



an economic development district

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•INDIAN TRIBAL UNITS

December 2, 1994

Mr. Gene McDonald, Director
WisDOT, District 8
P.O. Box 429
1701 N. 4th Street
Superior, WI 54880

Dear Mr. McDonald:

At the October 17, 1994, meeting of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), correspondence from your office regarding USH 53 (see attached) was reviewed. Based upon this review, the TAC instructed me to write you regarding higher construction costs resulting from mitigation of environmental matters, including wetland and wildlife.

In the correspondence from your office, dated August 16, 1994, it was noted that approximately \$6,836,000 will have been spent on wetland-related costs for the USH 53 project. From this total, approximately \$1,380,000 will be spent on the development of four mitigation sites bringing a total of \$2,476,000 invested in wetland avoidance/minimization/mitigation for the overall design process, including the mitigation sites. In addition to \$2,476,000 for wetland avoidance/minimization/mitigation, approximately \$4,360,000 in additional construction costs will occur to further reduce wetland/waterway impacts. Thus, a total of approximately \$6,836,000 will be spent on wetland avoidance/minimization/mitigation.

Understanding that the environmental costs attributed to the project are the costs of compliance with federal environmental law, it is important to recognize that the impacts of wetland avoidance/minimization/mitigation are high simply due to the amount of wetlands located within our region. As a result of environmental mitigation efforts, the costs associated with roadway improvements are higher than average, as noted within the memo attached to your office's correspondence, dated August 16, 1994. The result of this mitigation means a significant amount of transportation dollars going towards mitigation efforts.

1400 S. River St. • Spooner, WI 54801
715-635-2197 FAX 715-635-7262

Gene McDonald
Page 2
December 2, 1994

In the construction of transportation projects within the district, are the total dollars distributed for construction purposes lower due to higher than average mitigation costs? For example, are the total dollars allocated to the district for construction/reconstruction going towards fewer miles of improvements due to the costs associated with wetland/wildlife mitigation? If that were the case, would not the district be adversely impacted in that fewer projects and less miles of improvements are being completed?

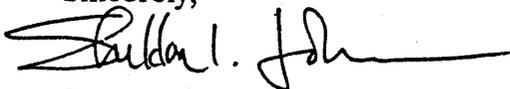
In addition to wetland mitigation costs, there are also the costs associated with wildlife mitigation. As stated within your office's correspondence, dated August 16, 1994, the projected cost associated with wolf mitigation along USH 53 is approximately \$694,000. Future mitigation of wildlife, other than wolves, along our roadways may be right around the corner.

For example, in an article from The Niche, a Newsletter of the Wisconsin Bureau of Endangered Resources, Vol. 7, No. 1, Summer 1994, titled *Update on Turtle Crossing Questionnaire*, it was stated that roadkill studies can identify areas where "Wildlife agencies can develop strategies to slow the carnage, from building special crossings under roads to installing warning signs and reducing speed limits." The result of this, and other wildlife mitigation, represents a continued increase in the cost of mitigation associated with roadways.

Another example of future wildlife mitigation may occur with the reintroduction of elk into the Chequamegon National Forest and surrounding area. The development of elk crossings in the construction/reconstruction of roadways, such as USH 2, would be very likely. Again, the costs associated with roadway development continue to climb. With the reintroduction of elk, it may not be impractical to require funds from the group or organization proposing the reintroduction of elk to go towards the necessary mitigation efforts along the existing or future roadway improvements.

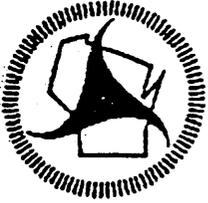
A response from your office regarding the questions noted above would be appreciated. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at (715) 635-2197.

Sincerely,



Sheldon L. Johnson
Transportation Planner

cc: Secretary George Meyer, DNR
Philip Scherer, TDA
TAC Members and Other Interested Parties
Enclosures



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS DISTRICT 8
1701 North 4th Street
P.O. Box 429
Superior, WI 54880-0429

August 16, 1994

Telephone (715) 392-7925
FAX (715) 392-7863

Mr. Edwin Ahlers, Chairman
Northwest Regional Planning Commission
302 Walnut Street
Spooner, WI 54801

Subject: Project 1198-01-01
Trego - Kent Road
USH 53 Expressway
Washburn and Douglas Counties

Dear Mr. Ahlers:

Pursuant to your request enclosed please find a copy of a recent tabulation of environmental design costs for various major projects, including USH 53, provided by the Office of Design to the Transportation Development Association. Also enclosed is a copy of the current program schedule for USH 53 showing the distribution of remaining construction projects and the funds committed to them.

In your letter, you expressed concern about USH 53 cost increases and noted that diversion of funds may jeopardize the scheduled opening. We too are concerned about cost increases and scheduling ramifications, but we also understand the DNR's and the federal resource agencies' needs to fully explore all avoid/minimize measures as they (DNR) progress toward issuance of their final environmental concurrences for each grading project.

Shell Creek was discussed in the EIS and was identified during the liaison process as a sensitive resource. During that process, DOT and DNR agreed that after the corridor alignment was selected, more in-depth analyses would be undertaken as necessary to successfully ensure that negative impacts to the resources of the area were avoided or minimized to the maximum practicable extent. For that to happen, an alignment had to be selected and the USH 53 design developed to a preliminary stage, in order to evaluate specific impacts and to pursue the avoid/minimize initiative. Therefore, the Shell Creek hydrologic study should be considered as DOT following through on a prior commitment, rather than pursuit of a new environmental issue.

Page 2

August 16, 1994

WOLVES

The eastern timber wolf is a federally-listed endangered species, protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Act is administered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and as the result of consultations with them, certain studies and mitigation measures were agreed upon to ensure that the wolf would not be adversely impacted by the project. At DOT's request, DNR agreed to provide the staff and equipment necessary to conduct these studies, on DOT's behalf.

The wide median areas north of Solon Springs were constructed to provide cover for wolves or other animals attempting to cross the expressway. The additional right-of-way for these crossings cost \$55,000 and the additional construction cost was approximately \$25,000. We would expect the cost of another wide median wolf crossing south of Minong to cost about the same.

The environmental design cost summary includes the cost of the wolf studies under the endangered species category, but to clarify all associated costs, following is a breakdown of all costs associated with wolf mitigation:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Costs</u> <u>FY '87 - '94</u>	<u>Est. Costs</u> <u>FY '95 - '97</u>	<u>Projected</u> <u>Totals</u>
Funded Studies	\$ 90,000	\$154,000	\$244,000
R/W	55,000	20,000	75,000
Design	290,000	35,000	325,000
Construction	<u>25,000</u>	<u>25,000</u>	<u>50,000</u>
	\$460,000	\$234,000	\$694,000

WETLANDS

Wetlands are protected under the federal Clean Water Act and all fills to be placed in waters of the United States must first be permitted by the US Army Corps. of Engineers (COE). DNR has been working closely with COE to enable us to meet the federal "no net loss" policy, and has repeatedly and continually negotiated on our behalf with the COE and with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to resolve project-related environmental issues.

