Preston said that both location alternatives and design alternatives have been developed to address the deficiencies in the corridor. The development of alternatives process includes: the identification of deficiencies, public and agency input to identify opportunities and constraints, avoidance of known environmental resources, consistency with local land use plans, and consistency with Mn/DOT guidelines.

### **Location Alternatives**

The location alternatives have been developed with public input at the Public Information Open House. In addition, Mn/DOT Project Manager Mark Scheidel has worked with the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet to determine the alternatives most consistent with local land use and development plans.

Six segments are used to define the alternatives. Input at the Public Meeting suggested using TH 68 as a south bypass for TH 14, therefore it is included as a south bypass for all of the segments. Reconstruction on present alignment is also being considered for all segments. Mr. Preston reviewed the alternatives as illustrated on aerial mapping. He focused on the location of bypass alternatives for Courtland and Nicollet, as follows:

#### Courtland

Mr. Preston said that a realignment of TH 14 should be designed so as not to promote two downtowns or to divide the residential area from the commercial/retail area. The City of Courtland location alternatives include two south bypasses, the existing alignment, and three north bypasses. The north bypasses include the near town option as indicated in the Courtland comprehensive plan, one further out of town, and one using CH 21. Although a north bypass is more likely, a south bypass is included to contrast the impacts. One south bypass is located near town and the other that was suggested at the public meeting is to use TH 68.

Mark Scheidel noted that there are lots subdivided but not platted adjacent to, and on the bluff side of TH 14 just east of the TH14/CH 37 intersection.

#### Nicollet

The City of Nicollet location alternatives include three south bypasses, the existing alignment, and one north bypass. The south bypasses include one option adjacent to the industrial development, one further south and south of the sewage ponds, and TH 68. A north bypass is included to contrast the impacts.

#### TH 14/15/CH 21

A figure showing a TSM solution and four realignment alternatives was presented for this intersection.





## Design Alternatives

The design alternatives include the No-Build, Transportation System Management (TSM), a two-lane design on either existing or new alignment, and a four-lane design on either existing or new alignment.

**ACTION:** The Advisory Committee was asked to review the location alternatives and report their comments to Mark Scheidel. Particularly, the mayors can apply their local knowledge to locating the alternatives to be compatible with land use plans.

Howard Preston said a realignment of TH 14 is an opportunity for interagency agreements promoting protective zoning and access management to prevent future congestion on a new bypass.

Mike Wagner, Nicollet County Engineer, said that CH 37 serves as a TH 15 bypass and asked about the high number of crashes at the CH 37 intersection. Howard Preston said the crash patterns are difficult to understand at this intersection.

In response to Joel Albrecht on the location of a future bypass of New Ulm, Howard Preston suggested that the City of New Ulm review their land use plan and determine the best placement of a bypass of New Ulm. This would be an opportunity for the city and county to preserve right-of-way for a future realignment of TH 14.

## ORIGIN-DESTINATION STUDY UPDATE

Lynn Kiesow reported on the status of the Origin-Destination Study. The O-D survey took place on Wednesday, August 14, 2002 from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM, as planned. The survey data was collected at seven stations using video cameras to capture license plates of vehicles passing by each station. In addition, traffic counts were taken at each station to verify the 2000 average daily traffic counts. The results of the study are expected to be available in October.

Mark Scheidel said that Mn/DOT listened and added the four additional stations requested by the Advisory Committee at their first meeting.

The Advisory Committee thanked Mn/DOT for expanding the O-D Study to include the additional stations.

Mike Wagner asked if interim measures have been developed for the TH 14/CH 37 intersection.

Howard Preston said that this is a very difficult intersection. Interim Strategies at Key Locations will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

Mr. Preston has completed a study for the University of Minnesota on *Reducing Crashes at Rural Through/Stop Controlled Intersections*. The research objective was to identify effective new mitigation strategies based on addressing the root causes of rural intersection crashes. Some of the potential mitigation strategies were to install streetlights, make the Stop signs more conspicuous, and move the Stop signs closer to a driver's line of sight. Mr. Preston said choosing the right gap to enter a roadway is a learned response.





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting Summary  
September 5, 2002  
1:30 to 3:30 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Biz Colburn reviewed the Goals and Objectives for the 14 West IRC project. There are four goals to address the deficiencies in the corridor: Safety and Mobility, Environmental, Social, and Economic.

The Advisory Committee suggested that the safety and mobility goals should be separate to reflect the importance of each. **ACTION:** HRG will separate the two goals.

## PURPOSE AND NEED

Biz Colburn presented the Purpose and Need for the 14 West IRC project.

A purpose statement will be incorporated at the beginning of this section, to read:

*The purpose of the TH 14 West IRC project is to address present and future safety, operations, and geometric deficiencies along this 22-mile segment of TH 14, consistent with community and public expectations.*

The Advisory Committee suggested adding a need: To maintain year round 10-ton status of the roadway.

## EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

Howard Preston described the matrix that would be used to evaluate the various alternatives. He explained the segments used to define the alternatives include the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet, and the rural segments between them and connecting to the project termini. The alternatives were given letters consistent across segments: Alternative A=No-Build, Alternative B = TSM, Alternative C=two-lane design, Alternative D=four-lane design, and the variations are the location alternatives.

Mr. Preston said for the next meeting the matrix will be completed to help evaluate the alternatives that best meet the purpose and need for the project. The technical analysis already indicates that a two-lane facility will not meet the mobility objectives in the future. The technical data supports a four-lane facility for addressing both the mobility and safety needs.

## NEXT MEETINGS

### Advisory Committee – February 2003

The purpose of the next Advisory Committee meeting is to present the analysis of the O-D Study, present interim mitigation measures, and to prepare for the Public Information Open House.

Meeting notices will be sent to notify the Advisory Committee of the date, time, and place for all meetings.

### Public Information Open House – March 2003





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting #3 Summary  
February 10, 2003  
3:00 to 5:15 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

## ATTENDEES

Brown County	Charles Guggisberg, County Commissioner
	Wayne Stevens, County Engineer
Nicollet County	Paul Engel, County Commissioner
	Tina Rosenstein, Environmental Serv. Dir.
	Mike Wagner, County Engineer
	Mandy Landkamer, Deputy Zoning
Courtland	Bob Schabert, Mayor
Courtland/Nicollet	Dan Wietecha, City Administrator
Courtland Township	Florence Arbes, Supervisor
Mankato	Ken Saffert City Engineer
New Ulm	Joel Albrecht, Mayor
	Steve Koehler, City Engineer
Nicollet	R. Mark Blais, Mayor
Nicollet Township	John Prosch, Supervisor
North Mankato	Wendell Sande, City Administrator
Region 9 Dev. Comm.	Wes Judkins, Planning Director
MPCA	Jim Seaberg, Transportation Planning
Mn/DOT District 7	Mark Scheidel, Project Manager
	Doug Haeder, ADE-State Aid, Planning
	Rebecca Arndt, Public Affairs
	Mary Dieken, Graduate Engineer
Howard R. Green Co.	Howard Preston
	Biz Colburn
	Kevin Pape

## INTRODUCTIONS

Mark Scheidel welcomed everyone saying there are a few changes in membership on the Advisory Committee since the November elections. Advisory Committee members introduced themselves.

Howard Preston said the purpose of today's meeting is to learn about the results of the Origin-Destination Study, review the Draft Corridor Management Plan, comment on the revised schedule to complete the project six months early, and to set the dates for the next Advisory Committee meeting and the Scoping Hearings.

## ORIGIN-DESTINATION STUDY REPORT

Kevin Pape said that the Origin-Destination Study was conducted to better understand travel patterns in the 14 West Interregional Corridor and to determine if there is a need for a bypass of any or all of the cities in the corridor. High tech video cameras were used to record license plates passing by the seven stations on August 14, 2002 from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. A total of 25,694 license plate records were recorded, with an 88% capture rate resulting in a high level of confidence in the results of the study.

It was learned that 80% of the trips had an origin or destination in the City of New Ulm, therefore a bypass of New Ulm would not divert enough trips around New Ulm and would not be justified.





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting #3 Summary  
February 10, 2003  
3:00 to 5:15 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

Approximately 50% of the vehicles passed through the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet indicating that a bypass of each community would be feasible. It was learned that the majority of the TH 14 vehicles traveling through New Ulm stayed on TH 14 rather than turning onto TH 15. Likewise, vehicles on TH 15 tended to stay on TH 15 from one side of the city to the other by using the TH 14/CSAH 37 Minnesota River crossing.

An Executive Summary of the O-D Study results with a map of the stations on the back was distributed to the Advisory Committee.

