



Highway 23/71 Preliminary Design

Newsletter 3

June 2007

About the Project

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) is proposing improvements to the 3.5-mile common section of Trunk Highway 23 and U.S. Highway 71 (Highway 23/71). The project corridor extends from the Highway 23/71 northern split in Dovre Township to the southern split of Highway 23/71 and Trunk Highway 294 (Business 71) in the city of Willmar. The proposed improvements are needed to address planned 2030 growth in the North Willmar Lakes area and provide long-term safety and mobility improvements for the Highway 23/71 Corridor. The first phase of project construction is anticipated between 2015 and 2020, depending on funding availability. The project's Scoping phase was completed in 2006, which identified alternatives that will be studied further in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Alternatives for Further Study in Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Alternatives include two build alternatives and a no build alternative, with alternative connections to the Point Lake Drive, 26th Street NW, and the DNR's Point Lake boat access. The attached page illustrates the build alternatives currently being studied in the project's EIS.

The two build alternatives call for the construction of either one or two interchanges and the closure of medians and existing direct accesses to the highway. Possible locations for the interchanges include the area at a relocated County Road 90 and at County Highway 25. Both interchange alternatives include safety and capacity adjustments to the local street network to provide private property access and connections to the interchange(s).

The EIS will identify potential impacts, avoidance alternatives, and impact minimization measures and help determine which alternative will eventually be selected for future construction.

Open House Public Meeting to be Held June 27th
Save the Date - You're Invited!

You are invited to attend a public meeting to be held on Wednesday, June 27, 2007. The public meeting will be conducted as an Open House to provide an opportunity for the public to review work completed on the project to date, including detailed build alternative layouts and a summary of the preliminary environmental impact documentation. Project representatives will be present to discuss all aspects of the project, including the build alternatives attached to this newsletter.

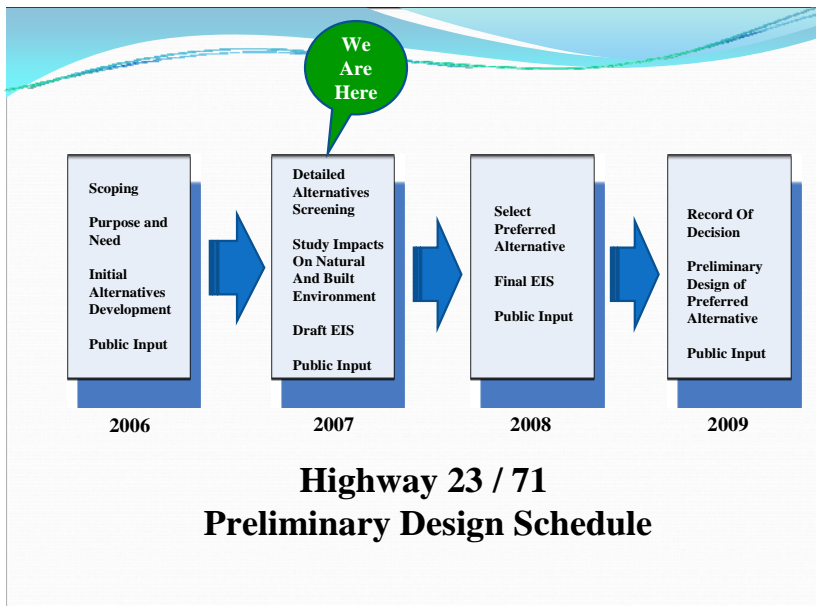
Open House Details

When: June 27, 2007 from 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Where: Kandiyohi County Health and Human Services Building
2200 23rd Street NE, Willmar (Lower Level - Multipurpose Room)

Map: <http://www.co.kandiyohi.mn.us/images/hhslecllocation.jpg>

Staff from Mn/DOT and its consultant (SEH Inc.) will be present to review project alternative drawings, discuss preliminary environmental impact findings, and answer your questions. The meeting location is wheelchair accessible. If you have special needs and desire to attend this meeting, or have questions but are unavailable to attend, please contact Lowell Flaten at (320) 214-3698.



Schedule

The project schedule shown above indicates the major project components and the current activities, including the completion of the Draft EIS and design of the project alternatives. Several study committees, government and permitting agencies, and members of the public will participate in the development of the EIS and the review of findings and conclusions. A public hearing, planned for late 2007, will be held with the completion of the Draft EIS. The Final EIS is planned for completion in 2008.

