

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In Summer 2004, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) identified Alternative C from the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) as the Preferred Alternative design for the Interstate 94/Trunk Highway 10 (I-94/TH 10) Interregional Connection (see Figure 1 on page 1-4). Alternative C will intersect I-94 approximately 1.6 miles southeast of the existing Trunk Highway (TH) 24 interchange. It continues north-northwest on a new alignment across the Mississippi River where it intersects with Sherburne County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 8, then continues north on an existing local road alignment (70th Avenue) to intersect with TH 10 at a point approximately 1.2 miles northwest of the existing TH 24/TH 10 intersection. The new roadway will be designed as a freeway with full access directional interchanges at I-94 and TH 10, as well as a local interchange at existing TH 24. Replacement of the existing TH 24 bridge over the Mississippi River will be completed as a separate project by 2040.

The extent of the proposed improvements required preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, Statute (42 USC 4321 et seq.), as well as the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) (Minnesota Rules Chapter 4410). The DEIS was prepared in 2004 to: discuss the purpose of and need for the proposed project; consider alternatives; evaluate environmental effects of alternatives; explore methods for avoiding and minimizing adverse impacts; and obtain public and agency input to aid in the identification of a Preferred Alternative for further study in the FEIS. The FEIS identifies the Preferred Alternative; explains the basis for its selection; summarizes, updates and expands the relevant environmental impact information provided in the DEIS for the Preferred Alternative (Alternative C); describes coordination efforts; and includes agency and public comments, responses to these comments, and any required findings or determinations (40 CFR 1502.14(e) and 23 CFR 771.125(a)).

The format for this FEIS, the Condensed FEIS format, was selected for the proposed project in consultation with the Mn/DOT Office of Environmental Services (OES) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Condensed FEIS format avoids the repetition of DEIS material by briefly summarizing or incorporating by reference the DEIS information that has not changed. The focus of the Condensed FEIS is on changes in the project, its setting, impacts, technical analysis, and mitigation that have occurred since the DEIS was circulated. The format affords the reader a complete overview of the project and its impacts on the human environment. In addition, the Condensed FEIS format parallels the DEIS. Important information from each major section of the FEIS is briefly summarized with reference to the corresponding section of the DEIS and discussion of any noteworthy changes that have occurred since the DEIS was circulated. A copy of the DEIS will not be provided to those parties that received a copy of the DEIS when it was circulated, unless a request is made.

FHWA and Mn/DOT are the joint lead agencies for this project. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR) and the St. Cloud Area Planning Organization (APO) participated as cooperating agencies in review of draft environmental documents and as participants in the project Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) throughout the scoping and EIS processes. (The TAC also included the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), the affected counties and some of the local cities). The COE is a cooperating agency for the EIS pursuant to

the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR, Part 1501.6) and Corps of Engineers permit authority under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 CFR 320-330). The St. Cloud APO and MnDNR are cooperating agencies providing input and expertise consistent with NEPA regulations. The APO's involvement relates to the transportation-related issues in the St. Cloud area and its role as a metropolitan planning organization. The MnDNR's involvement relates to its management/regulatory authority over various natural resources in the study area (Mississippi Scenic Riverway, fisheries, wildlife, etc.).

A River Corridor Advisory Committee (RCAC) was also established as part of the EIS process. The RCAC included elected officials from the local townships, cities, and counties. The EIS process also included coordination with several additional natural and cultural resource agencies and numerous opportunities for public and agency comments.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE I-94/TH 10 INTERREGIONAL CONNECTION PROJECT

The need for an improved interregional connection between I-94 and TH 10 was initially established in a comprehensive transportation study completed by Mn/DOT in 1996. Since that time, additional transportation policies, studies and forecasting have reconfirmed and strengthened the need for improvements to the transportation system connection between I-94 and TH 10. Problems and needs to be addressed by the proposed project include:

- Highways I-94, TH 10 and TH 24 in the study area are important linkages that connect regional centers throughout the state. They are designated as part of the National Highway System (NHS) as well as Minnesota's High-Priority Interregional Corridor (IRC) System. The TH 24/TH 10 corridor (currently the river crossing connection most used by interregional travelers) was designated as a High-Priority IRC, with performance standards that include the need to maintain a minimum travel speed of 60 mph, with a preferable travel speed of 65 mph.
- Increasing transportation demand on existing corridors connecting I-94 and TH 10 coupled with limited opportunities in existing corridors to increase capacity. This results in increased congestion and the inability to meet the IRC performance standards described above.
- The existing TH 24 corridor currently experiences crash rates similar to statewide averages for similar roadways; however, the severity of crashes is higher than the state average. Safety problems in the TH 24 corridor will likely increase as traffic levels rise since the ability to find gaps in traffic to cross or access TH 24 will become more difficult and motorists will take greater risks. Also, pedestrian, bicyclist and snowmobile safety issues will continue to worsen as volumes rise and more modal conflicts result.
- Impacts of congestion on the communities through which interregional traffic is traveling (Clearwater and Clear Lake) will lead to increasing delays for local traffic trying to cross the corridor. This will also decrease the quality of downtown areas bisected by the highways.
- The existing at-grade crossing of TH 24 with the BNSF rail line results in increased congestion at the TH 10/TH 24 intersection and in downtown Clear Lake when a train passes through, stopping vehicular cross-traffic on TH 24.

