

FINAL RECOMMENDATION

New Ulm Highway 14 Special Task Force

To: Mr. Greg Ous, District Engineer
Minnesota Department of Transportation, District 7
2151 Bassett Drive
Mankato, MN 56001-6888

Copy: Mr. Charles Zelle, Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Transportation
395 John Ireland Boulevard
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155-1899

From: Members of the New Ulm Highway 14 Special Task Force (listed on page 4)

Date: May 18, 2015

After several months of detailed discussion, careful analysis and public input, the Highway 14 Special Task Force is pleased to offer our recommendations to MnDOT regarding transportation investments in the New Ulm Corridor. We have reached a unanimous, consensus view on how we would like to see MnDOT use currently available transportation funding for the area.

Our recommendations are based on the understanding that MnDOT is programmed to invest nearly \$43 million to rebuild the Highway 14/15 Front Street and Minnesota River bridges in 2018. Our process considered how to make the best use of this funding in the short-term, while also planning for future growth and development in New Ulm. Based on this understanding, the Task Force recommends the following:

1. Build a system of improvements from Broadway to the “Y”

- a) The Task Force recommends using currently available funding to;
 - improve truck turning at the Highway 14/15 intersection at Broadway,
 - rebuild two-lane bridges over Front Street and the Minnesota River, and
 - build a new, grade-separated interchange at Highway 14/15/CR 21 (the “Y”).
- b) The two-lane bridges in conjunction with the interchange improvements should be viewed as an “all or nothing” proposition. In other words, if no improvements are to be made at the “Y” intersection, then four lane bridges are expected to be constructed.

2. Design with the future in mind

Being able to expand the bridges in the future was an important factor in shaping the Task Force's recommendation for two-lane bridges. Future expansion also contributed to the high level of public support for two-lane bridges. Therefore, the Front Street and Minnesota River bridges must be designed to accommodate two additional lanes in the future (for a total of four lanes on each bridge).

3. Use the design concepts most favored by the Task Force and the public

a) Segment 1 (Broadway to Front Street Bridge): Alternative A

- This alternative consists of converting the existing four-lane facility to a three-lane section with dedicated left turn lanes and maintaining existing access control. This promotes lower vehicular speeds in town, increases the truck turning radius at Broadway, and provides for an outside shoulder which can accommodate bike traffic.

b) Segment 2 (Front Street and Minnesota River Bridges): Alternative A

- This alternative consists of two-lane bridges over Front Street and the Minnesota River, with a roundabout intersection with Front Street. This provides adequate capacity for current traffic volumes, projected traffic growth, and slows traffic entering the community. MnDOT is also encouraged to provide a roundabout bypass lane for vehicles leaving New Ulm.

c) Segment 3 (the "Y"): Alternative A

- This alternative consists of a grade-separated interchange with Highway 15 traveling over Hwy 14, utilizing teardrop roundabout ramp terminals for travel on Highway 14 and 21.

4. Be mindful of other details

- MnDOT is urged to **"impact New Ulm once"** by constructing these improvements together, and in an expedited fashion.
- Aesthetic elements of the improvements should provide a **welcoming gateway**.
- MnDOT should **coordinate with the City of New Ulm** on design details. This includes evaluating how large trucks will use the intersection at Broadway.

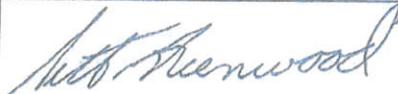
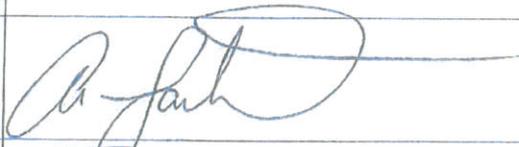
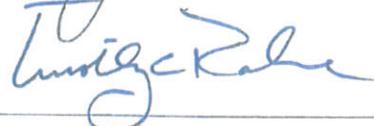
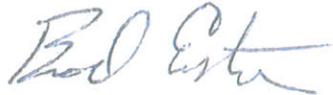
While some could view the use of two-lane bridges as a short-cut, the Special Task Force recognizes that these recommendations will provide for a fully functional system of improvements that are also fiscally responsible. Our recommendations provide a blueprint for detailed project development, and lay a solid foundation for additional coordination with area stakeholders.

Furthermore, the Special Task Force believes that these recommendations are aligned with the Guiding Principles our group established at the beginning of our process: to support transportation investments that enhance growth; improve safety; increase mobility; support completion; and make smart investments.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve on the Special Task Force and trust that MnDOT will continue to be collaborative with the citizens of New Ulm and Nicollet County as improvements are designed and constructed.

(See signature page below).

We endorse these recommendations.

Name	Representing	Signature
Robert Beussman	Mayor City of New Ulm	
Steve Koehler	City Engineer City of New Ulm	
Richard Seeboth	Commissioner Brown County	
Wayne Stevens	County Engineer Brown County	
Dr. Bruce Beatty	Commissioner Nicollet County	
Seth Greenwood	County Engineer Nicollet County	
Aaron Lambrecht	New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce	
Tim Rahe	New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce	
Brad Estochen	MnDOT, Office of Traffic, Safety & Technology	
Chad Fowlds	MnDOT, Program Delivery	