## **DRAFT CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW**

Howard Preston presented an overview of the Draft Corridor Management Plan (CMP). The purpose of the CMP is to document existing conditions and review environmental issues in the corridor using readily available traffic, environmental, and land use data bases, a windshield survey, but no original data gathering. The environmental review is not a quantitative comparison of alternatives.

Mr. Preston highlighted key points in each chapter, as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction outlines the history of the TH 14 corridor in the roadway system; the vision for the corridor; the goals, objectives, and measures of effectiveness to evaluate alternatives; sets up the outline of the document; and illustrates the timeline to complete the project. Of the 130,000 miles of roadways in Minnesota, the Interregional Corridor system identifies 2,930 miles as the highest priority. TH 14 West has been identified in Mn/DOT's IRC system as one of these highest priority roadways. The vision for the corridor and the goals, objectives, and measures of effectiveness have all been developed from Advisory Committee, Corridor Coalition and Public input.

Chapter 2 – Public and Agency Involvement outlines the public involvement process, and the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders in the corridor. There have been approximately 20 meetings with the Advisory Committee, Project Management Team, the general public and Public Outreach to communities in the corridor to gain input on issues in the corridor and potential alternatives.

Chapter 3 – Existing and Forecast Conditions documents what is known in the corridor. Eight segments have been identified to help in the identification of deficiencies. The purpose of the environmental overview is to identify known social, economic, and environmental issues and subsequently avoid them when identifying alternatives. The existing traffic volumes in the corridor range from 5,000 to 7,000 vpd and the forecast volumes range from 10,000 to 13,000 vpd. This indicates that the volumes are going to double along the corridor by the year 2025 resulting in increased congestion.

Charles Guggisberg asked if traffic forecasts were done 20 years ago and how they compare to the current volumes. Howard Preston said he does not know of any being done for this roadway, but over the last 20 years the typical traffic growth rate has remained consistent at about 2% to 3% per year.





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting #3 Summary  
February 10, 2003  
3:00 to 5:15 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

There are 221 access points along the 22-mile corridor. In rural areas the statewide average is 8 accesses per mile and Segment 2 is over this goal. In Segment 4 there are 58 accesses per mile compared with the statewide average of 28 accesses per mile in urban areas. This is important because the greater the number of accesses the more likely to have safety and mobility deficiencies. For this project the Level of Service C-D boundary is the index of congestion. Currently, two segments do not meet this goal and in the future the whole corridor is deficient. The corridor has an average of 33% no passing zones compared to Mn/DOT's goal of 10 % for this type of roadway.

Chapter 4 – Identification of Deficiencies - The summary of deficiencies documents the location of deficiencies in the corridor and where the need is to move forward with improvements. There are safety deficiencies at three intersections and one segment. Currently there are four segments that do not meet the above 55 miles per hour IRC speed goal, and in the future it is forecasted that six segments will be deficient. There are three intersections that are at risk of having traffic signals. Traffic signals induce delay on the roadway and the emphasis of IRC corridors is for mobility. Therefore, future consideration should be given to interchanges at these intersections.

The question that needs to be answered in the NEPA process is if there is a need to move forward with the project. Chapter 4 documents that there are mobility, safety, and access related deficiencies in the TH 14 West Corridor, and where those deficiencies are located.

Chapter 5 – Development of Alternatives - This chapter documents the identification of a universe of alternatives that will address the needs in the corridor. There are design alternatives and location alternatives.

*Design Alternatives:*

- The analysis indicates that an improved two-lane roadway does not meet the Level-of-Service C-D boundary. Only the four-lane options meet the goals and objectives

*Location Alternatives:*

- From CSAH 6 (in North Mankato) to Nicollet, the plan is to use the existing alignment.
- In Nicollet, a number of alternatives have been identified. One north bypass, two south bypasses (both avoiding the city holding ponds), and the existing alignment. At the intersection with CSAH 23, if a signal is warranted with the forecast traffic, then it would be prudent to reserve right-of-way for a future interchange.
- In Courtland there is one south bypass, two north bypasses and the existing alignment.
- At the western end of the corridor, there are a number of alignments identified to improve the TH 14/TH 15/CSAH 21 intersection. The objective here is to line up the two legs of TH 14 for the through movement.

Mr. Preston noted that the north bypass of Nicollet and the south bypass of Courtland are not preferred by either of the cities because they are not consistent with their land use plans and there is the potential for environmental impacts.

Mr. Preston said the next step in the process is Scoping where alternatives that are not feasible are scoped out. The Project Process includes: CMP identifies deficiencies; Scoping – screens alternatives and confirms Purpose and Need; DEIS quantifies the impacts of alternatives for comparison; and during the FEIS a preferred alternative is selected.





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting #3 Summary  
February 10, 2003  
3:00 to 5:15 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

Bob Schabert asked at what stage in the process are right-of-way parcels identified that would be impacted. Mr. Preston said right-of-way impacts are identified during the preliminary geometric layouts of the alternatives and are quantified in the Draft EIS.

Tina Rosenstein asked how long it takes to get to implementation of the preferred alternative because Nicollet County wants to adopt an official map for the corridor. Mr. Preston said that in order to move forward with implementation you need two things: a staff approved geometric layout and a signed EIS.

Chapter 6 - Alternative Staging and Implementation was purposely not completed at this time. After meeting with Federal Highway and Mn/DOT's Office of Environmental Services, it was determined that the Scoping process (a requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act, NEPA) and CMP would overlap one another. For the NEPA Scoping it is important to start with a universe of alternatives and not identify a preferred alternative until later in the environmental review process. Chapter 6 of the CMP is supposed to identify a preferred alternative and an implementation plan. This chapter will be completed at the end of the Scoping process.

Chapter 7 – Community Resolutions Mark Scheidel referred to the sample resolution in this chapter and asked the partners to review it with their constituencies. Mn/DOT would like to have the partners adopt a resolution in support of the CMP when it is completed. He suggested they distribute the sample resolution to initiate the discussion now.

**ACTION:** The Advisory Committee agreed to get their **comments on the Draft CMP** back to Mark Scheidel by **February 24, 2003**. Mark will compile them and give direction to HRG on any changes that may need to be made.

## REVISED SCHEDULE

HRG presented a revised schedule to complete the 14 West IRC project six months early, by June 30, 2003. This will allow District 7 to have a completed Scoping Decision Document early enough to request funding for an EIS beginning federal fiscal year 2004.

An optimistic time schedule to complete an EIS (both the Draft and Final) is approximately two years. If any unusual or significant impacts arise it most likely would take longer.

## NEXT MEETINGS

### Advisory Committee – March 10, 2003 Nicollet County Service Building

- Review Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Decision document
- Prepare for Scoping Hearing/Open House

**Scoping Hearing – April 23, 2003**  
**2:00 to 3:30 PM      Agency Hearing**  
**4:30 to 7:00 PM      Public Hearing**  
**Courtland Community Center**





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting #4 Summary  
March 10, 2003  
2:00 to 4:00 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

## ATTENDEES

Brown County	Charles Guggisberg, County Commissioner
	Wayne Stevens, County Engineer
Nicollet County	Paul Engel, County Commissioner
	Mike Wagner, County Engineer
	Mandy Landkamer, Deputy Zoning
Courtland	Bob Schabert, Mayor
Courtland/Nicollet	Dan Wietecha, City Administrator
Courtland Township	Florence Arbes, Supervisor
Mankato	Gary Graupman City Engineer
New Ulm	Joel Albrecht, Mayor
	Steve Koehler, City Engineer
Nicollet	R. Mark Blais, Mayor
Mn DNR	Peter Leete, Transportation Hydrologist
	Leo Getsfried, Area Hydrologist
	Craig Berberich, Fish Specialist
	Joel Anderson, Area Wildlife Manager
MPCA	Jim Seaberg, Transportation Planning
Mn/DOT District 7	Mark Scheidel, Project Manager
	Lisa Bigham, Planning Director
	Larry Filter, District Design Engineer
Howard R. Green Co.	Howard Preston
	Biz Colburn

## INTRODUCTIONS

Mark Scheidel welcomed everyone to the Advisory Committee meeting and asked attendees to introduce themselves. At the February 10 meeting the Advisory Committee requested to have their next meeting before the Scoping Document is distributed to the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) distribution list (on March 31, 2003) to give them the opportunity to review and comment on the scope of the project first.

The *Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Decision Document* was distributed to the Advisory Committee today for their input on the document.

**ACTION:** The Advisory Committee agreed to get their **comments on the Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Decision Document** back to Mark Scheidel by **Friday, March 14, 2003**. Mark will compile them and give direction to HRG on any changes that may need to be made.

## **Draft CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Mark Scheidel distributed a revised Evaluation of Location Alternatives Matrix (Table 5.2-1) that reflects comments on the Draft Corridor Management Plan from the Advisory Committee.