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August 16, 1994

Total acres of wetlands filled or to be filled on USH 53 and mitigation ratios/requirements are as follows:

	<u>Acres Filled</u>	<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Mitigation Acres Required</u>
Trego - Lampson	3.74 acres	1.5:1	5.61 acres
Lampson - Minong	10.93 acres	1.5:1	16.40 acres
Minong - Gordon	32.85 acres	1.5:1	49.28 acres
Gordon - CTH "E"	17.97 acres	1.5:1	26.96 acres
CTH "E" - Kent Rd.	<u>36.00 acres</u>	<u>2:1</u>	<u>72.00 acres</u>
	101.49 acres		170.25 acres

The cost of mitigation site development (4 sites) to date is \$660,000 (\$221,000-design; \$159,000-real estate; \$280,000-construction) and the projected cost for completion of these four sites is expected to be \$1,380,000.

Total investment in wetland avoidance/minimization/mitigation to-date for the overall design process including the mitigation sites, is \$1,166,000. The projected total investment in this category through FY '97 is estimated at \$2,476,000. To these design costs, the following additional construction costs could be added to the USH 53 construction projects to further reduce wetland/waterway impacts:

* Bridge at Shell Creek instead of box culvert	\$1,450,000
* Relocation of both roadways at Two Mile Lake (future project)	1,700,000
* Extra Span for Totogatic River Bridge	160,000
* Bottomless box culverts instead of pipes at 6 small streams	<u>1,050,000</u>
	\$4,360,000

This would bring the total wetland related cost of the project to \$6,836,000.

Mr. Ahlers, you asked if all the environmental matters are on the table. DOT is in the role of "applicant" with respect to environmental issues and DNR is in the role of "regulatory agency" and the coordination process between our two agencies is spelled out in our interagency cooperative agreement. Until we receive notification of "final concurrence" from the DNR, we are in the position of doing what needs to be done to address all environmental matters. When we receive the notification of final concurrence, we can be reasonably assured that all environmental issues for the particular project have been addressed (although the possibility remains that unforeseen developments could occur after final concurrence that would require further investigations). As of this date we have received final concurrences on the segments of USH 53 from CTH "E" to Kent Road and from Trego to CTH "F". All other segments are undergoing extensive development and coordination efforts with receipt of final concurrence being our major goal.

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August 16, 1994

The USH 53 project is a federally-funded project and so is regulated by the three federal resource agencies (USFWS, COE, EPA) noted earlier. The DNR is our link to these agencies and throughout development of this project has been negotiating with them for their concurrence on project features. These negotiations expedite the project development process by addressing new issues before they emerge as show-stoppers, and ensure the project remains on schedule. Final concurrence from the DNR is documentation that DNR and the federal resource agencies have reached agreement on project features. For that reason, DNR's concurrence efforts are critical to the success of the project, and are greatly appreciated by DOT.

The environmental costs attributable to the project, are the cost of compliance with federal environmental law.

Sincerely,



Daniel J. Peterson, PE
District Chief Design Engineer

DJP:JAR:bmt

Enclosure

y:\design\jar81094.wp

PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

			CONSTRUCTION ITEM	LET DATE	COST ESTIMATE IN '94 DOLLARS
CTH 'E' - KENT ROAD					
Project I.D.	*1198-01-74		BPM Pavement	1/93	\$2,892,000
	*1198-01-30		Signing	1/93	98,000
	*1198-01-71 and 72		Grade and Base	5/92	5,590,000
AIRPORT (OR CTH 'A') - CTH 'E'					
Project I.D.	1198-01-84	AIRPORT - CTH E	Grading, Base	11/96	\$4,480,000
	1198-01-88	AIRPORT - CTH E	PCC Pavement	11/97	6,860,000
	1198-01-33	AIRPORT - CTH E	Signing	11/97	133,000
	1198-01-83	C&NW R/R OVERHEAD	Bridge	11/96	662,000
MINONG - AIRPORT (OR CTH 'A')					
Project I.D.	1198-01-79	MINONG - WASCOTT	Grading, Base	12/95	\$7,050,000
	1198-01-80	WASCOTT - GORDON	Grading, Base	1/96	1,970,000
	1198-01-83	GORDON - CTH A	Grading, Base	5/96	3,825,000
	1198-01-82	MINONG - CTH A	PC Pavement	11/96	10,975,000
	1198-01-32	MINONG - AIRPORT	Signing	11/96	225,000
	1198-01-90	TOTOGATIC RIVER BR	Bridge	12/96	630,000
	1198-01-91	ST. CROIX RIVER BR	Bridge	5/96	500,000
	*1198-01-51		R/R connect	6/92	500,000
LAMPSON - MINONG					
Project I.D.	1198-01-78	LAMPSON - MINONG	Grading, Base	11/95	\$3,300,000
	1198-01-	LAMPSON - MINONG	PC Pavement	11/96	2,320,000
	1198-01-	LAMPSON - MINONG	Signing	11/96	75,000
TREGO - LAMPSON					
Project I.D.	*1198-01-75	TREGO - LAMPSON	Grading, Base	4/94	\$3,445,000
	1198-01-78	TREGO - LAMPSON	PC Pavement	12/94	2,289,000
	1198-01-31	TREGO - LAMPSON	Signing	12/94	74,000
			Subtotal		\$57,703,000
MISC. PROJECTS					
	0631-08-03		Wetland Mitig.	12/95	\$271,000
	0631-08-04	NELSON SITE I	Wetland Mitig.	6/94	130,000
	0631-08-05	BRANCA SITE	Wetland Mitig.	4/96	409,000
	0631-08-0X	NELSON SITE II	Wetland Mitig.	4/95	293,000
	1198-01-06		Hydro Studies (PE)		42,000
	1198-01-07		Hydro Studies (PE)		32,000
	1198-01-41		Utilities	3/92	1,000
	1198-01-42		Utilities	7/93	20,000
	1198-01-4x		Proposed Utilities		380,000
	1198-01-08		Endangered Species (PE)		115,000
	1198-01-09		• • (Botanical)		10,000
	1198-01-10		• • (Zoological)		10,000
	1198-01-21		R/W	7/95	50,000
	1198-01-22		R/W	1/92	315,000
	1198-01-23		R/W	11/92	684,000
	1198-01-24		R/W		558,000
			TOTAL		\$61,023,000

NOTES: Estimates based on 1994 dollars.
 Schedule based on Using approved EIS corridor.
 * Currently Under Construction or Completed



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Tommy G. Thompson
Governor

Charles H. Thompson
Secretary

DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS
4802 Sheboygan Avenue
P.O. Box 7816
Madison, WI 53707-7816

July 12, 1994

Mr. Phil Scherer
Transportation Development Association
22 N. Carroll Street
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Mr. Scherer:

Per our recent telephone conversation, enclosed is our effort to capture the cost of highway design attributable to addressing environmental issues. The July 8 memo and attached raw back-up data summarizes the district's efforts in analyzing several major projects throughout the State. The May 6 memo contains the district's general estimates of the percentage of design to address environmental issues. The acquisition of this data has required a considerable effort on our part and I hope it will be of use to you.