Your Input is Important

Mn/DOT encourages your participation and questions. This study process will rely on public

involvement, including public open houses, a series of newsletters, and project updates on the web site. Many outreach activities have already been completed, including meetings with Dovre Township, the Eagle Lake Association, environmental review and permitting agencies, neighborhood groups, and local businesses. An Open House was held during the Scoping Phase in July, 2006 in addition to the Open House planned for June 27th. With the completion of the Draft EIS later this year, a public hearing will also be held. Watch for future newsletters and the project web site for meeting announcements.

For More Information

Please visit the project's web site
or contact Mn/DOT staff:

[http://projects.dot.state.mn.us/seh/
2371](http://projects.dot.state.mn.us/seh/2371)

Lowell Flaten, Project Manager
Phone: 320.214.3698
Email: lowell.flaten@dot.state.mn.us



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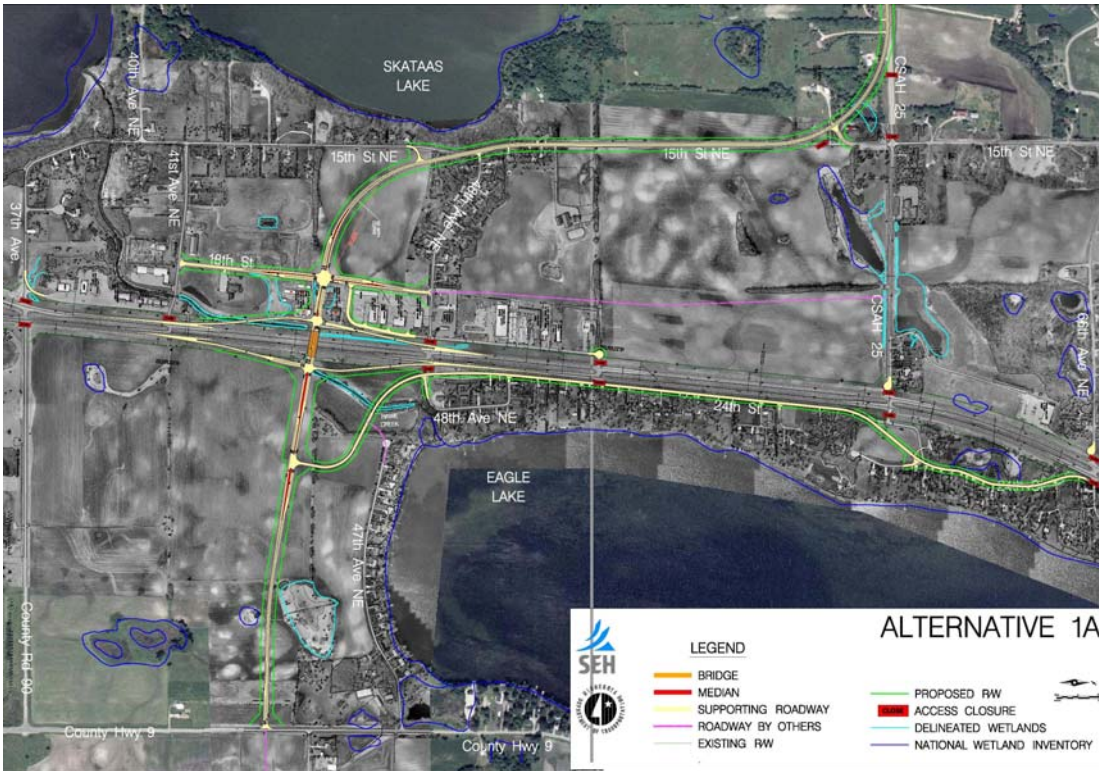
Mn/DOT District 8
2505 Transportation Road

Willmar, MN
56201

Highway 23/71 Environmental Impact Statement

Build Alternatives (not to scale)