Wayne Stevens asked Mn/DOT to give consideration to how the future TH14/15 alignment will enter New Ulm, even though a bypass of New Ulm is not recommended. His concern is at the





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting #4 Summary  
March 10, 2003  
2:00 to 4:00 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

intersection of TH 14/15 with Broadway in New Ulm where trucks have an especially difficult time making right and left turns.

## **SCOPING DOCUMENT/*Draft* SCOPING DECISION DOCUMENT REVIEW**

Howard Preston said the Scoping Document is the first step in the environmental review process. It documents the deficiencies, identifies the purpose and need for the project, outlines the goals and objectives, identifies a universe of alternatives to address the deficiencies, and provides an evaluation of the alternatives. The Scoping Document answers the question "Is there a need to move forward with the project?" In this case "Yes" there is a need. It also identifies the alternatives that address the need and the environmental issues that will be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The quantification of impacts takes place within the EIS process.

New Ulm Mayor Joel Albrecht asked how long it takes to complete an EIS. Mr. Preston said the minimum time frame would be two years if no unusual or significant impacts are found. It is not unusual for the EIS process to take three to five years.

Mr. Preston reviewed the Scoping Document pointing out key issues in each chapter.

Chapter 1 – describes Scoping, the first step in the environmental review process.

Chapter 2 – describes the purpose of the project which is to address present and future safety, operations, and geometric deficiencies in the corridor consistent with community and public expectations. A number of deficiencies have been identified that include a lack of passing zones and high crash rates at three intersections. Also, there is a risk of adding traffic signals. Mr. Preston said this concept is counterintuitive. Traffic signals create traffic delay and are not safe. Usually there are twice as many accidents at signalized intersections compared to unsignalized intersections.

Chapter 3- provides a description of the corridor from its early days as a fur trading route to its current status as a U.S. Highway and part of the National Highway System.

Chapter 4 –outlines the preliminary estimated costs for each of the alternatives calculated in 2003 dollars and potential funding sources. Interchanges are not included in the costs.

Chapter 5 – is the schedule for the environmental review process and identifies the contact for the project.

Chapter 6 – outlines the development of alternatives process, the goals and objectives for the project, and the results of the origin-destination study. It then describes the universe of alternatives that include both roadway design and location alternatives. The corridor was divided into three segments for the location alternatives. Advantages and disadvantages for alternatives are listed to help in determining which alternatives should be carried forward and those that should be dismissed from further consideration.

When discussing Segment 1 in the vicinity of the TH 14/15/CH 21 intersection, Mike Wagner asked if an interchange works with all alternatives. Mr. Preston said there is room for an





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting #4 Summary  
March 10, 2003  
2:00 to 4:00 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

interchange with each of the alternatives. Mayor Albrecht asked if the aerial mapping with alternatives would be on display at the Scoping Hearing. Mr. Preston said yes.

Mr. Preston said the alternatives have been developed with input from the Advisory Committee, as well as using existing data bases to locate environmental resources in order to avoid them when laying out the alternatives. The alternatives have been engineered to determine that they can work.

Lisa Bigham asked about the right-of-way width in order to do "official mapping" for the corridor. Mr. Preston said there is flexibility in moving the alternatives to fit the right-of-way, but better mapping is needed than what we are using now.

Mayor Bob Schabert commended Mn/DOT saying coordination has been especially good with this project. Mn/DOT has listened and there has been mutual agreement on the identification of the location alternatives.

At the end of the chapter there is a list of alternatives to carry forward into the environmental review process and those alternatives that are dismissed from further review.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Advisory Committee discussed the alternatives and decided to carry forward the four-lane on existing alignment alternatives for each segment, rather than dismiss them, to provide a comparison to the bypass alternatives, even though the existing alignment has many disadvantages through the cities of Courtland and Nicollet.

Chapter 7 – lists the environmental issues to be addressed and quantified in detail in the EIS.

Chapter 8 - describes the Public and Agency Involvement process. The Advisory Committee suggested adding a list of meetings in this section.

At the end of the document a *Draft* Scoping Decision Document is provided to outline the anticipated scope of the project to take into the environmental review process. After the Scoping Hearing, the Scoping Decision will be finalized.

## **SCOPING HEARING/PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE**

Biz Colburn distributed the Open House/Public Hearing handouts and copies of the presentation boards anticipated to be on display for the Open House. She explained that the Open House and Scoping Hearing will run concurrently. Two Scoping Hearings will be held on April 23, 2003, one for the affected agencies in the afternoon and one for the public in the evening. People can attend either one or both Hearings. The open house will run continuously and a presentation will be given at each of the Hearings, one at 2:15 and one at 5:30 PM, followed by public comment. A court reporter will be there to document the comments and proceedings for the formal record.





# 14 West IRC

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Advisory Committee Meeting #4 Summary  
March 10, 2003  
2:00 to 4:00 PM  
Nicollet County Service Building

**Scoping Hearing – April 23, 2003**  
**2:00 to 3:30 PM      Agency Hearing**  
**4:30 to 7:00 PM      Public Hearing**  
**Courtland Community Center**

A newsletter/flyer will be prepared to announce the Open House/Public Hearing. This will be e-mailed to all of the Advisory Committee members to distribute to their constituencies. These could be put into the utility bills, in the windows of retail stores in the area, etc.

## **SCHEDULE TO COMPLETE THE CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Biz Colburn said that the announcement of the Scoping Hearing and availability of the Scoping Document will be in the March 31, 2003 EQB Monitor. The Scoping Document will be distributed to the EQB distribution list on March 31, 2003. This is followed by the formal Scoping Hearing on April 23, 2003. The comment period on the scope of the project closes on May 2, 2003. Comments will be addressed and a Final Scoping Decision Document will be prepared and distributed. Concurrently with the Scoping process, the final chapter (Chapter 6 Implementation Plan) of the Corridor Management Plan (CMP) will be prepared and will reflect the alternatives carried forward in the scoping decision. Then the communities and counties along the corridor will be asked to provide a resolution in support of the implementation of the CMP.

It is anticipated that the scoping process and the final CMP will be completed by the end of May 2003 so that Mn/DOT will be prepared to move forward with an EIS when funding becomes available.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM.



# **APPENDIX A**

## **Public Participation**

### **Public Outreach Meeting Summaries**

- July 7, 2002 – Nicollet Coordination Meeting
- February 4, 2003 – West End TH 14 Coordination Meeting



# 14 West IRC

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Nicollet Coordination Meeting Summary  
July 7, 2002  
4:00 to 5:00 PM  
Nicollet City Hall

## ATTENDEES

Nicollet County  
City of Nicollet  
City of Nicollet  
Nicollet Township  
Mn/DOT District 7

Mike Wagner, County Engineer  
Dan Wietecha, City Administrator  
R. Mark Blais, Mayor  
John Prosch, Supervisor  
Mark Scheidel, Project Manager

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this meeting was to get more local input on the bypass alternative locations around the City of Nicollet that had been suggested at the May 2002 Open House and at other meetings. New local knowledge that was shared with Mn/DOT was:

- Desire of the community to maintain visibility from the roadway,
- Land parcels with owners willing to sell, and
- City land use policy considerations that had emerged since the City of Nicollet 1986 Land Use Plan was completed

## RESULTS

- Though not on the 1986 Land Use Plan, the City now supports a bypass of Nicollet.
- City residential growth is seen as occurring to the North and Northeast of the City.
- The universe of alternative options will basically stay the same, with some adjustments that reflect willing sellers and to retain more land on the North side of the South option that is closest to the City.





# 14 West IRC

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Courtland Coordination Meeting Summary  
February 4, 2003  
3:00 to 4:30 PM  
Courtland City Hall

## ATTENDEES

Brown County	Charles Guggisberg, County Commissioner
	Wayne Stevens, County Engineer
Nicollet County	Paul Engel, County Commissioner
	Tina Rosenstein, Environmental Serv. Dir.
	Mike Wagner, County Engineer
Courtland	Bob Schabert, Mayor
Courtland	Dan Wietecha, City Administrator
Courtland Township	Floence Arbes, Township Supervisor
New Ulm	Steve Koehler, City Engineer
Mn DNR	Leo Getsfried, Hydrologist
Mn/DOT District 7	Mark Scheidel, Project Manager

## PURPOSE

The purpose of the meeting was to get more local and agency input on the universe of alternatives on the western portion of the TH 14 corridor. Most of the previous input has been focused on the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet. The deficiencies identified in the safety analysis and the origin/destination study have emphasized the importance of the TH 14/TH 15 area and the alignment West of Courtland. Also, some new ideas were brought up at the January Project Management Team meeting that needed additional local comment.

