

Whitmore Resolution Group

MEETING OVERVIEW

April 11, 2022 | 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. | New London, MN

Meeting Overview

Participants of the Advisory Group met to discuss the Hwy 23 & Hwy 9 safety project from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Peace Lutheran Church in New London on April 11, 2022. A brief summary of the session is below, as well as an overview for the next session. MnDOT is working on option(s) for the intersection based on feedback from the meeting. A second session will be scheduled with the Advisory Group in the near future to hear the options before larger public engagement begins.

Attendees at 4/11/2022 meeting

- Richard Schmidt, Business & Public
- Kelly Asche, City of New London
- Bill Adams, NLS
- Anthony Rupp, Fire and EMS
- Mel Odens, County Public Works
- Roger Indieke, County Commissioner
- Stacy Petersen, Business (at intersection), Public
- Cody Brand, MnDOT
- Ryan Barney, MnDOT
- Mandi Lighthizer, MnDOT
- Doug Dietz: New London Township
- Josh Reed: New London Chamber of Commerce
- Jon Husby, (not on advisory committee)

Additional individuals on Advisory Group (unable to attend 4/11/22 meeting):

Dr. Richard Wehseler, public
Darica Schneider, Jennie-O

Background and Introductions

Facilitator Pam Whitmore led an introduction and reviewed the agenda to kick off the meeting. The introduction included a circle introduction of participants present at the meeting, as well as an overview of the ground rules.

Shared Goals: Participants at the 4/11/22 meeting agreed they have interests in common, although their perceptions of how to further those interests may be different. These include:

- Making the intersection safer for drivers and pedestrians;
- Accommodating increased traffic patterns, especially with school and senior living nearby, as well as the influx of Kandiyohi CR 40 traffic;
- Coming to consensus on a safety improvement that can be implemented in a mutually agreeable time frame;
- Selecting an improvement that allows for future growth;
- Meeting budget parameters and researching funding sources;
- Minimizing the impacts on adjacent businesses; and
- Assuring the flow of commerce on Highway 23.

Check-in

The check-in exercise indicated a desire and commitment by those present to move forward together.

Globe	Global perspective
Eye	Going with eyes wide open and open to change
Clock & Hourglass	Time to start working
Tinker Toys	Ideas interconnected
Butterfly	Transition to floating through the intersection
Puzzle piece	Putting pieces of puzzle together
Light	Having AHA moments
Bicycle	Consider traffic flow and non-vehicular flow
Checklist	Things left to do
Canoe	Process for moving forward together
Gears	Move in the same direction

Education

Exercises for Perspective Learning

Advisory Group members engaged in an exercise to learn perspectives from each other regarding the intersection of Highway 23 and Highway 9 and the previously proposed improvement. The areas identified by the attendees included:

- Improvements for safer vehicular traffic and non-vehicular traffic;
- Uses or future uses of pedestrian and bikers;
- Future growth of intersection and impact on local community;
- Usability of intersection (currently and also in light of future growth);
- Limitations in funding sources;
- Possible options for other funding sources;
- Impact on safety and response time for emergency vehicles;
- Impact on sightlines;
- Traffic flow, including related to commerce and access to New London;
- Timelines for improvements;

- Interim options to supplement longer term project options; and
- Brainstorming for future public engagement

Overview of historical timeline to date

The Advisory Group discussed the historical timeline of the project from 2016 to date. MnDOT also clarified that the Advisory Group and community should view the re-assessment as a “safety improvement project” and no longer as a J-turn project, since MnDOT is taking a fresh look at all options.

Prioritized Discussion Points

The group identified specific items when considering options for future proposals related to the improvement project:

- Prioritizing decreasing crashes;
- Discussing possibility for slowing traffic
- Understanding funding sources
- Gathering background information related to the historic plans communicated for intersection about 16 years ago;
- Considering future development, as well as use of trail system, for promotion of a bikeable/walkable community
- Discussing possible impacts the selected improvement project may have on local economy and community, including effect of alternative routes that travelers may choose to take based on the end result of improvement project;
- Educating community of limitations arising out of topography that impacts speed decisions or improvement project options, such as curve, hill, elevation changes, as well as safety considerations related to semi-trailer travel and ability to accelerate or slow down;
- Sharing data related to time of day of crashes, traffic flow now and predicted in the future;
- Understanding traffic patterns at that intersection;
- Educating about the impact on emergency vehicle response time and emergency vehicle access to calls;
- Considering impact on moving snow and snow plows;
- Discussing use of intersection by all types of drivers

Next Steps for Discussion

MnDOT will take the feedback and data from the Advisory Group to help them determine options for the intersection. These options will be shared with the Advisory Group at the next meeting, and then ultimately will go to the community at large. It should be noted, the Advisory Group will not be selecting a single option to take to the public; rather, the public will be seeing and providing input on more than one option from MnDOT for the intersection. Although not representative of what the options may include, the Advisory Group listed ideas for MNDOT to consider including (in NO particular order) signal/stoplight; roundabout; interchange; or J-Turn. The group also discussed how the public likely would have an interest in knowing cost, impact

on local community, impact on future growth, timelines and possible interim measures.

Goal: Group meets again in June, with full community engagement starting up in the Summer of 2022.