

Whitmore Resolution Group

MEETING OVERVIEW

July 26, 2022 | 5 pm. | New London, MN

Meeting Overview

Participants of the Advisory Group met to hear additional information about four different draft concepts from MnDOT for the Hwy 23 & Hwy 9 intersection improvement project on July 26, 2022. The meeting was held at Peace Lutheran Church in New London. A summary of the session is below. The next step in the process is public engagement. This third session involved (1) additional graphics of the draft concepts from staff from SRF Consulting Group, Inc. for feedback; (2) time spent by the group engaging in clarifying questions; and (3) additional information about costs and timeframes.

At the beginning of the meeting, Pam reiterated that the group was not being asked to select a single option to take to the public; rather, the public will be seeing and providing input on the same draft concepts the Advisory Group has reviewed. There was an open house scheduled but is in the process of being rescheduled due to primaries.

Attendees at 7/26/2022 meeting

- Richard Schmidt, Business & Public
- Randy Juhl, NLS
- Anthony Rupp, NL Fire and EMS
- Tim Renner, NL Township
- Gene Kubesh, NL Township
- Stacy Petersen, Business (at intersection), Public
- Cody Brand, MnDOT
- Ryan Barney, MnDOT
- Mandi Lighthizer, MnDOT

Additional individuals on Advisory Group (unable to attend 7/26/22 meeting):

- Kelly Asche, NL City Council
- Doug Dietz: New London Township
- Josh Reed: New London Chamber of Commerce
- Mel Odens, County Public Works
- Dr. Richard Wehseler, Clinic & Public
- Trooper Munson, Law Enforcement
- Roger Indieke, County Commissioner
- Darica Schneider, Trucking and Public

Background and Introductions

Facilitator Pam Whitmore opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda for the evening. The introduction included a circle discussion by the participants present at the meeting about the role of the Advisory Group in public engagement, as well as an overview of the importance of being a resource. The discussion included a reminder to the group that the process provides a fresh start for working together toward safety improvements for Hwy 23 & Hwy 9, and that the group is looked to as leaders in the community. The Facilitator discussed the importance of giving the process a chance to work. The group discussed how their role in public engagement included:

- Creating awareness for others around project and options
- Helping educate the community based on facts learned, not assumptions
- Sharing perspective of the advisory group
- Listening to input and bringing it back to the advisory group
- Engaging public and having honest discussion
- Staying open to learning about all options

Additional Education on DRAFT Concepts:

Before presenting the four draft concepts, staff from SRF Consulting Group, Inc reminded the group that future work on Hwy 40 is included in the draft concepts. Staff from SRF Consulting Group, Inc presented additional information on the four concepts to the Advisory Group. Below highlights the additional information

Draft Concept 1: Interchange

- Schedule: estimated 5 plus years after funding received with time frame for funding unknown, however, nature of this type of funding could take up to 10 years or longer
- Crash Information: studies show 40% reduction in total crashes; initially estimated at 70-90% reduction in serious and fatal crashes, but currently being further researched because of conflicting studies
- Range of projected cost: \$20-26 million
- Pedestrians: pedestrian trail along bridge
- Chapin closure: Chapin drive closed with cul-de-sac for drivers to turnaround
- Speed: highway speed

Draft Concept 2: J-Turn

- Schedule: estimated 1.5 to 2.5 years after funding is received with time frame for funding unknown, however, nature of this type of funding could take up to 2 years or longer
- Crash Information: studies show 15% reduction in total crashes; 70% reduction in serious and fatal crashes.
- Range of projected cost: \$7-10 million
- Pedestrians: underpass

- Chapin closure: Chapin drive closed
- Speed: highway speed

Draft Concept 3: Roundabout (single lane)

- Schedule: estimated 2.5 to 3.5 years after funding is received, with time frame for funding unknown, however, nature of this type of funding could take up to 2 years or longer
- Crash Information: studies show increase in property crashes; 80-85% reduction in fatal crashes
- Range of projected cost: \$7-10 million
- Pedestrians: underpass
- Chapin closure: no, Chapin remains open
- Speed: reduced speed at roundabout

Draft Concept 4: Traffic Signal

- Schedule: estimated 2.5 to 3.5 years after funding is received with time frame for funding unknown, however, nature of this type of funding could take up to 5 years or longer
- Crash Information: 28% increase in fatal crashes
- Range of projected cost: \$10-14 million
- Pedestrians: underpass
- Chapin closure: Chapin drive closed from Highway 23
- Speed: highway speed
- NOTE: this concept would need additional consideration on whether the required federal traffic warrant guidelines can be met

Next Steps for Discussion

MnDOT is finalizing draft concepts for the public’s review and input. As noted in the meeting, the role of the Advisory Group is not to select a single option to take to the public but to be a resource for MnDOT during the process and a resource to the community during engagement. The public will be seeing and providing input on the same draft concepts the Advisory Group reviewed. There was an open house scheduled but is in the process of being rescheduled due to primaries.