If you have any questions on the contents of the attached research, please contact Richard Filsinger at 267-7954. After reviewing the data, let's get together to answer any questions and discuss how you think you may want to use the data.

Sincerely,

Michael Cass, P.E.
Director, Office of Design

MAC:k2424
Enclosure

cc: Fred Ross
Carol Cutshall
Dan Pritchard

CORRESPONDENCE/MEMORANDUM

State of Wisconsin

DATE: 07/12/94

TO: Michael Cass, P.E.
Director of the Office of Design

FROM: Richard R. Filsinger, P.E.

SUBJECT: Percentage of Design Cost to Address Environmental Issues

In response to your June 6, 1994 request for the districts/Highway 29 Team to provide us with environmental data on individual projects, the following is a table of the responses to date:

	Dist. 1	Dist. 2	Dist. 3	Dist. 4	Dist. 5	Dist. 8	Hwy 29
Total Design \$	5,044,200	3,379,000	1,716,591	5,302,174	4,184,000	7,186,240	5,553,530
Total Env. \$	870,000	508,000	126,388	572,635	1,700,000	5,411,038	2,130,812
% Design = Env.	17.2	15.0	7.4	10.8	40.6	70.1	38.4
% Env. = Hist.	10.3	5.0	2.4	1.3	3.0	0.6	2.0
	89,610	25,400	3,033	7,444	51,000	32,466	43,660
% Env. = Arch.	31.5	12.0	22.3	2.7	66.0	7.5	46.2
	274,050	60,960	28,184	15,461	1,122,000	405,828	982,291
% Env. = Haz. Mat	11.0	10.0	24.3	24.2	---	4.9	1.0
	95,700	50,800	30,712	138,578	---	265,141	21,830
% Env. = Wetlands	18.5	9.0	13.3	19.4	12.0	45.6	9.5
	160,950	45,720	16,810	111,091	204,000	2,467,433	200,152
% Env. = Noise	3.6	6.0	1.6	1.4	17.0	0.1	6.1
	31,320	30,480	2,022	8,017	289,000	5,411	130,981
% Env. = Air	3.3	5.0	---	0.4	---	0.2	0.2
	28,710	25,400	---	2,291	---	10,822	4,366
% Env. = Endanger	3.8	5.0	0.8	4.0	---	24.1	16.5
	33,060	25,400	1,011	22,905	---	1,304,060	352,103
% Env. = Ag Impct	6.8	8.0	4.4	0.5	---	4.0	1.8
	59,160	40,640	5,561	2,863	---	216,442	39,294
% Env. = Other	11.1	40.0	30.9	46.1	2.0	13.0	16.7
	96,570	203,200	39,054	263,985	34,000	703,435	355,136

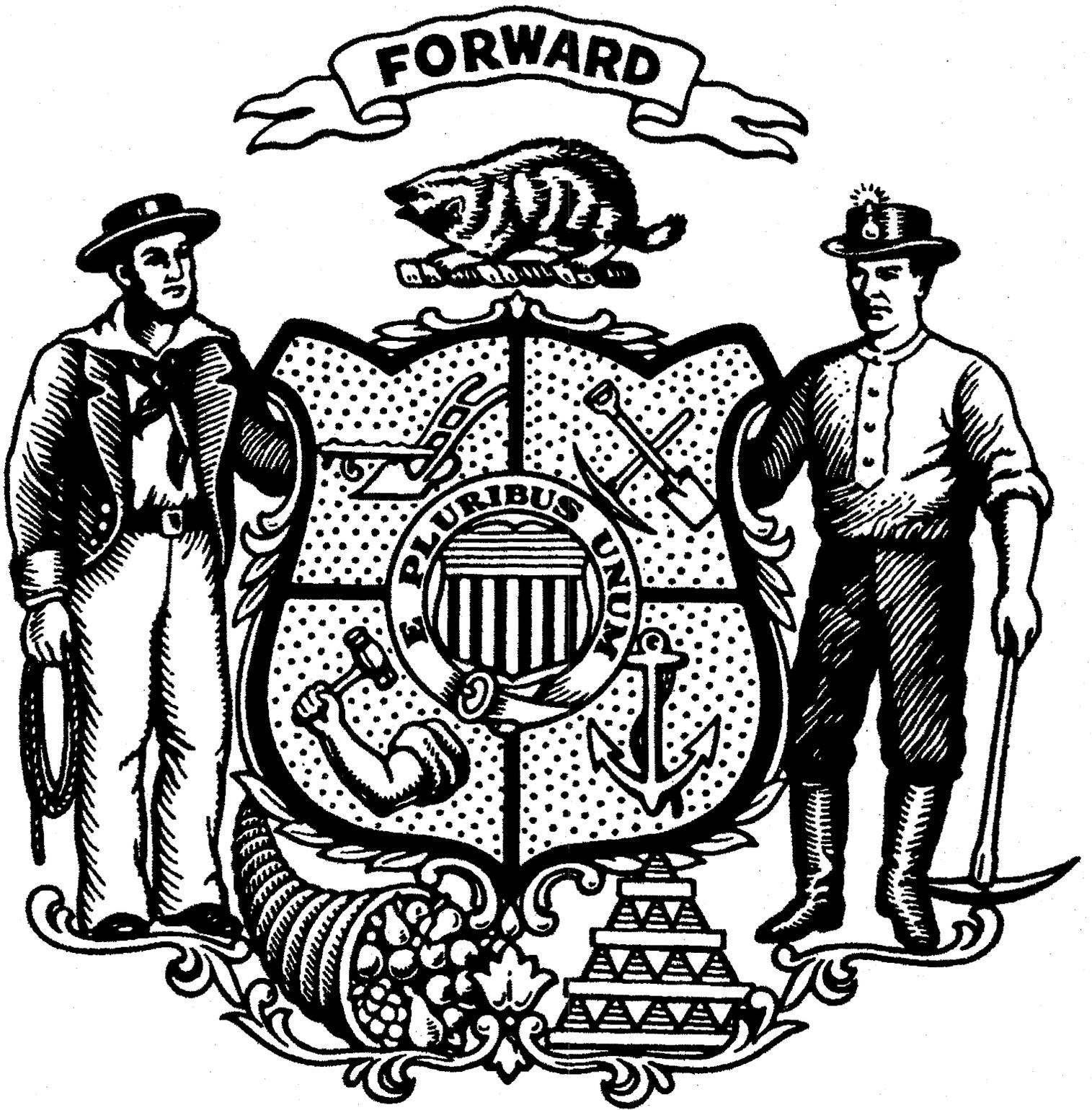
The averages from the preceeding table are:

	AVERAGE
Design \$	4,623,676
Env. \$	1,616,982
% Design = Env.	28.5
% Env. = Hist.	3.5 36,088
% Env. = Arch.	26.9 412,682
% Env. = Haz. Mat	12.6 100,460
% Env. = Wetlands	18.2 458,022
% Env. = Noise	5.1 71,033
% Env. = Air	1.8 14,318
% Env. = Endanger	9.0 289,757
% Env. = Ag Impct	4.3 60,660
% Env. = Other	22.8 242,197

The projects analyzed by the districts were the following:

District 1 -- USH 18/151, Verona Bypass
 District 2 -- USH 151, Waupun-Fond du Lac
 District 3 -- USH 45, New London Bypass
 District 4 -- USH 10, Waupaca-Fremont
 District 5 -- USH 53, LaCrosse Freeway, I90-Holmen
 District 8 -- USH 53, Trego-Hawthorne
 Highway 29 -- STH 29, Shawano bypass

END



END



A G E N D A

December 13, 1994

1:30 P.M.

Governor's Conference Room

1. Opening Remarks - Governor Thompson

2. Roll Call
Approval of June 9, 1994 Minutes

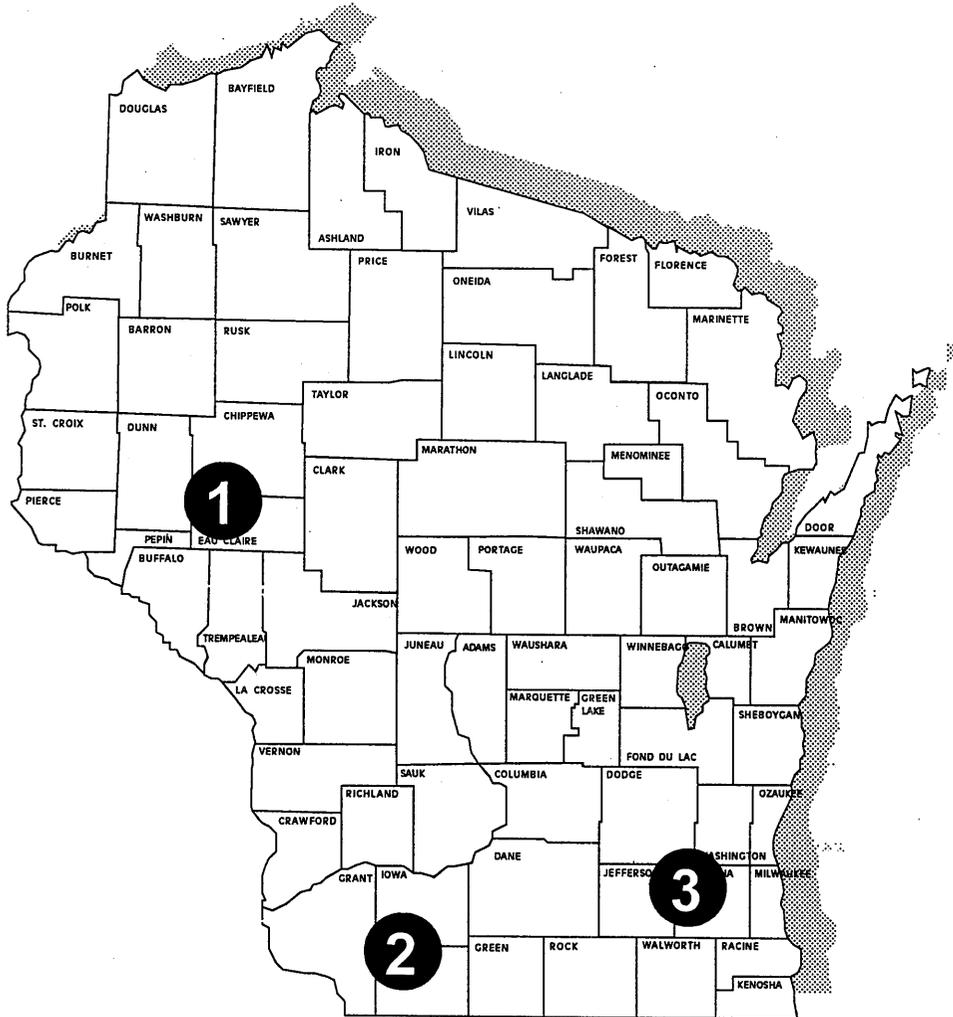
3. Review of DOT Recommendations & Project Evaluation - Secretary Thompson

4. Potential Project Schedule - Secretary Thompson

5. Discussion and Motions - TPC

6. Adjourn

1994 Major Highway Projects



Candidates for Enumeration

- 1** USH 53 Eau Claire Freeway
- 2** USH 151 Belmont - Dodgeville
- 3** STH 16/67 Oconomowoc Bypass

1995 Candidate
Major Highway Projects

Potential Construction Schedule

USH 53	Eau Claire Freeway	Begin 2001-2002
USH 151	Belmont - Dodgeville	Begin 2001-2002
STH 16/67	Oconomowoc Bypass	Begin After 2005

1994 PROCESS USED TO DETERMINE THE RELATIVE MERIT OF CANDIDATES FOR ENUMERATION

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	% WEIGHT OF TOTAL PROCESS
40% Enhance Wisconsin's Economy	50% Increase Competitiveness of Existing Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on Time, Costs, Accidents - Unique Reasons Why Project Will help existing Businesses 	15%
	25% Increase Attractiveness For New Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic Development Potential - Unique Reasons Why Project Will Attract New Businesses 	5%
	25% Complete Corridors 2020 Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relationship to Backbone and Connector Tiers of the Corridors 2020 Network 	10%
20% Improve Highway Service	100% Improve Traffic Flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current Mobility Impediments 	20%
20% Improve Highway Safety	100% Reduce Accidents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Net Accident Reduction - Existing Highway vs Proposed Highway 	20%
10% Minimize Undesirable Impacts	50% Identify Social Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Disruption - Business Disruption - Fringe Development 	3%
	50% Identify Environmental Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural Resource - Manmade Resources - Sensory Resources 	3.5%
10% Serve Community Objectives	100% Identify Public Support/ Opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public Hearing Testimony 	10%