## RESULTS

No specific alignment changes were suggested because the adjusted universe of alternatives now include an option for maintaining the existing alignment below the hill [with the 60 mph curve on TH 14] and an option for staying just above the bluff all the way from Courtland to New Ulm. However, the following comments were noted:

- CSAH 21 is an important route into New Ulm and needs access to the TH 14 Minnesota River crossing without excessive re-routing.
- Nicollet County and Courtland Township would not favor getting TH 14 turned back to them.
- Using a TH 14 turnback as a local feeder for all the residential development pressure in the area is not in line with current Nicollet County land use policy.
- Courtland Township also does not support more rural residential development.
- An intersection with TH 15 on top of the hill has some good points, but if the intersection can be incorporated below the hill, despite the physical limitations, this option would be favored.
- Extending CSAH 37 would involve a steep grade.
- The 60 mph curve is better than the 70 mph curve because of wetlands impacts and speed consistent with driver expectations as they cross the bridge, which has a 45 mph speed.
- It would be appropriate to have a four-lane design of TH 14 continue all the way to TH15 because the New Ulm side of the Minnesota River is designed to accommodate a four-lane design and it opens up options for merging in TH 15 into a lane with no stop. Also, in the future, the long-term bridge replacement option across the Minnesota River most likely will be a four-lane design to accommodate future traffic.



# **APPENDIX A**

## **Public Participation**

Comments on the Alternatives Presented at  
the September 5, 2002 Advisory Committee  
Meeting from:

- City of Nicollet – October 25, 2002
- City of Courtland – October 25, 2002

**The City of Nicollet**  
**PO Box 547**  
**Nicollet, MN 56074**

25 October 2002

Mark Scheidel  
MNDOT - Dist. 7  
501 S. Victory Dr.  
PO Box 4039  
Mankato, MN 56002-4039

Dear Mr. Scheidel:

The Nicollet City Council and the Nicollet Chamber of Commerce have reviewed the alternative routes being considered for US Highway 14. For convenience a copy of the overhead photo is enclosed.

These comments assume that the highway would be made into a limited-access, four-lane highway. Increased traffic counts, particularly of trucks, raise safety concerns all but precluding its being continued as a two-lane highway.

**Current Alignment (not labeled, but designated in orange):** Although there are relatively few streets intersecting Hwy. 14 through town, there are several private driveways. This stretch is already posted at 50 mph. Homes and businesses proximate to the existing highway would make acquisition of additional right-of-way expensive. Additional problems would arise in the displacement of affordable housing for some 70 families. A mobile home park is located on the east; while, a new subdivision of owner-occupied, single-family houses and rental townhouses is on the west. Furthermore, recognizing the need for affordable housing in the Nicollet region, funding contributions for this new subdivision have been provided by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, Federal Home Loan Bank, City of Nicollet, and local employers. An additional problem could also arise in a disruption of a storm/surface water retention pond servicing approximately 400 acres.

**Alternative A:** On the east, this route appears to run through wetlands and/or difficult soils off of Middle Lake. On the west, there are definite concerns for the potential impact on wildlife habitat and water quality of nearby Swan Lake, the largest shallow prairie pothole in the lower 48 states, covering roughly 10,000 acres. The likelihood of commercial development near such a by-pass and interchange would also be inconsistent with the City's *Land Use Plan* and current growth trends for new residential development generally toward the north of town.

**Alternative B:** Although Nicollet's growth has been primary residential and generally toward the north of town, light industrial development has been toward the south. This route passes extremely close to this area and may not by-pass future commercial growth.

**Alternative C:** This route was not shown on the original overhead photo; we drew this in during the meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup>. This actually follows the route that the City,

County, and MNDOT were discussing and sketching during a series of informal meetings in the winter of 1999/2000. Like Alternative B, it is close to industrial properties toward the south, but allows additional room for industrial growth. The additional room becomes all-the-more necessary when considering the likelihood of some retail commercial development near a probable interchange at CSAH 23.

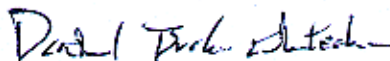
\* **Alternative D:** This route is also not shown on the original overhead photo; we also drew this in during the meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup>. This is the route that received the most approval during the City's discussions. It allows room for continued commercial growth toward the south of town, but there is a definite concern the route may be a bit beyond a reasonable distance from town.

**Alternative E:** Assuming an interchange at CSAH 23, the City believes this is beyond a reasonable distance from town. The route is intended to be a by-pass, but the City adamantly does not want a by-pass so far out as to be a hassle for local businesses and commuters or to inconvenience travelers into not stopping in Nicollet.

**Alternative F:** This route is also beyond a reasonable distance from town. Additionally, the route would involve acquiring wholly new right-of-way for several miles to the west of Nicollet. The geography along this route—particularly as it approaches the City of Courtland—involves bluffs above the Minnesota River. This would presumably be cost prohibitive in terms of both acquiring land and constructing the highway to accommodate for the topography.

If you have any other questions, please contact me at (507) 276-4435 or by email at [tricity@rtsmn.com](mailto:tricity@rtsmn.com).

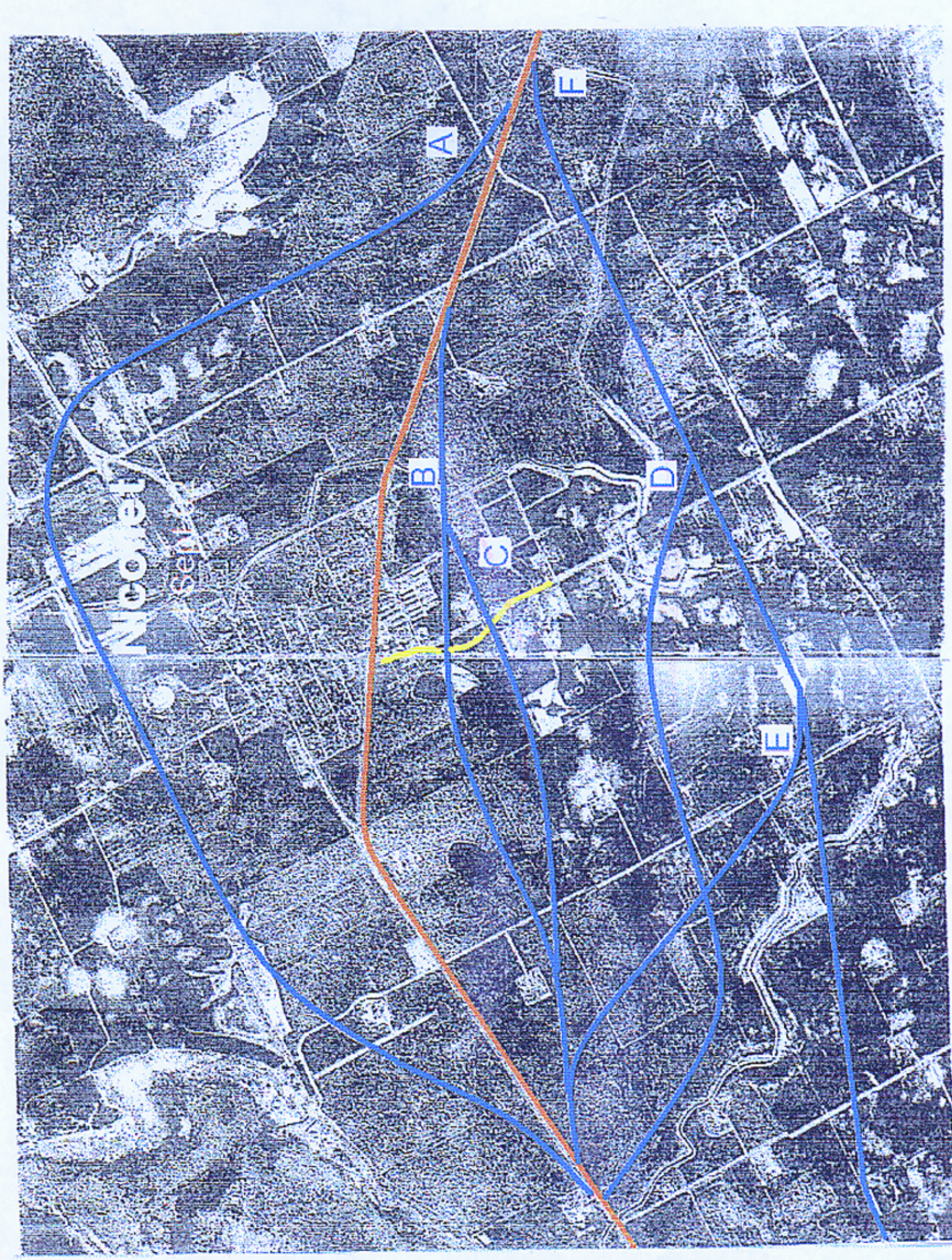
Sincerely,



Dan Wietecha  
City Administrator

Encl.