- Increasing growth in the area will limit available options for adding corridor capacity, if a Build Alternative is not identified as the Preferred Alternative during the EIS process. There is an immediate need to identify a Preferred Alternative and preserve the best corridor (i.e., serves the transportation need, while minimizing environmental impacts) as soon as possible. This would also allow communities to plan any future development with the Preferred Alternative corridor in mind.

1.2 DEIS ALTERNATIVES

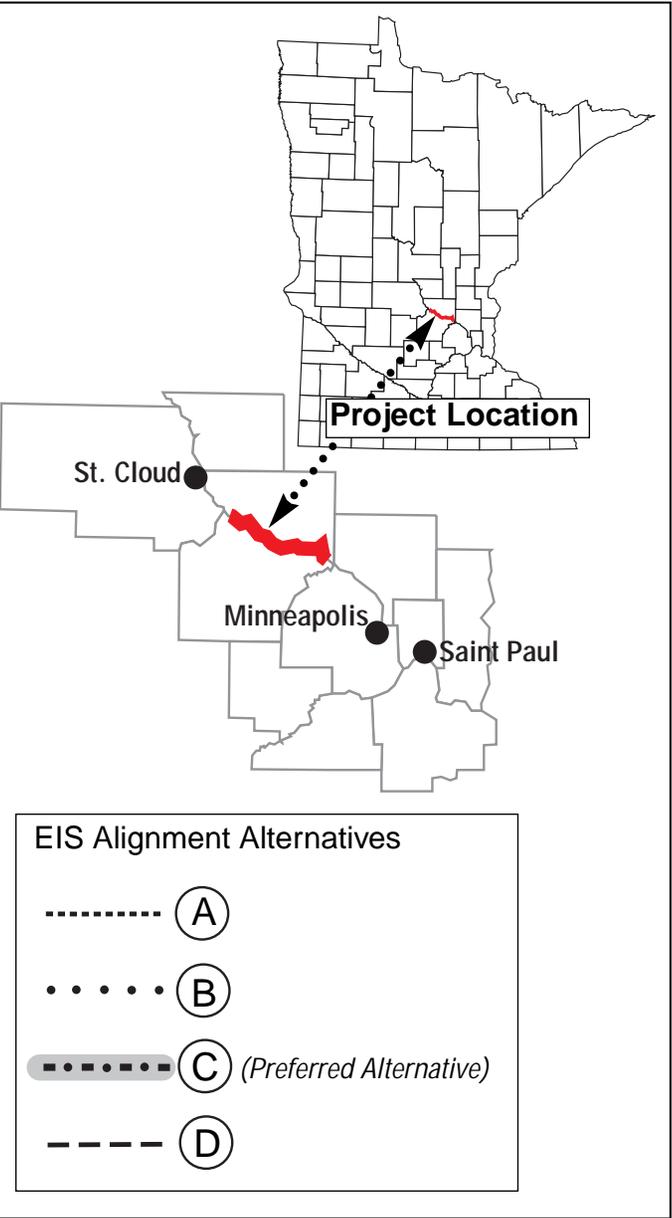
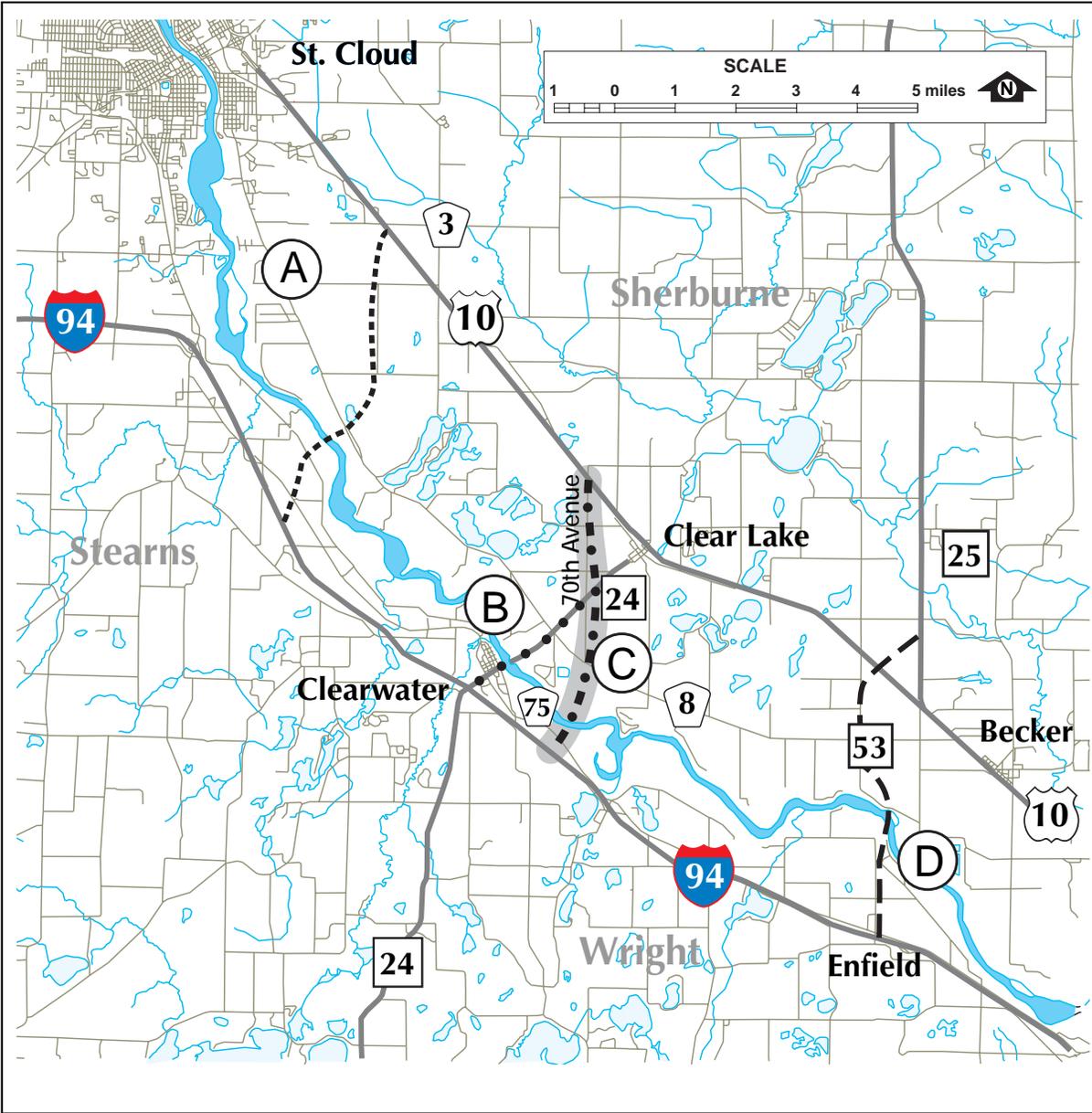
The process of developing alternatives for the I-94/TH 10 Interregional Connection included a number of studies and an increasing level of refinement of alternative concepts over the past ten years. A broad range of potential connections was evaluated in Mn/DOT's *Mississippi River Crossing Study* conducted in 1995-1996, with four potential corridors ultimately recommended for further study. These corridors were refined to four specific alignments during the EIS scoping process documented in the 1997 *I-94/TH 10 Regional Connection Scoping Document* and the 2001 scoping decision document. During the DEIS process, the scoping alignments were further refined with respect to interchange configurations and system connection issues and a number of sub-alternatives were developed and evaluated, ultimately resulting in identification of four Build Alternatives (one in each of the alignments carried forward from scoping) that were analyzed and documented in detail in the DEIS. The four Build Alternatives in the DEIS ranged from expansion of the existing TH 24 corridor with a realignment at the north end (Alternative B) to three new corridor alignments (Alternatives A, C and D). Figure 1 shows the location of the four Build Alternatives. The average length of the Build Alternative corridors is six miles with each alternative planned as a four-lane freeway. Following is a brief description of the alternatives analyzed in the DEIS.