Shaded areas will be scored by Evaluation Team

Wisconsin's Major Highway Projects 1988-2005

Hwy	Project	Mile	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
1985	NEW 43rd St. Arterial	4																		
	45 Clintonville Relief Route	5																		
	29 Shawano Co Ln-Green B	10																		
	29 Wausau-Ringle	11																		
	16/67 Oconomowoc-Pewaukee	5																		
	23 STH 32-STH 57	6																		
	18/151 Dodgeville-Mt. Horeb	21																		
	441 Tri-Co. Expressway	10																		
	29 Marathon City-Wausau	9																		
	53 I 90-Holmen	11																		
Enumerated in 1987	18/151 Mt. Horeb-Verona	7																		
	51 USH 8-CTH "K"	8																		
	45 New London Bypass	5																		
	8 Rhinelander Beltline	7																		
	151 Sun Prairie-Columbus	11																		
	45 West Bend B.	13																		
	31 Stataline-STH 50	5																		
	29 Shawano Bypass	8																		
	794 Lake Arterial	3																		
	18 Waukesha-ECL	8																		
53 Solon S.-Hawthorne	5																			
Enumerated in 1989	151 Columbus-Beaver Dam	12																		
	35 River F. Beltline	6																		
	124 North Crossing	5																		
	61 Sandy Hook-Dickeyville	5																		
	26 Fort Atkinson Bypass	7																		
	41 Abrams-Oconto	11																		
	41 STH 114 - CTH OO	9																		
	54 Wisconsin Rpd.-Plover	15																		
	53 Trego-Hawthorne	34																		
	50 New Muster Bypass	3																		
Enumerated in 1991	51 Merrill-CTH S	14																		
	29 Chippewa Falls Bypass	7																		
	18/151 Verona Bypass	6																		
	36 Burlington - STH 100	19																		
	60 Hartford-USH 41	6																		
	12 Whitewater Bypass	7																		
	51 Tomahawk -Add Lanes	10																		
	76 Appleton - Greenville	3																		
	110 USH 41 - STH 116	8																		
	Enumerated in 1993	31 STH 142 - STH 11	6																	
50 Lake Geneva - Slades Cnrs		8																		
57 STH 54 - Dyckesville		11																		
35 River Falls - IH 94		7																		
141 Abrams - STH 22		8																		
41 Freeway Conversion		129																		
10 Appleton-Stevens Point		60																		
29 Green Bay-IH94		177																		
151 Sun Prairie-Fond' Lac		56																		
Enumerated in 1993		11 Janesville Bypass	15																	
	12 Sauk City - Middleton	18																		
	13 Marshfield Mobility Study	5																		
	64 Houlton - New Richmond	14																		
	151 Fond du Lac Bypass	11																		
57 Random Lake - IH 43	11																			

Background Information on U.S. Highway 53 Corridor

Pat Goss
Dropped this
off

Project objectives:

- The USH 53 project must accomplish three objectives: 1) Reduce traffic congestion on USH 53 - Hastings Way; 2) Reduce the high accident rate on USH 53 - Hastings Way; and 3) Provide a missing Corridors 2020 Backbone freeway link for USH 53.
- A draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) thoroughly studied three options for the corridor: upgrading the existing route to a freeway, constructing an Inner Corridor Freeway, and constructing an Outer Corridor Freeway. Based upon the findings of the EIS (summarized below), and based upon public and agency input, WisDOT recommended the Inner Corridor. The Final EIS was published and distributed in April 1994, with a record of decision provided by the Federal Highway Administration in July 1994.

Safety considerations:

- Traffic crashes on USH 53 - Hastings Way totalled 337 in 1990, and are projected to reach 530 in 2010 if no action is taken. This rate is 320% higher than the overall statewide average for urban freeways. The Inner Corridor would reduce total accidents to approximately 285 in 2010, compared to 490 with the Outer Corridor.

Traffic considerations:

- USH 53 - Hastings Way, designed to carry 35,000 vehicles per day, is now carrying 40,000-45,000 (and up to 48,000), and is projected to carry 60,000 vehicles per day in 2010 if no action is taken. Traffic forecasts show that the Inner Corridor will carry 21,000 vehicles per day in 2010 (with a 7% reduction on Hastings Way), compared to 7,000 vehicles per day on the Outer Corridor (with a 26% increase on Hastings Way).

Economic development considerations:

- The Inner Corridor provides efficient access to key business centers and arterials, including the regional airport and industrial parks. The Outer Corridor does not.

Environmental considerations:

- An Inner Corridor would directly impact 227 fewer acres of woodlands and farmlands, and produce 34% fewer vehicle hours of travel and 5% fewer vehicle emissions, than the Outer Corridor. The Inner would also better protect the habitat of endangered species.
- The Outer Corridor promotes costly sprawl development beyond the existing urban service area, and even beyond the service area planned for 2010.

Benefit/cost ratio:

- The Inner Corridor scores 1.71 in its benefit/cost ratio, compared to 0.91 for the Outer.

SUMMARY OF BUILD ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED FOR USH 53 E.L.S. CORRIDOR STUDY

IMPACT AREAS	BUILD ALTERNATIVES		
	Outer Corridor Freeway Hastings Way	Inner Corridor Freeway	Outer Corridor Freeway
Limits	USH 53/STH 93 Interchange north to the USH 53/STH 124 Interchange	USH 53/93 Interchange north to the USH 53/STH 124 Interchange	From a point on IH 94 approx. 2.5 miles SE of the IH 94/USH 53 Interchange north to the USH 53/STH 124 Interchange
Length	9.5 mi.	7.5 mi.	11.0 mi.
Functional Classification	Freeway	Freeway	Freeway
Design Speed	60 mph	60 mph	70 mph
Posted Speed	55 mph	55 mph	65 mph
Projected Traffic Year 2010 ADT (No-Build - 57,000) ¹	Freeway - 45,000 Frontage Roads - 14,000	Freeway - 21,000 Hastings Way - 40,000	Freeway - 7,000 Hastings Way - 51,000
Wet land Acres	0	0	0
Woodland Acres	1	65	148
Farmland Acres ²	38	102	246
Prime Farmland Acres	0	32	98
Park Acres	<1	0	0
Protected Species Present ³	0	1	5
River/Creek Crossings ⁴	1	2	2
Archaeological Sites ⁵	0	0	7
Historic Properties	0	0	0
Potential Hazardous Waste Sites	93	6	4
Affected Residences	21	45 ⁶	9
Affected Businesses	60	6	2
Affected Farm Operations	8	20	29
Farm Severances	4	10	21
Total Affected Properties	81	47	11
Construction Cost ⁷	\$90 million	\$72 million	\$67 million
R/W Relocation Cost	\$20 million	\$7 million	\$1 million
Total Cost	\$110 million	\$79 million	\$68 million

¹ Traffic volume between Main and Birch Street, volume increases to 61,000 north of Birch Street due to North Crossing construction.