June 2007

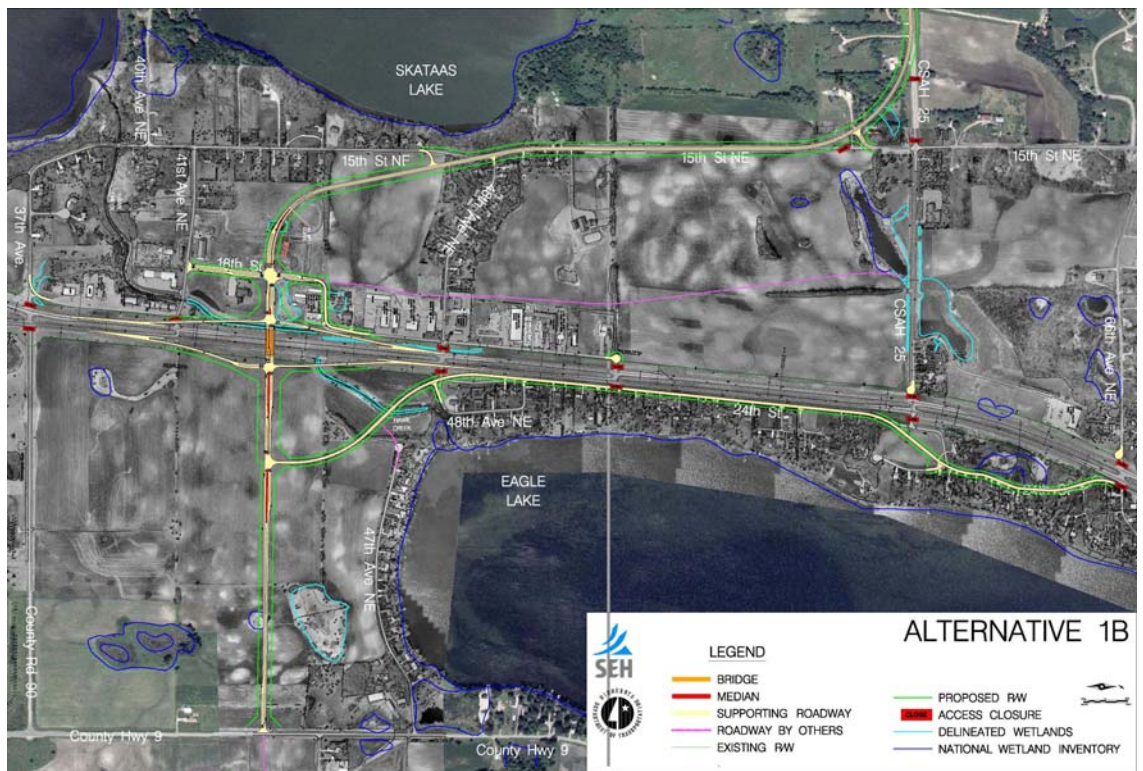


Alternative 1A Relocated County 90 Interchange - Northern Alignment

This alternative provides for one access to Highway 23/71 and connecting roadway improvements. The proposed connecting minor arterial highway between CSAH 25 and County Highway 9 will be designed for a speed of 55 mph (50 mph curve west of the interchange).

Alternative 1B Relocated County 90 Interchange - Southern Alignment

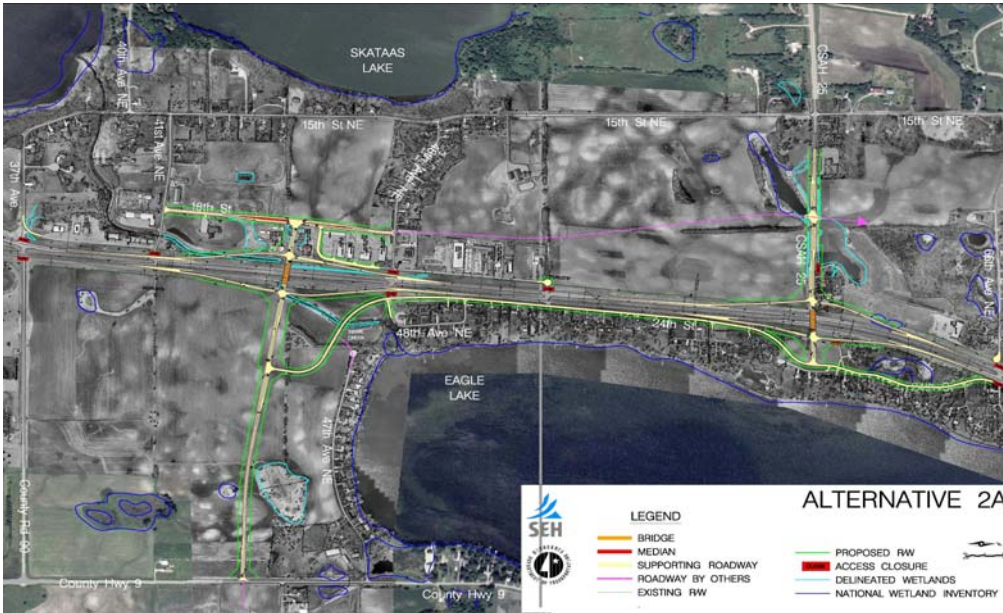
This alternative also provides for one access to Highway 23/71 and connecting roadway improvements, with a southerly alignment in the interchange in comparison to Alternative 1A. The proposed connecting minor arterial highway between existing CSAH 25 and County Hwy. 9 will be designed for a speed of 55 mph (40 mph curve west of the interchange).