- No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative consists of reconstruction of the existing two-lane TH 24 corridor (as required by routine maintenance) between I-94 and TH 10 within the study area. It is assumed that by 2040, the existing TH 24 bridge over the Mississippi River would need to be replaced as part of the No-Build Alternative.

- Alternative A

Alternative A is located east of the City of St. Cloud. This alternative intersects with I-94 at a point approximately 4.5 miles northwest of the existing I-94/TH 24 interchange. It continues in a northeasterly direction on a new alignment across the river, then heads north to connect to TH 10 in the vicinity of the intersection of Sherburne County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 3 with TH 10. This alternative would be a freeway design with interchanges at I-94 and TH 10 and a grade-separated rail crossing near TH 10. This alternative would also assume the replacement of the existing TH 24 bridge over the Mississippi River by 2040 as part of a separate project. Mn/DOT determined that a future local interchange at CSAH 8 is physically and operationally possible, based on a review completed in response to the City of St. Cloud and the St. Cloud APO's request; however, the interchange would not be constructed as part of Alternative A. The interchange would need to be pursued independently by the local jurisdiction.



I-94 / TH10 PROJECT LOCATION

I-94/TH 10 INTERREGIONAL CONNECTION
 Final Environmental Impact Statement
 S.P. #8823-01
 Minnesota Department of Transportation District 3

Figure 1

Alternative B

Alternative B is located along the existing TH 24 alignment from its interchange with I-94, through the City of Clearwater, across the Mississippi River and northeast to the intersection of TH 24 with a local road (70th Avenue, same alignment as Alternative C) approximately 0.8 mile northeast of Sherburne CSAH 8. The alignment continues north on 70th Avenue (the same road alignment as identified for Alternative C) to intersect with TH 10 at a point approximately 1.2 miles northwest of the existing TH 24/TH 10 intersection. Alternative B assumes replacement of the existing TH 24 bridge over the Mississippi River by 2040 as a separate project. Alternative B would be a freeway design with interchanges at I-94 and TH 10, and a grade-separated rail crossing near TH 10. This alternative also includes an interchange at Sherburne County Road (CR) 57 to provide local access to/from the City of Clear Lake.