² Cropland and pasture only.

³ Species: Karner Blue Butterfly - federal endangered; Palox Moth - proposed state endangered; Dusted Skipper Butterfly - state special concern;

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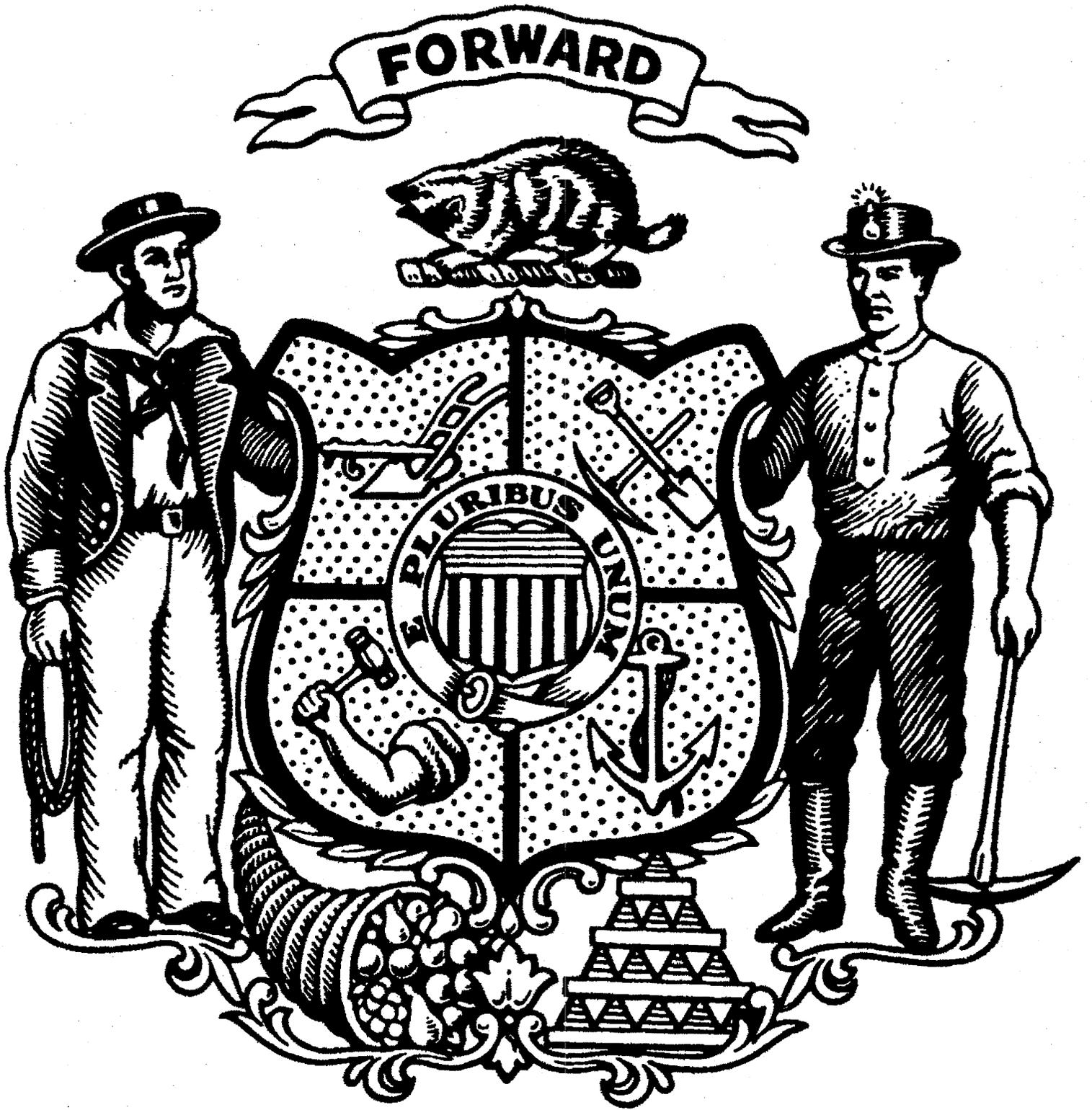
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END



END

Interstate 90/Highway 16 Corridor Study

1994
??

Problem

- Traffic in the Crossing Meadows Shopping Center-Valley View Mall area of LaCrosse/Onalaska is congested. Long delays occur throughout the year during peak shopping periods.

Background

- Approval of a land use plan for the LaCrosse River Valley is being deferred by LaCrosse County until agreement is reached in the shopping area. The land use plan has been approved by LaCrosse, DNR and DOT.
- LaCrosse County, Onalaska and DOT engaged Barton-Aschmann to study highway designs that would best eliminate traffic jams.
- Attached map shows Barton-Aschmann's recommendation. Nine other alternatives were looked at, but they did not solve the problem.

Current Issues of Business in the Crossing Meadows Shopping Center

- Crossing Meadows has hired an engineering firm to make more studies. They have 60 days to do this in. Their goal is to have a direct connection to CTH "SS". The City of Onalaska also opposed the solution on map.

Study Results

- Map layout is the safest design.
- Traffic jams are either eliminated or quality reduced.
- The other nine alternatives don't work as well.
- Access to Crossing Meadows will be by an interchange.
- Additional driving time is less than time spent stopped at a red light.

Recommendations

- Whereas existing professional studies could not find a better solution, the layout on the map should be constructed, which includes a grade separation at CTH "SS".
- Would be a future major project, costs estimated at \$11.6 million.