Highway 23/71 Environmental Impact Statement

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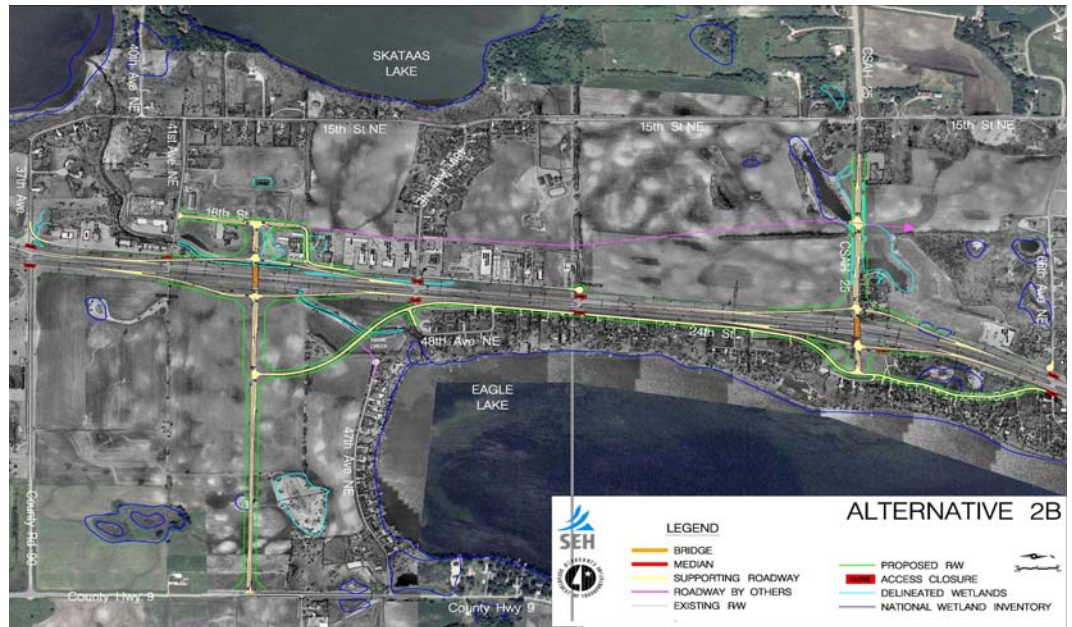


Alternative 2A Relocated County 90 Interchange (Northern Alignment) and CSAH 25 Interchange

This alternative provides for two accesses to Highway 23/71 and includes the Alternative 1A interchange "footprint" (no connecting minor arterial highway) and an interchange at County Highway 25.

Alternative 2B
Relocated County 90 Interchange (Southern Alignment) and CSAH 25 Interchange

This alternative also provides for two accesses to Highway 23/71 and includes the Alternative 1B interchange "footprint" (no connecting minor arterial highway) and an interchange at County Highway 25.



Point Lake Area Alternative Access Connections

Four alternative access connections are also being studied to connect persons destined for Point Lake Drive, 26th Street NE, and the DNR public waters access to other routes when the current access to/from Highway 23/71 is closed. A Point Lake area alternative access connection will be selected as a component of the preferred alternative for the project.