- Alternative C (identified as the Preferred Alternative)

Alternative C intersects with I-94 at a point approximately 1.6 miles southeast of the existing TH 24/I-94 (Clearwater) interchange. It continues in a north-northeast direction on a new alignment across the river until it intersects with Sherburne CSAH 8, it then continues north on an existing local road alignment (70th Avenue – the same road alignment as identified for Alternative B) to intersect with TH 10 at a point approximately 1.2 miles northwest of the existing TH 24/TH 10 intersection. This alternative includes a freeway design with interchanges at I-94 and TH 10 and a grade-separated rail crossing near TH 10. This alternative also includes an interchange at existing TH 24 to provide local access to/from the City of Clear Lake. Alternative C also assumes the replacement of the existing TH 24 bridge over the Mississippi River by 2040 as a separate project.

- Alternative D

Alternative D is located west of the City of Becker. This alignment intersects with I-94 at a point approximately 0.6 mile west of the freeway rest area east of the Hasty interchange. It continues in a northerly direction on a new alignment parallel to existing Barton Avenue, then across the river to 0.2 mile east of the existing intersection of TH 10 and Sherburne CSAH 53. With this alternative, TH 25 north of TH 10 would be realigned to connect to the new interregional connection alignment at the TH 10 interchange. This alternative includes a freeway design with interchanges at I-94 and TH 10 and a grade-separated rail crossing near TH 10. Alternative D also assumes the replacement of the existing TH 24 bridge over the Mississippi River by 2040 as a separate project. Local connections/interchanges would not be included.

1.3 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Alternative C was identified as the Preferred Alternative to be studied in the FEIS. Identification of the Preferred Alternative was based upon how well each alternative met the regional transportation function, how each alternative impacted the Mississippi Scenic Riverway, negative impacts within communities in the study area, and other impacts that may be unique to the corridors. Support of the local communities was also considered.

Alternative C best met the regional transportation function, had the least impact (of corridors on new alignment) to the Mississippi Scenic Riverway, and had no unique impacts. Although initial positions varied widely among local communities, Alternative C offered the best opportunity for consensus and was brought before the River Crossing Advisory Committee for support.

Based on the additional survey and mapping data obtained subsequent to the DEIS, input from the local communities and additional guidance received from Mn/DOT design staff regarding the centerline spacing and interchange designs, the following modifications were incorporated into the Alternative C design. Refer to Table 1.1 at the end of this chapter for a comparison of the Draft and Final Alternative C impacts.

- 124-foot centerline spacing reduced to 90 feet. The original (DEIS) 300- to 325-foot corridor was tightened to a 300-foot corridor for study in the FEIS.
- The design speeds on the following ramps were evaluated to identify the best balance between minimizing project impacts and meeting safe design standards, in response to concerns expressed by property owners and resource agencies.
 - I-94 interchange “horseshoe” ramp (eastbound I-94 to northbound river crossing) revised from a 35-mph design to a 40-mph design.
 - TH 10 interchange “horseshoe” ramp (westbound TH 10 to southbound river crossing) revised from a 35-mph design to a 40-mph design speed.
 - Ramp from westbound I-94 to northbound river crossing modified from 60-mph design speed to 70-mph design speed. The ramp from southbound river crossing to eastbound I-94 remains at a 60-mph design speed.
 - Ramp from eastbound TH 10 to southbound river crossing modified from 60-mph design speed to 70-mph design speed. Ramp from northbound river crossing to westbound TH 10 remains at a 60-mph design speed.
 - The ramps for southbound river crossing to westbound I-94 and northbound river crossing to eastbound TH 10 use 50-mph design speeds; the alignment radii of both these ramps have been reduced to the minimum acceptable radii for a 50-mph design speed, in order to minimize property impacts

The design modifications listed above would have been applied to any of the alternatives. The following modifications are specific to the Final Alternative C alignment.

- Mainline design adjusted to more closely follow the section line. Efforts made to avoid splitting areas of impact (e.g., residential properties, farmland, and irrigated agricultural areas) on both sides of the proposed roadway. Compared to the alignment for Alternative C in the DEIS, the alignment has been shifted approximately 42 feet west from a point 2,500 feet south of the TH 24 interchange and returned to the previous alignment at a point 1,000 feet north of County Road 57. This shift results in wetland impacts in this area additional to what was evaluated in the DEIS (e.g., Wetland C-3).
- The proposed roadway has been realigned from 430 feet south of CSAH 8 through the I-94 interchange based on updated mapping and community input. The shift was necessary to avoid substantial impacts to a private golf course, as well as minor impacts to the

Clearwater/Clear Lake Wastewater Treatment facility, which was the original intent of the Alternative C alignment. The modification will shift the I-94 interchange approximately 1,300 feet southeast of the original proposed interchange location.