Cc: Nicollet City Council  
Mike Wagner, Nicollet County



## CITY OF COURTLAND

300 Railroad Street ~ Courtland, Minnesota 56021  
Phone: (507) 354-7055 ~ E-mail: courtld@prairie.lakes.com

25 October 2002

Mark Scheidel  
MNDOT - Dist. 7  
501 S. Victory Dr.  
PO Box 4039  
Mankato, MN 56002-4039

Dear Mr. Scheidel:

The Courtland Planning Commission and Courtland City Council have reviewed the alternative route being considered for US Highway 14. For convenience a copy of the overhead photo is enclosed.

These comments assume that the highway would be made into a limited-access, four-lane highway. Increased traffic counts, particularly of trucks, raise safety concerns all but precluding its being continued as a two-lane highway.

**Current Alignment (not labeled, but designated in orange):** This is actually Main Street through downtown Courtland. It is lined with houses and retail businesses and intersected by a number of cross streets and many driveways. It is already posted at 35 mph because of safety concerns. Right-of-way acquisition would be expensive through this route. Current commercial growth trends have also been along this alignment toward the west of town. Additional problems would arise in the displacement of affordable housing. The existing houses along the highway are older, smaller, and more affordable than most of the new residential development in town. Also, a new subdivision of affordable housing—for some 50 families—has recently begun development immediately south of Hwy. 14. Recognizing the need for affordable housing in the Courtland region, funding contributions for this new subdivision have been provided by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, City of Courtland, and local employers.

**Alternative A:** This is one of the two routes preferred by the community, allowing room for growth. Recent growth trends have included commercial and residential generally along the existing Hwy. 14 axis and residential among the bluffs toward the south.

**Alternative B:** This route is way beyond reasonable distance for by-pass. It is intended to be a by-pass, but the City adamantly does not want a by-pass so far out as to be a hassle for local businesses and commuters or to inconvenience travelers into not stopping in Courtland. It roughly follows CSAH 21. It may be convenient to just place a new road on top of an existing road; but we believe you will find that CSAH 21 is not suited for a limited-access, four-lane highway. The western terminus of this route near New Ulm would also have problems with the steep topography above the Minnesota River.

### *Mission of the City of Courtland*

*We envision Courtland as a city with managed growth which offers a high quality of life for individuals, families and businesses at an affordable cost.*

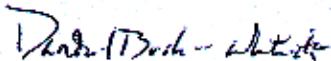
**Alternative C:** This is the second of the two routes preferred by the community. It actually follows the route drawn in the City's *Comprehensive Plan*, recently adopted in the spring of 1999. And it is consistent with the City's long-range land use plans. It allows room for growth toward the north; while, recent growth trends have generally been along the existing Hwy. 14 and toward the south. One concern with this route is that it is uphill of the City and the Minnesota River; surface/storm water drainage would need to be addressed. The City is currently addressing storm/surface water plans and would require new drainage patterns to tie into system.

**Alternative D:** This route draws laughs locally. It cuts through bluffs and residential neighborhoods above the Minnesota River. Right-of-way acquisition would be difficult, the bluffs would present engineering issues beyond alternative alignments, and it runs counter to recent growth patterns and long-range land use plans. Furthermore, being directly above the Minnesota River, surface/storm water drainage comes to greater necessity and greater difficulty, being downstream of the City's plans for controlling such drainage.

**Alternative E:** Like Alternative D, right-of-way acquisition, topography, local growth trends, and surface/storm water drainage make this an unacceptable route. And it runs additional problems by not following the existing Hwy. 14 alignment from the east, the topographical issues are compounded.

If you have any other questions, please contact me at (507) 276-4435 or by email at [tricity@rtsmn.com](mailto:tricity@rtsmn.com).

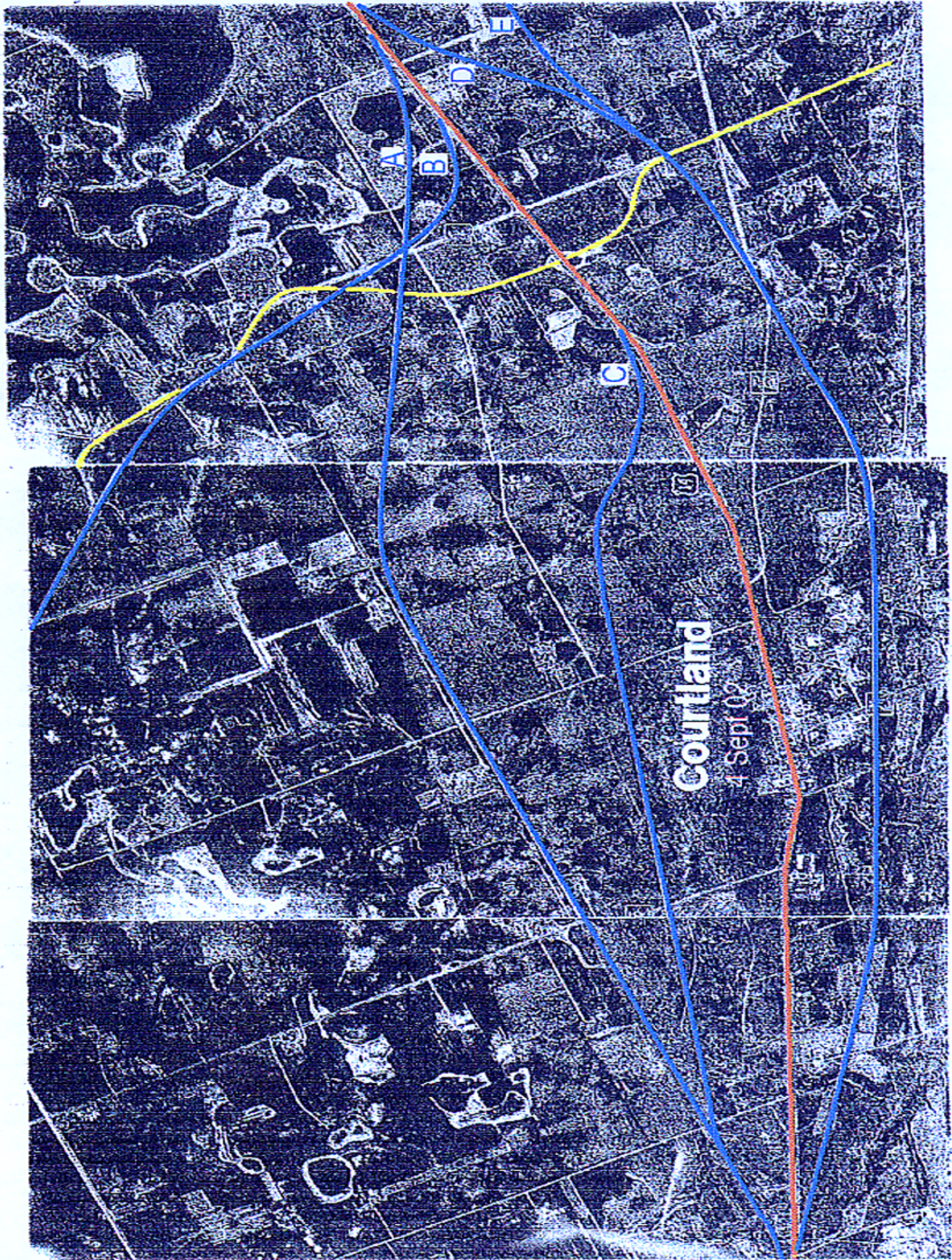
Sincerely,



Dan Wietecha  
City Administrator

Encl.

Cc: Courtland City Council  
Mike Wagner, Nicollet County



# **APPENDIX A**

## **Public Participation**

Communications:

- Press Release
- Fact Sheet
- Newsletter



## News Release

**District 7, Mankato/Windom**  
501 S. Victory Dr.  
P.O. Box 4039  
Mankato, MN 56002-4039

Office Tel: 800-657-3747  
Fax: 507-389-6281

Date: May 3, 2002

Contact: Rebecca Arndt  
507/389-6883

To Be Released: Immediately

### **OPEN HOUSE FOR PLANNING HIGHWAY 14 NEW ULM TO MANKATO**

MANKATO, Minn.—Those interested in helping shape the future of Highway 14 from New Ulm to Mankato are invited to a public information open house hosted by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. The open house will be held on Tuesday, May 21, 2002 from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Courtland Community Center.

Mn/DOT and local governments are in the process of developing a corridor management plan that will address future needs in this corridor.