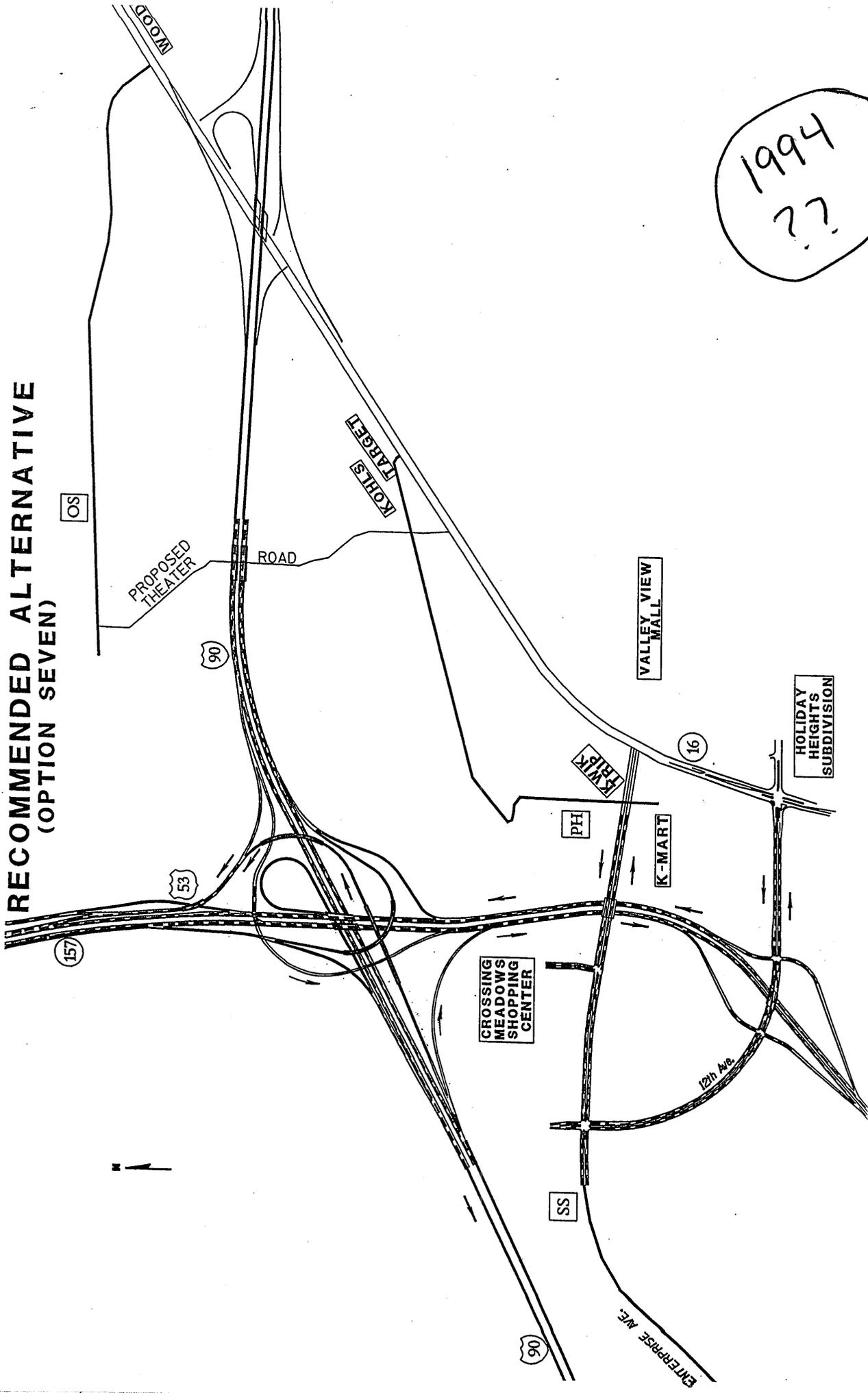
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ANNE GRAYSON-MOTHS
PUBLIC INFORMATION

TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT 5
3550 MORMON COULEE ROAD
LA CROSSE, WI 54601

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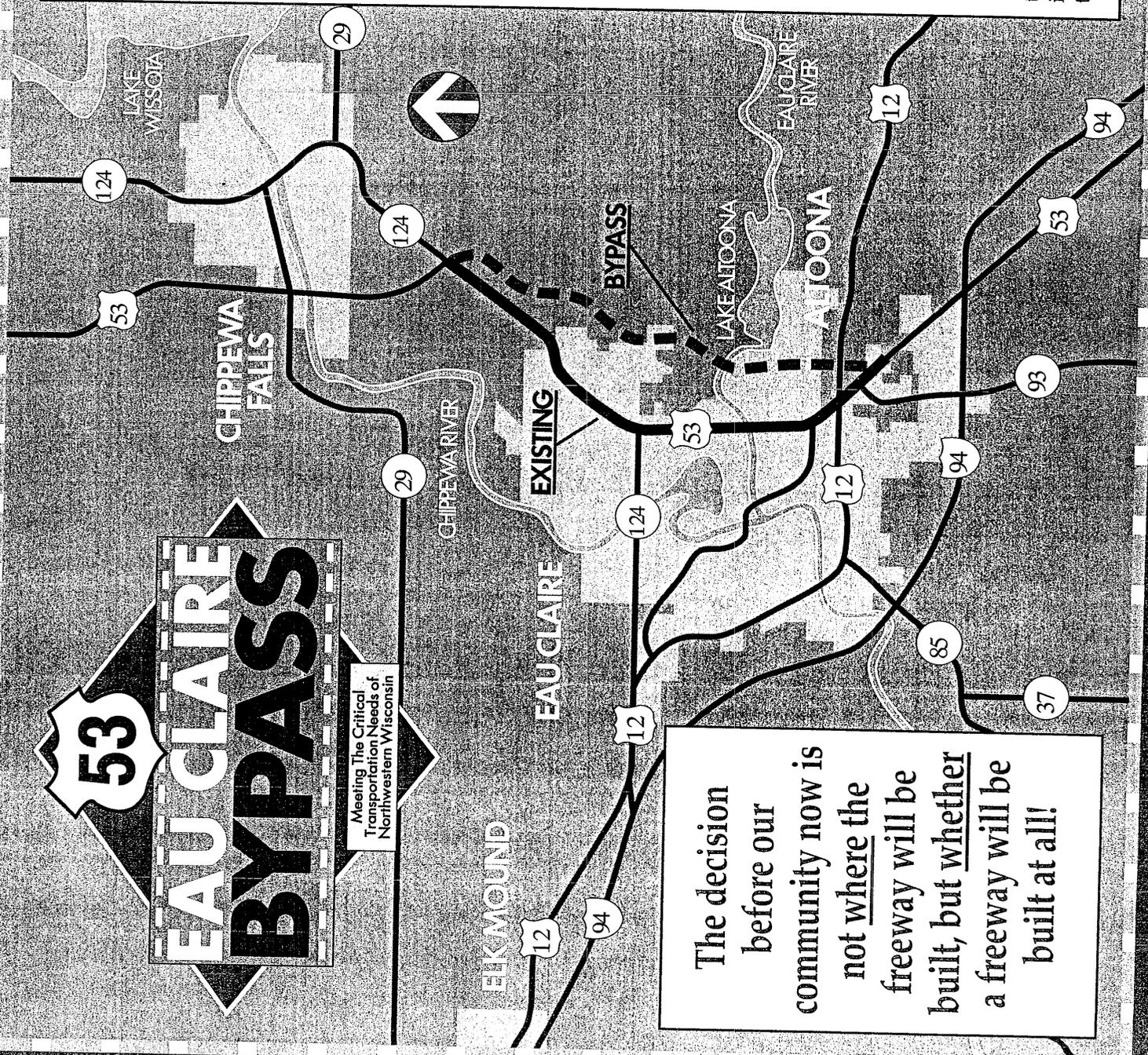
RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE (OPTION SEVEN)



1994
??