- The alignment radii on the second curve for both exit ramps to TH 24 (at the interchange with the proposed river crossing) were reduced to minimize right of way impacts.
- To minimize impacts to Fish Creek, the Fish Creek culvert is now anticipated to require a 10-foot extension, rather than the initially-anticipated 20-foot extension.
- The construction of a cul-de-sac on Gowan Avenue (along the south side of I-94, northwest of Fish Lake) is no longer required in order to accommodate the southbound river crossing to eastbound I-94 ramp.
- The following design features have been incorporated to avoid impacting Wetland BC-4 (Cater Lake):
 - The 60-mph design speed for the northbound river crossing to westbound TH 10 ramp has eliminated the Preferred Alternative’s initial impact on Wetland BC-4 and reduced its impact on Wetland BC-3.
 - The cross-section of mainline TH 10 has been tightened by shifting westbound TH 10 to the south 24 feet and introducing median barriers (medians are approximately 2,300 feet long).
 - The inside shoulder at Cater Lake has been reduced from a 10-foot shoulder to a 6-foot shoulder.
 - The addition of urban-type median, revisions to TH 10 alignment, and shoulder width reduction creates an opportunity to flatten the inslope (from 1:2 to 1:4) between TH 10 and Cater Lake. This permits improved infiltration and reduces erosion potential.
 - South Lake Cater Pond was added to treat runoff from the roadway east of Cater Lake. The pond was pulled in toward TH 10 and elongated in order to minimize property impacts.
 - North Cater Lake pond was added to treat runoff from the roadway west of Cater Lake. This pond was located adjacent to CSAH 66 in old road right of way.
- The bridge for the eastbound TH 10 to southbound river crossing ramp, and that of the westbound TH 10 to southbound river crossing ramp, were combined into one bridge structure in order to minimize crossings over the railroad, as well as to reduce overall project costs.
- A 12-foot trail was incorporated on the north side of the CSAH 75 bridge over the proposed interregional connection roadway.
- A 12-foot trail has been incorporated on the south side of the CSAH 8 overpass over the proposed interregional connection roadway.
- A 12-foot trail was incorporated on the north/west side of the TH 24 interchange area’s bridge over the proposed interregional connection roadway.

The modifications that have been made to the original Alternative C since the DEIS are outlined here in order to guide readers to what alignment specifics have changed since that document's publication. However, the Preferred Alternative considered in this FEIS reflects all modifications outlined above. Henceforth, this document's use of the term "Preferred Alternative" refers to this comprehensive alignment, including its post-DEIS modifications, unless otherwise noted.

Because the impacts that the DEIS alignment of Alternative C would have had on the golf course were so great (it would have required the removal of three holes, essentially removing the overall functionality of the course), the Preferred Alternative as evaluated in this FEIS is identified as a better overall option than the DEIS Alternative C. The impacts to the golf course would have been substantial without the alignment modification and could have required relocation of the entire golf course at a substantial cost. In addition, the Preferred Alternative evaluated in this FEIS avoids impacts to the Clearwater/Clear Lake Wastewater Treatment facility.

Questions have been raised as to the need for minor movement ramps, particularly those designed with a "horseshoe" configuration (I-94 eastbound to northbound, TH 10 westbound to southbound), because this configuration results in substantial right of way impacts. Project traffic forecast analyses found that 10 percent of the total daily traffic projected to use the Preferred Alternative would use the I-94 eastbound to northbound river crossing, and nine percent would use the TH 10 westbound to southbound movement. While these percentages are relatively low compared to 75 percent of the volume that is using the main ramps, the volumes on these minor movements are not unimportant. Placing these minor ramp volumes on a local arterial street (e.g., TH 24) with at-grade intersections would require an additional lane in each direction to accommodate this volume. In other words, while these numbers are considered "minor" when compared to the mainline movements, they are substantial when considered in the context of magnitude with TH 24 volumes.

Further, users generally select routes with the shortest travel time (not necessarily distance) and the most reliability. The alternate route to the Preferred Alternative's river crossing (old TH 24) will have a minimum of five signals and a busy rail crossing that limits flow and at times disrupts traffic. The old TH 24 route, while shorter for some minor movement trip patterns, is not as reliable due to the possibility of stops and railroad crossing interruption.

Finally, federal access policy governing interstate routes strongly supports access for all movements; partial movement interchanges are discouraged. As a result, removing the minor movements without justification would not be permitted.

1.4 COSTS/FUNDING

Preliminary cost estimates for the Preferred Alternative are shown in Table 1.2. The table includes cost estimates for construction of the proposed improvements and right of way acquisition costs. These estimates are based on 2005 dollars and have been refined since the DEIS to include specific project elements being proposed for the Preferred Alternative (e.g., additional ramps).

**TABLE 1.2
COST ESTIMATES FOR PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

COST	Preferred Alternative (Alternative C)
Construction Cost of Interregional Connection (excludes right of way acquisition)	\$125,300,000
Right of Way and Relocation Costs	\$8,100,000
TOTAL COST (Construction and right of way only)	\$133,400,000

Funding sources have yet to be identified; however, it is anticipated that funding will be a combination of state and federal funds.

1.5 SCHEDULE

The proposed project is currently included in Mn/DOT District 3's long-range plan and is identified for construction beginning in 2015. However, since this interregional connection has been identified as an important link in the state's IRC system it is possible, if funding becomes available sooner, that the project could be advanced. Table 1.3 shows the schedule for completion of the environmental review process and project construction.