Public input is crucial throughout the development of the plan in order to identify transportation-related options and solutions within the segment of Highway 14 that extends southeast from State Highway 15 in New Ulm to Nicollet County Road 6 near North Mankato. The preliminary information that Mn/DOT and consultant, Howard R. Green, have gathered will be on display for discussion and input. It includes existing and future land use, congestion levels, crash rates, environmental issues, and access points along the corridor.

Attendees will have an opportunity to discuss the issues one-on-one with Mn/DOT staff and the HRG project team.

An Advisory Committee is also helping to guide the planning for future improvements to the Highway 14 corridor. It is made up of elected officials, engineers, and planners representing the Counties of Nicollet, Blue Earth, and Brown; Cities of New Ulm, Courtland, Nicollet, North Mankato, and Mankato; Townships of Courtland, and Nicollet; Region 9 Development Commission and Mn/DOT.

This segment of Highway 14 has been designated as a medium priority interregional corridor and is part of Mn/DOT's "Moving Minnesota" initiative. The Mankato Mn/DOT office received \$200,000 from the 2000 Legislature to develop the plan and partners, including counties and cities along the corridor, have contributed additional resources.

###



## News Release

### District 7, Mankato/Windom

501 S. Victory Dr.  
P.O. Box 4039  
Mankato, MN 56002-4039

Office Tel: 800-657-3747

Fax: 507-389-6281

Date: August 12, 2002

Contact: Rebecca Arndt

507/389-6883

To Be Released: Immediately **ONLY** to State Highway Patrol, Brown and Nicollet County Sheriffs, Brown and Nicollet County Highway Departments  
(This is **NOT** to be released to the general public.)

### **ORIGIN-DESTINATION SURVEY TO BE CONDUCTED FOR HIGHWAY 14 NEW ULM TO MANKATO**

Video Cameras will be Recording License Plates

MANKATO, Minn.— As part of the Highway 14 West Interregional Corridor Study (New Ulm to Mankato), an origin-destination survey will be conducted by recording license plates of vehicles at 7 locations within the corridor. The survey will take place August 14 from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM. The rain date is August 15. Video cameras will be staffed by operators at all 7 locations. In addition, traffic tube counters will be placed in the vicinity of the seven locations. The purpose of the survey is to find out if drivers are traveling through the study area or if they have an origin or destination within the study area. (This information will not be used to identify individual vehicle owners.)

The results of the survey will help identify who's using Highway 14 between New Ulm and Mankato now and help predict how the roadway will be used in the future. This is one piece of information that will be used to determine which roadway improvements will best serve the traveling public in the Highway 14 West Corridor.

Mn/DOT and local governments are in the process of developing a corridor management plan that will address future needs in the Highway 14 West Corridor.

This segment of Highway 14 has been designated as a medium priority interregional corridor and is part of Mn/DOT's "Moving Minnesota" initiative.

NOTE: A map is attached of the general locations of the 7 station locations.

###



## News Release

**District 7, Mankato/Windom**  
501 S. Victory Dr.  
P.O. Box 4039  
Mankato, MN 56002-4039

Office Tel: 800-657-3747  
Fax: 507-389-6281

Date: April 4, 2003

Contact: Rebecca Arndt  
507/389-6883

To Be Released: Immediately

### **SCOPING HEARING SET FOR HIGHWAY 14 NEW ULM TO MANKATO**

MANKATO, Minn.—The public and affected agencies in the Highway 14 corridor, New Ulm to Mankato, are invited to a scoping hearing and open house hosted by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Formal scoping hearings will be held on Wednesday, April 23 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Courtland Community Center. Also, an open house will run continuously for people to discuss issues one-on-one with Mn/DOT and consultant team staff.

The scoping document summarizes the analysis conducted during the development of the corridor management plan and indicates there is a need to make improvements in this corridor. Some of the identified problems include: high crash rates at three intersections, lack of passing zones, high percentage of truck traffic, future traffic congestion, and high levels of access roads in Courtland. An origin-destination study was conducted to understand travel patterns in the corridor. The results indicate that bypasses of Nicollet and Courtland would be feasible, but since New Ulm is an origin or destination for 85% of the traffic, a bypass of New Ulm is not suggested.

Alternatives have been developed to address the safety, operations, and geometric needs along this 22-mile segment of Highway 14 from State Highway 15 in New Ulm to Nicollet County Road 6 near North Mankato. They include bypasses of Nicollet and Courtland as well as using the existing alignment and there are a number of alternatives in the vicinity of the Highway 14/15/21 intersection near New Ulm.

-more-

The alternatives in the scoping document have been identified during the development of the corridor management plan through input from the Advisory Committee, at public meetings, during coordination with the cities of Courtland and Nicollet and from affected agencies. Information on the results of the analysis and the development of alternatives will be available for public review and comment at the scoping hearing. Public input during scoping is crucial in refining the alternatives to carry forward into the environmental review process.

The scoping document is available for public review during regular business hours at Mn/DOT District 7; the Blue Earth County, North Mankato, and New Ulm Public Libraries; and at the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet (by appointment).

The public and agencies are invited to comment on the scope of the project. All written and verbal comments will be included in the public record. Comments are due by Friday, May 2 when the comment period closes.

Individuals with a disability who need a reasonable accommodation to participate in the public meeting on April 23 may contact Rebecca L. Arndt at 1-800-657-3747 or through the Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529.

# # #



**District 7**  
About D7  
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News & Events  
Key Contacts

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Bemidji  
Brainerd  
Detroit Lakes  
Rochester  
Mankato  
Willmar  
Metro

**Mn/DOT Home**  
FAQ  
Site Map  
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Moving Minnesota



## News Release

April 4 , 2003

### Scoping Hearing Set for Highway 14 New Ulm to Mankato

MANKATO, Minn. - The public and affected agencies in the Highway 14 corridor, New Ulm to Mankato, are invited to a scoping hearing and open house hosted by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Formal scoping hearings will be held on Wednesday, April 23 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. and 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Courtland Community Center. Also, an open house will run continuously for people to discuss issues one-on-one with Mn/DOT and consultant team staff.

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Alternatives have been developed to address the safety, operations, and geometric needs along this 22-mile segment of Highway 14 from State Highway 15 in New Ulm to Nicollet County Road 6 near North Mankato. They include bypasses of Nicollet and Courtland as well as using the existing alignment and there are a number of alternatives in the vicinity of the Highway 14/15/21 intersection near New Ulm.

The alternatives in the scoping document have been identified during the development of the corridor management plan through input from the Advisory Committee, at public meetings, during coordination with the cities of Courtland and Nicollet and from affected agencies. Information on the results of the analysis and the development of alternatives will be available for public review and comment at the scoping hearing. Public input during scoping is crucial in refining the alternatives to carry forward into the environmental review process.

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**Too fast...too close...too late...**

**See ORANGE.**

**We're in the *WORK ZONE* Together**

For statewide up-to-date traveler information, Minnesotans are now able to access weather-related road conditions, construction and congestion by dialing 511 or by logging on to <http://www.511mn.org/>

District 7, Mankato/Window  
501 S. Victory Dr.  
P.O. Box 4039  
Mankato, MN 56002-4039  
Tel: 800/657-3747  
Fax: 507/389-6281

Contact:  
[Rebecca Arndt](#)  
Public Affairs Coordinator  
507/389-6883

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Mn/DOT Information Center E-mail: [info@dot.state.mn.us](mailto:info@dot.state.mn.us)  
395 John Ireland Boulevard • St. Paul, MN 55155-1899  
Phone: 800/657-3774 • 800/627-3529 (TTY, Voice, ASCII)



# 14 West IRC

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## Fact Sheet #1 May 2002

**What is the Highway 14 West Corridor?** The Highway 14 West Corridor is a two-lane roadway approximately 22 miles in length. Located in Nicollet County, the corridor extends from State Highway 15 near New Ulm to County Road 6 near North Mankato. Mn/DOT has identified this highway as a medium priority interregional corridor connecting the secondary trade centers of New Ulm and Mankato.

**What is an IRC?** The Interregional Corridor (IRC) System adopted by Mn/DOT in January 2000 identifies roadway corridors that tie the state together by connecting people with jobs, distributors with manufacturers, shoppers with retailers, and tourists with recreational opportunities. The goal of the IRC System is to provide efficient connections among regional trade centers. Mn/DOT's IRC System is made up of 2,930 miles of the approximately 130,000 road miles in Minnesota. Although this represents only 2% of the road miles, these roadways carry one-third of all the vehicle miles traveled in the state. The use of these highways continues to increase.