**TABLE 1.3
PROJECT SCHEDULE**

Task/Activity	Completion Date
Release of Scoping Document/Draft Scoping Decision Document	September 1997
Final Scoping Decision Document	December 2001
Distribute DEIS for agency/public comment	February 2004
DEIS Public Hearing	March 4, 2004
Identification of Preferred Alternative by Mn/DOT Commissioner	May 2004
Distribute FEIS	Fall/Winter 2006
Mn/DOT Adequacy Determination and FHWA Record of Decision	Fall/Winter 2006
Construction	Begin 2015, complete 2019

1.6 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Table 1.1, at the end of this chapter, summarizes the transportation, environmental, social and economic impacts of the Preferred Alternative. Assessment of these impacts is based upon an approximate 300-foot wide corridor, with wider impact areas assumed at interchanges based on preliminary interchange design concepts, plus impacts as required to mitigate local roadway access impacts. The impacts included in the summary table may be further minimized through avoidance and minimization efforts during final project design, but represent a reasonable basis for comparing the DEIS Alternative C alignment with the final Preferred Alternative alignment. The impacts of the Preferred Alternative are described in greater detail in Chapters 4 through 12 of the FEIS document.

1.7 OTHER MAJOR GOVERNMENTAL ACTIONS IN THE PROJECT STUDY AREA

Independent corridor studies have been prepared for the I-94 and TH 10 corridors within and beyond the EIS study area to address capacity and safety issues in the corridors over the next 20 years. The recommendations of these corridor studies are summarized in Section 2.2 of the DEIS. The recommendations generally include construction of additional lanes on I-94 to increase capacity and the conversion of TH 10 to a freeway from the I-94/TH 10 Interregional Connection through the City of St. Cloud to the City of Rice.

The need for capacity improvements to the I-94 and TH 10 corridors are independent from the need for the I-94/TH 10 Interregional Connection project – that is, the projects are not needed to support each other and each has an independent utility. However, construction of the proposed I-94/TH 10 connection project likely will affect the location of improvements made to the I-94 and TH 10 corridors. Independent environmental review of the I-94 and TH 10 corridor improvements will occur prior to their implementation.

1.8 PERMITS AND APPROVALS

The following federal, state and local permits/approvals/concurrences will likely be required for construction of the proposed action:

AGENCY	TYPE OF PERMIT/APPROVAL/ CONCURRENCE
Federal	
Federal Highway Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EIS (Draft and Final) • Record of Decision • Section 4(f) Evaluation (Draft and Final)
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 404 Permit
State	
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES) • Section 401 Water Quality Certification
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 106 concurrence
Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 106 review • EIS (Draft and Final) • Wetland Conservation Act • EIS Adequacy Determination
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MnDNR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Waters Permit • Water Appropriation Permit, if needed
Local	
City of Clearwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Consent
City of Clear Lake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Consent
Watershed Districts	
Clearwater River Watershed District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface Water Plan review

1.9 POTENTIAL AREAS OF CONTROVERSY AND UNRESOLVED ISSUES

Throughout the EIS scoping, DEIS and FEIS process, the proposing agencies have made extensive efforts at agency, local government and public involvement, in order to identify potentially controversial issues and resolve them during development of the DEIS alternatives and the Preferred Alternative design. This effort has generally been successful in addressing concerns of stakeholders in the project area; however, different agencies, local jurisdictions and citizens affected by the proposed project have varying priorities and interests they would like to see protected. In addition, subsequent to the close of the DEIS public comment period, property owners in the project area, including residents of the Fish Lake area, have contacted Mn/DOT and FHWA staff regarding their concerns with the project. These residents' comments are addressed throughout this FEIS; Chapter 13 documents the proposing agencies' attempts to identify and resolve all potentially controversial issues, as well as their ongoing discussions with project stakeholders.

1.10 PROJECT COMMITMENTS

Throughout the DEIS and FEIS preparation processes, Mn/DOT has committed to a number of mitigation measures that will be implemented as part of the proposed project, including commitments to further coordination with appropriate agencies. It should be noted that a number of commitments have been made to coordinate with other agencies where Mn/DOT does not have direct authority to implement certain programs or services; these reflect Mn/DOT's position that some actions must be accomplished jointly in order to meet certain goals. Some of the commitments itemized here are legal requirements, and some are not. This project will comply with all federal and state laws and regulations which are applicable at the time of construction.

**TABLE 1.4
PROJECT MITIGATION COMMITMENTS**

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No tower lighting will be used on I-94 interchange. Conduct additional analysis at time of design to determine best lighting option.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuous lighting will not be installed at I-94 acceleration ramp where the southbound river crossing traffic movement comes in. Although only lighting at the nose will be provided at the time of construction, Mn/DOT reserves the right to install additional lighting in the area if night crash rates warrant it.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct second mussel survey in Mississippi River prior to construction. Relocate any mussels that are found in the project area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide standard Blanding's Turtles notification to project contractor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove abandoned parking area along old TH 24 rest area (near the Mississippi River).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid acquisition of property at Clearwater/Clear Lake water treatment site.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include MnDNR in bridge concept meetings. Bridge design/treatments will be as non-intrusive as possible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commit to a long-span bridge concept over the river channel (average pier spacing to be 260 to 300 feet—estimate that two piers will be required in channel).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid acquisition of Pazik property near Fish Lake.

TABLE 1.4 continued
PROJECT MITIGATION COMMITMENTS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide trail continuity along CSAH 8, CSAH 75, and existing TH 24.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate with MnDNR to establish native grasses within Mn/DOT right of way in the project corridor and interchange areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct a reduced cross-section on TH 10 to avoid impacts to Cater Lake.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information regarding noise setback distances to local land use officials.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local officials on official mapping.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimize impacts to wildlife and habitat by providing wildlife crossings under river crossing bridge and revegetation with native plants.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction within the river is to wait until after June 15 to control erosion/sedimentation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-review project area for presence of Blanding’s Turtles prior to construction.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bluff cuts will be limited to 10 feet; cleared vegetation will be replaced with native species.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gowan Pond (proposed stormwater pond) will include measures to prevent the migration of materials from the Mississippi River to the pond.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roadway within Clear Lake wellhead protection area will use clay-lined ditches to prevent contamination.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming such a commitment is found to be consistent with Mn/DOT regulations, Mn/DOT will fund the installation of a flapgate at Fish Creek if a local government agrees to take ownership of it, including all maintenance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with adjacent property owners along the proposed I-94 ramps so berming can be constructed at minimal cost.

**TABLE 1.1
COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE C IMPACTS**

SUBJECT	DEIS Alternative C	Preferred Alternative (Modified Alternative C)
TRANSPORTATION AND FISCAL IMPACTS		
IRC Performance Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets criteria. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets criteria.
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlled-access freeway eliminates conflict points, improves safety. • Reduced volumes on TH 24 decreases ped/bike conflicts with vehicles. • Grade-separated rail crossing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlled-access freeway eliminates conflict points, improves safety. • Reduced volumes on TH 24 decreases ped/bike conflicts with vehicles. • Grade-separated rail crossing.
Relative Year 2040 Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)⁽¹⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -156,440 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -156,440
Relative Year 2040 Daily Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT)⁽¹⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -20,660 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -20,660
Construction cost of interregional connection (excludes ROW acquisition)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$97,876,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$125,300,000
Total cost of interregional connection (includes ROW acquisition and relocation estimates)⁽²⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$105,181,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$133,400,000
SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS		
Section 4(f) and Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No impact. • Potential small family gravesite (identified by DEIS comment). Will be avoided.
Parks, Trails, Recreational Areas and Natural Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If necessary, provisions for existing DNR snowmobile trail within an abandoned RR corridor adjacent to CSAH 75 will need to be provided. • Provide accommodations for River Country Regional Trail near CSAH 75. • Possible noise and visual impacts to the quality of user experience on Mississippi Scenic Riverway and Canoe/Boating Route. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it still exists in current location at time of project construction, provisions for existing DNR GIA snowmobile trail (within abandoned RR corridor adjacent to CSAH 75) will be provided. Ongoing coordination with DNR will be conducted. The existing trail is located on temporary easements (whose locations may change between now and project construction). • The City of Clearwater has identified plans to provide the River Country Regional Trail, a recreational trail parallel to CSAH 75, including within the project area. A 12-foot trail has been incorporated on the north side of the project's CSAH 75 overpass over the interregional connection. • Possible noise and visual impacts to the quality of user experience on Mississippi Scenic Riverway and Canoe/Boating Route. • Sherburne County has identified plans to provide a future trail along CSAH 8, including within the project area. A 12-foot trail has been incorporated on the south side of the project's CSAH 8 overpass over the interregional connection. • A 12-foot trail has been incorporated on the TH 24 overpass bridge over the interregional connection, to provide pedestrian and bicycle access
Threatened/Endangered species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No record of threatened/endangered species in this corridor area. • Blandings turtle sighting in Clearwater area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No record of threatened/endangered species in this corridor area. • Blandings turtle sighting in Clearwater area; also near Fish Lake.
Other natural resource impacts (fish, wildlife, vegetation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts to 0.4-acre strip floodplain forest along the east river shore. • Impacts to large oak woodland at top of east bluff - approximately 4.5 acres. • Alternative will need to provide mitigation in bridge design to facilitate wildlife movements along the river. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts to 0.7-acre strip floodplain forest along the east river shore. • Impacts to large oak woodland at top of east bluff - approximately 4.8 acres. • Alternative will provide mitigation in bridge design to facilitate wildlife movements along the river.
Wetlands (number of acres of encroachment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heron Rookery approximately 2,325 feet east of Draft Alternative C construction limits (although resource was not identified until DEIS comment period) • 6.3 acres of impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heron Rookery identified during the DEIS comment period and confirmed approximately 1,600 feet east of Final Alternative C construction limits. • "Fish Creek" (channel from Fish Lake) impacted by extension of culvert; 0.11 acre impact on wetland not previously identified. • 6.46 acres of impact (total).
Floodplain/Floodway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encroachment in 100-year floodplain: transverse, 780 linear feet, 4.5 acres fill area.⁽³⁾ • Bridge pier impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encroachment in 100-year floodplain: transverse, 900 linear feet, 5.2 acres fill area. • Approximately 12 piers in floodway with the potential for one pier in the floodplain.
Water Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential treatment on northeast side of river, within or partially within 100-year floodplain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned treatment on northeast side of river, within or partially within 100-year floodplain. • Planned treatment to north of Fish Lake (west of Fish Creek) to help address concerns of area residents about quality of water entering Fish Lake. • South and North Cater Lake Ponds will treat runoff from roadway.