**What is the Purpose of the Study?** The purpose of the Study is to develop a Vision for the Corridor that achieves a balance between regional mobility and local circulation. Improved mobility includes better access for adjacent land uses with a high priority on safety. In November 2001, Mn/DOT selected the Howard R. Green Company as its consultant to develop a Corridor Management Plan for the 14 West IRC. This roadway is classified as a principal arterial, with the main goal being mobility. The Project Team has been collecting information on traffic, land use, and environmental issues to identify deficiencies in the corridor.

**What's Next?** The next steps are to identify and evaluate alternative solutions; and develop a Corridor Management Plan that includes phasing for implementation. The Plan is scheduled for completion in June 2003. Once the Corridor Management Plan is completed, the scoping process begins. The preparation of the Scoping Decision Document identifies the scope of the project to take into the environmental review process to get ready for implementing projects.

### **How Can the Public Participate?**

- A Public Information Open House will be held May 21, 2002 to get input from the public on issues and concerns in the Corridor.
- We'll be back in Spring 2003 for another Public Meeting to share potential solutions and the draft Corridor Management Plan for public review and comment. See you then!
- A Scoping Hearing is scheduled for November 2003.
- Call your representative on the Advisory Committee.

**Who is Representing You?** An Advisory Committee is helping to guide the planning for future improvements to the 14 West Corridor. It is made up of elected officials, engineers, and planners representing the Counties of Nicollet, Blue Earth, and Brown; the Cities of New Ulm, Courtland, Nicollet, North Mankato, and Mankato; the Townships of Courtland, and Nicollet; and the Minnesota Department of Transportation. A critical role for the Advisory Committee is to provide two-way communication between their constituents and the Project Management Team.

**Need More Information?** Contact Mark Scheidel, Project Manager; Mn/DOT – District 7; 501 South Victory Drive; P.O. Box 4039; Mankato, Minnesota 56002-4039; Phone: 507/389-6149; Fax: 507/389-6281; E-mail: [mark.scheidel@dot.state.mn.us](mailto:mark.scheidel@dot.state.mn.us).





### ***What is the Highway 14 West Corridor?***

The Highway 14 West Corridor is a two-lane roadway approximately 22 miles long. Located in Nicollet County, the corridor extends from State Highway 15 near New Ulm to County Road 6 near North Mankato. Mn/DOT has identified this highway as a medium priority interregional corridor connecting the secondary trade centers of New Ulm and Mankato.

### ***What did the Analysis Find - Are There Needs?***

During the development of the *Draft* Corridor Management Plan (CMP), Mn/DOT conducted a comprehensive analysis of the Highway 14 West Corridor. Roadway design, safety, growth trends, and existing and future levels of congestion within this segment of TH 14 were analyzed and an origin-destination study was conducted. The results of the studies all indicate a need to improve the roadway because of safety and operational deficiencies. There are high crash rates at three intersections, lack of passing opportunities all along the corridor, high levels of access in Courtland, increasing traffic congestion, a high percentage of trucks using the roadway, decreasing speeds projected, and a desire to maintain community cohesiveness in Courtland and Nicollet.

### ***What is the Purpose of the Project?***

The *Purpose* of the TH 14 West IRC project is to address present and future safety, operations, and geometric deficiencies along this 22-mile segment of TH 14, consistent with community and public expectations.

### ***Origin-Destination Study***

An origin-destination study was conducted to understand travel patterns along Highway 14 West. The results helped to determine the need for and location of bypasses along the corridor and were used in the development of alternatives. There is a high level of confidence in the study results, which indicate that:

- Bypasses of Courtland and Nicollet would be feasible, most likely diverting 50 percent of the traffic around the cities.
- New Ulm, a regional trade center, is an origin or destination for 85 percent of the traffic, therefore a bypass is not suggested.

### ***What's Next?***

The Scoping process for the 14 West IRC overlaps the finalization of the Corridor Management Plan for the project. The CMP has laid the groundwork for moving into the Scoping phase where a universe of location and design alternatives are identified to address the purpose and need for the project. During Scoping the number of alternatives is reduced for in-depth environmental review. It is also the time when social, economic, and environmental issues are identified that will be used to evaluate the alternatives. Once the Scoping Decision is made, the CMP will be finalized. The project ends with the completion of the Scoping Decision Document and the CMP, so that Mn/DOT will be prepared to move forward with the Environmental Impact Statement as soon as funding is received.

### ***How to Comment***

You can comment verbally or in writing during the Scoping Hearing or mail to the Project Manager Mark Scheidel, Mn/DOT - District 7; 501 South Victory Drive; P.O. Box 4039; Mankato, Minnesota 56002-4039; Phone: 507/389-6149; Fax: 507/389-6281; E-mail: [mark.scheidel@dot.state.mn.us](mailto:mark.scheidel@dot.state.mn.us).

**Be sure your comments are received by May 2, 2003** when the comment period closes.





# Highway 14 West Corridor

New Ulm to North Mankato

Issue 1: May 2002

## You are invited to a Public Information Open House

For the Highway 14 West Interregional Corridor

**Tuesday, May 21, 2002**

**4:30 to 7:00 PM**

**Courtland Community Center**

### Help Shape the Future of Highway 14

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) is hosting a Kick-Off Open House for the Highway 14 West Corridor Management Plan. The public is invited to help identify transportation issues and potential solutions within the Highway 14 corridor from New Ulm to North Mankato.

Mn/DOT and its consultant, Howard R. Green Company (HRG) have just started developing a Corridor Management Plan to address future needs in the 14 West corridor. This interactive Open House will give citizens an opportunity

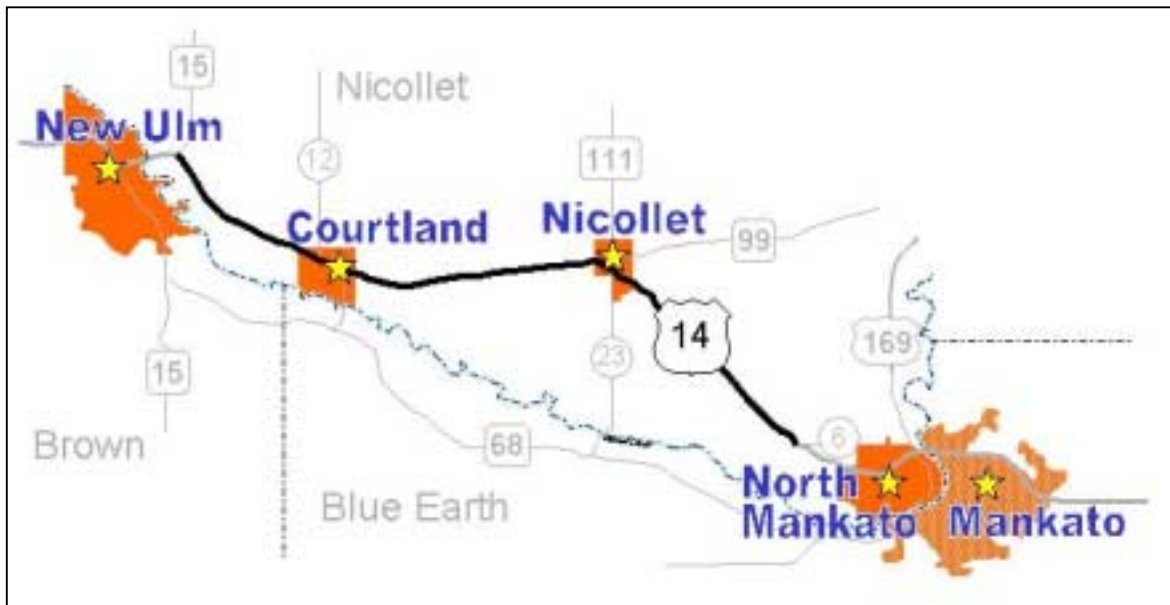
to discuss issues one-on-one with Mn/DOT staff and the HRG project team. The public can identify their issues on large corridor maps as well as write suggestions on comment sheets provided. Information that will be on display for discussion includes:

- Levels of Congestion
  - Percent No-Passing Zones
  - Existing and Future Land Use
  - Environmental Constraints
  - Access Density
  - Crash Rates

**Public input is critical throughout the development of the Plan.**

**Help shape the future of Highway 14!**

**Let us know what you think!**



*The Highway 14 West Corridor is approximately 22 miles long and extends southeast from State Highway 15 in New Ulm to County Road 6 near North Mankato.*

## Highway 14 West Study Area

The Highway 14 West Corridor is a two-lane roadway approximately 22 miles in length. Located in Nicollet County, the corridor extends southeast from State Highway 15 in New Ulm to County Road 6 near North Mankato. Mn/DOT has identified this highway as a medium priority interregional corridor connecting the secondary trade centers of New Ulm and Mankato.

## What is an IRC?

The Interregional Corridor (IRC) System adopted by Mn/DOT in January 2000 identifies roadway corridors that tie the state together by connecting people with jobs, distributors with manufacturers, shoppers with retailers, and tourists with recreational opportunities. The goal of the IRC System is to provide efficient connections among regional trade centers. Mn/DOT's IRC System is made up of 2,930 miles of the approximately 130,000 road miles in Minnesota. Although this represents only 2% of the road miles, these roadways carry one-third of all the vehicle miles traveled in the state. The use of these highways continues to increase.

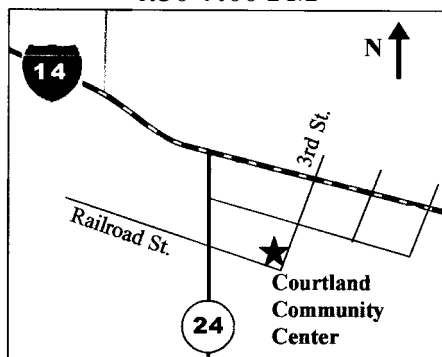
## Partnerships are Important

A partnership between Mn/DOT and the counties, cities, townships and other state and local agencies, as well as corridor stakeholders, will be sought in order to make meaningful transportation changes along Highway 14 compatible with local land use.

### Public Meeting Location:

Tuesday, May 21, 2002

4:30-7:00 PM



Courtland Community Center  
300 Railroad Street

## Advisory Committee is Representing You

An Advisory Committee is helping to guide the planning for future improvements to the 14 West Corridor. You are being represented by:

### COUNTIES

<u>Nicollet</u>	Judy Hanson, County Board Mike Wagner, County Engineer Tina Rosenstein, Env. Services Director
<u>Brown</u>	Wayne Stevens, County Engineer Charles Guggisberg, County Board
<u>Blue Earth</u>	Colleen Landkamer, County Board Alan Forsberg, County Engineer

### TOWNSHIPS

<u>Courtland</u>	Florence Arbes, Supervisor
<u>Nicollet</u>	John Prosch, Supervisor

### CITIES

<u>Courtland</u>	Bob Schabert, Mayor Dan Wietecha, City Administrator
<u>Nicollet</u>	R. Mark Blais, Mayor Dan Wietecha, City Administrator
<u>North Mankato</u>	Nancy Knutson, Mayor Wendell Sande, City Administrator
<u>New Ulm</u>	Joel Albrecht, Council Member Steve Koehler, City Engineer
<u>Mankato</u>	Mike Laven, City Council Ken Saffert, City Engineer

### OTHER

<u>Reg. 9 Dev. Comm.</u>	Jack Fitsimmons, TAC Chair Wes Judkins, Planning Director
<u>Minnesota DNR</u>	Victoria Poage, Env. Ecologist
<u>MSU-Mankato</u>	Perry Wood, Prof/ Planner
<u>Minnesota PCA</u>	Dale Thompson, Transp. Planning

### Mn/DOT/District 7

Mark Scheidel, Project Manager  
Lisa Bigham, Planning Director

### Howard R. Green Company

Howard Preston, Project Director  
Biz Colburn, Project Manager

**For more information, please contact:**

**Mark Scheidel, Project Manager**

Mn/DOT District 7  
501 S. Victory Drive  
P.O. Box 4039  
Mankato, MN 56002  
**Phone: 507/389-6149**

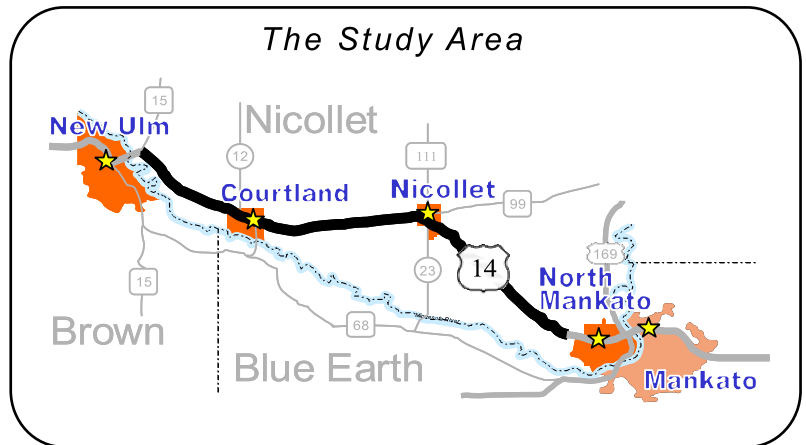
**E-mail: [mark.scheidel@dot.state.mn.us](mailto:mark.scheidel@dot.state.mn.us)**

## You are Invited to Attend One of the Scoping Hearings

on April 23, 2003 to learn about the Highway 14 North Mankato to New Ulm plan. People are encouraged to comment on the scope of the study including the alternatives and environmental issues to be studied. At the formal hearing, a presentation on the scope of the plan will be given at 2:15 PM and again at 5:30 PM followed by public and agency comment for the record. An Open House will run concurrently with the Hearing where the public will have the opportunity to discuss issues one-on-one with Mn/DOT and consultant team staff.

## ★THE STUDY AREA

The study area is approximately 22 miles of Highway 14 from County Road 6 near North Mankato to State Highway 15 just east of New Ulm in Nicollet County, Minnesota. This segment of Highway 14 has been identified by Mn/DOT as a Medium Priority Interregional Corridor connecting the regional trade centers of Mankato and New Ulm and includes the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet.



## ORIGIN-DESTINATION STUDY RESULTS

An origin-destination study was conducted to understand travel patterns along Highway 14. The results indicate that:

- Bypasses of Courtland and Nicollet would be feasible, most likely diverting 50 percent of the traffic around the cities.
- New Ulm, a regional trade center, is an origin or destination for 85 percent of the traffic, therefore a bypass is not suggested.

## ★THE PURPOSE

The purpose of the Highway 14 plan is to address present and future safety, operations, and geometric deficiencies along this 22-mile segment of Highway 14, consistent with community and public expectations.

## ★THE NEED

Identified problems include: high crash rates at three intersections, lack of passing zones, high percentage of truck traffic, future levels of congestion, high levels of access in Courtland, and concern about the divisive effect on the communities of Courtland and Nicollet with the increasing volumes of traffic, especially truck traffic.

# THE PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

The environmental document will evaluate the social, economic, transportation, and environmental impacts of alternatives, including the No-Build and various Build Alternatives. The proposed alternatives include four-lane design alternatives and bypasses of the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet as well as using the existing alignment. A number of alternatives have been identified to address the safety and geometric deficiencies in the vicinity of the intersection of Highways 14, 15, and 21 near New Ulm.

The alternatives have been identified during the development of the Corridor Management Plan through input from the Advisory Committee, at public meetings, during coordination with the Cities of Courtland and Nicollet, and from affected agencies.

## THE SCOPING HEARINGS

The same project information will be presented at each of the hearings and people are welcome to attend either one.

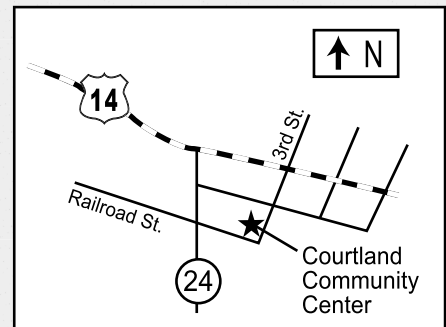
The Scoping Hearings are scheduled for:

Wednesday, April 23, 2003

Courtland Community Center

300 Railroad Street

Interagency Hearing	2:00 to 3:30 PM Presentation at 2:15 PM
Public Hearing	4:30 to 7:00 PM Presentation at 5:30 PM
Open House	Continuous



## DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY

The Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Decision Document is available for review at the following places during regular business hours:

- Mn/DOT District 7
- Blue Earth County Public Library
- North Mankato Public Library
- New Ulm Public Library
- Cities of Courtland and Nicollet (by appointment)

## HOW TO COMMENT

Verbal comments can be made at the Scoping Hearings and will be recorded by a Court Reporter. Written comments can be submitted at the Scoping Hearings or sent to Mn/DOT District 7 by mail, fax, or e-mail.

The contact person is:

Mark Scheidel, Project Manager  
Mn/DOT - District 7, Mankato Office  
501 South Victory Drive  
Mankato, MN 56002-4039

Telephone: (507) 389-6149

Fax: (507) 389-6281

E-mail: [mark.scheidel@dot.state.mn.us](mailto:mark.scheidel@dot.state.mn.us)

★ All written and verbal comments will be included in the public record. **Comments are due by Friday, May 2, 2003, when the comment period closes.**