TABLE 1.1 continued
COMPARATIVE SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVE C IMPACTS

SUBJECT	DEIS Alternative C	Preferred Alternative (Modified Alternative C)
SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS continued		
Noise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greatest change in noise levels along Alt. C will occur at 'isolated' residential receptors located along the Riverway (15-decibel increase from 2040 No-Build to 2040 Build). The new crossing location also creates an additional noise source that could be annoying to riverway users looking for quiet river experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greatest change in noise levels along Preferred Alternative will occur at 'isolated' residential receptors located along the Riverway (13-decibel increase from 2040 No-Build to 2040 Build). The new crossing location also creates an additional noise source that could be annoying to riverway users looking for quiet river experience. Concerns regarding noise impacts on Fish Lake residents due to elevated ramps.
Wild and Scenic River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New crossing corridor approximately 1.5 miles downstream from existing TH 24 crossing. Introduces additional source of traffic noise and visual impacts to Riverway users. Bridge is visible for approximately 1/2 mile (downstream view from river bend). Bridge is within the designated 'recreational' section of the Riverway and the proposed 'rural residential' land use district. Bottom of bridge structure is approximately 17 feet above top of bank. Cut 8 feet into east bluff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New crossing corridor approximately 1.6 miles downstream from existing TH 24 crossing. Introduces additional source of traffic noise and visual impacts to Riverway users. Bridge is visible for approximately 1/2 mile (downstream view from river bend). Bridge is within the designated 'recreational' section of the Riverway and the proposed 'rural residential' land use district. Bottom of bridge structure is approximately 20 feet above top of bank. Cut 10 feet into east bluff.
Visual/Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New bridge across Mississippi Scenic Riverway (see also Wild and Scenic River impacts). A new four-lane highway through existing rural area. Bridges/ramps for interchanges and overpasses are between 25 and 32 feet above adjacent land surface. Adverse visual impacts to/from residents within City of Clearwater. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New bridge across Mississippi Scenic Riverway (see also Wild and Scenic River impacts). A new four-lane highway through existing rural area. Bridges/ramps for interchanges and overpasses are approximately 40 feet above adjacent land surface. Adverse visual impacts to/from residents within City of Clearwater. Concern about roadway lighting impacts on residents of Fish Lake area.
Soils: Erosion, sedimentation, bluff slumping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 8-foot cut into east river bluff face. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 10-foot cut into east river bluff face.
Right of way Acquisition and Relocation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential total parcel acquisitions ⁽⁴⁾ (residential/agricultural) Potential total parcel acquisitions ⁽⁴⁾ (commercial/industrial) Total right of way acquisition ⁽²⁾ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 (15/3) 5 (5/0) 480 acres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16 (12/4) ⁽⁵⁾ 1 (1/0) Approximately 508 acres
Farmland ⁽⁶⁾	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 149 acres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 152 acres
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated tax loss on total acquisitions is \$31,000. Would displace businesses at five commercial, and three agricultural properties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimated tax loss on total acquisitions is \$23,054. Would displace one commercial business.
Social/Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interregional traffic 'bypasses' downtown Clearwater. Signs could advertise easy off-on via TH 24 interchanges. Interregional traffic 'bypasses' downtown Clear Lake. Signs could advertise easy off-on via TH 24 interchanges. This alternative would impact the cities of Clearwater and Clear Lake by eliminating interregional trips through the cities' downtowns - this could be viewed as a negative and/or positive impact. Proposed alignment would bisect existing residential 'community' along CSAH 75. 11.5-acre (including 3 holes) impact to Eagle Trace Golf Course (private). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interregional traffic 'bypasses' downtown Clearwater. Signs could advertise easy off-on via TH 24 interchanges. Interregional traffic 'bypasses' downtown Clear Lake. Signs could advertise easy off-on via TH 24 interchanges. This alternative would impact the cities of Clearwater and Clear Lake by eliminating interregional trips through the cities' downtowns - this could be viewed as a negative and/or positive impact. Proposed alignment would bisect existing residential 'community' along CSAH 75. 1.3-acre impact to Eagle Trace Golf Course (private). Acquisition will not impact use of the golf course.

⁽¹⁾ VMT and VHT values in this table are the difference between No-Build VMT and Alternative C's VMT and the difference between No-Build VHT and Alternative C's VHT (see Section 4.4 of DEIS).

⁽²⁾ Total right of way includes the land area required for total and partial acquisitions. Figure may include more property than is permanently required; any area not required for permanent right of way will be released from Mn/DOT ownership.

⁽³⁾ Updated figures for DEIS Alternative C's floodplain impacts are based on updated and refined mapping.

⁽⁴⁾ Multiple contiguous parcels of the same classification that are under the same ownership are counted as one parcel requiring acquisition.

⁽⁵⁾ Parcels classified under the residential/agricultural category (new classification distinction since the DEIS) are counted here as residential (because they include a homesteaded property).

⁽⁶⁾ This acreage is approximate and includes only prime, unique and statewide important farmland as identified by the NRCS. This acreage is part of the overall acreage reported above for "total right of way acquisition."