53 EAU CLAIRE BYPASS

Meeting The Critical Transportation Needs of Northwestern Wisconsin



The decision before our community now is not where the freeway will be built, but whether a freeway will be built at all!



For over 20 years the State of Wisconsin has recognized the need for a freeway bypass to eliminate the pressure caused by the bottleneck on Highway 53 as it runs through Eau Claire. However, the State did not, until recently, identify a location which would effectively reduce the congestion and improve safety.

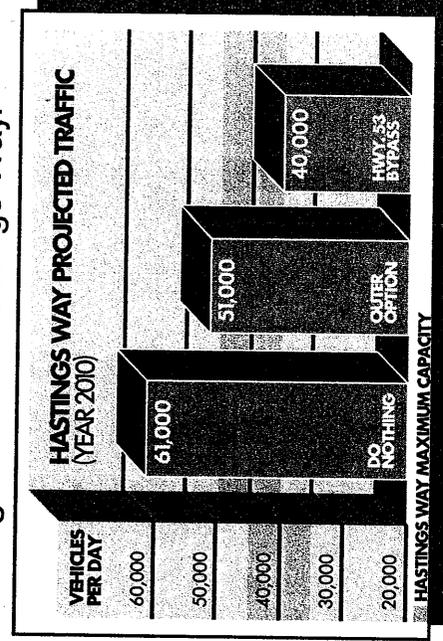
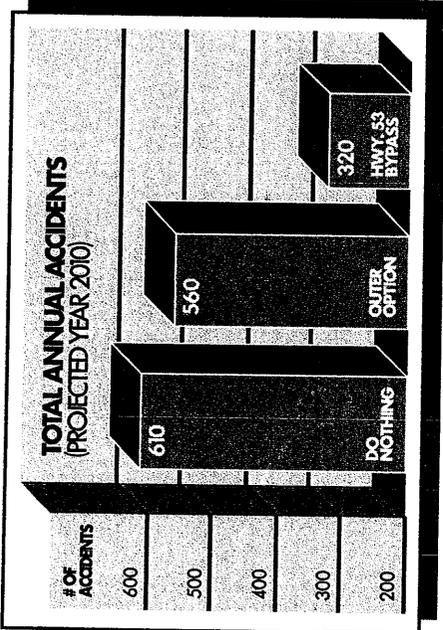
In 1989, the Department of Transportation initiated an extensive corridor study. It spent over three years in a detailed study of several possible choices. A location west of Lake Altonna was chosen for the following reasons:

- ◆ Provides a freeway to Northwest Wisconsin at 65 mph speeds.
 - ◆ Eliminates the Eau Claire bottleneck by diverting over 20,000 vehicles to the freeway bypass.
 - ◆ Improves safety on existing Hwy 53 by reducing projected accidents and fatalities by half.
 - ◆ Provides a safe and convenient freeway connection between Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire (estimated to be 3,000 commuters per day).
 - ◆ Provides quality highway access to the Chippewa Valley area for shopping, work, business, education and medical trips.
 - ◆ Consistent with the Metropolitan Planning Organization's urban planning boundary and sanitary sewer service area.
 - ◆ Consistent with the plans for the Hwy 29 Chippewa Falls bypass.
- This project ranks among the top projects in the state for funding because of the significant improvement in traffic congestion and safety that will result. ■

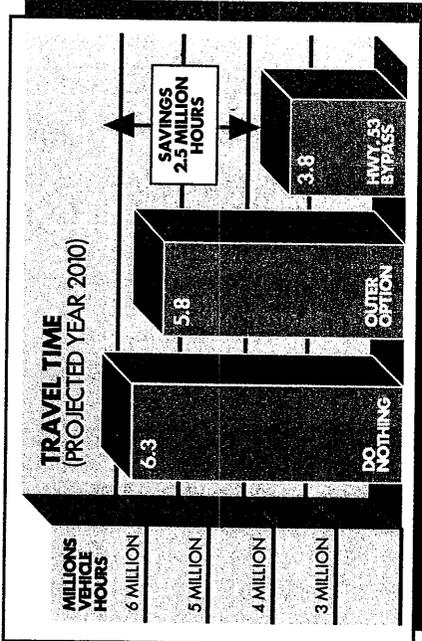
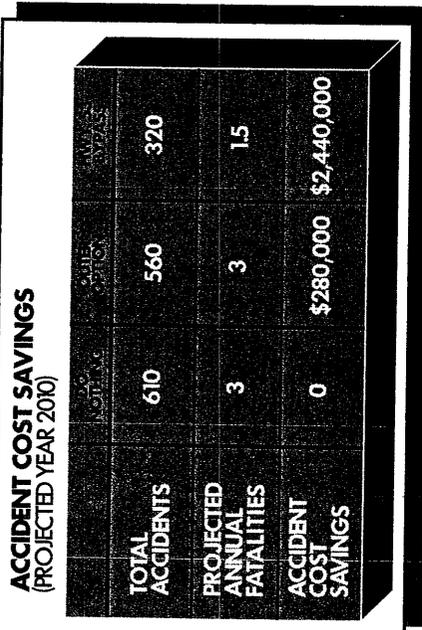
The Department of Transportation has studied alternatives for a bypass of Hastings Way in great detail. Following an extensive Environmental Impact Study, the Department of Transportation selected the "inner corridor". This is the only alternative for the Highway 53 bypass which provides substantial relief to the serious and growing traffic safety problems on Hastings Way.

The graphs shown compare doing nothing, the outer option, and the recommended Highway 53 bypass (inner corridor) with regard to some of the many factors considered. The findings clearly show that the Highway 53 bypass, as recommended by the Department of Transportation, will best serve our area.

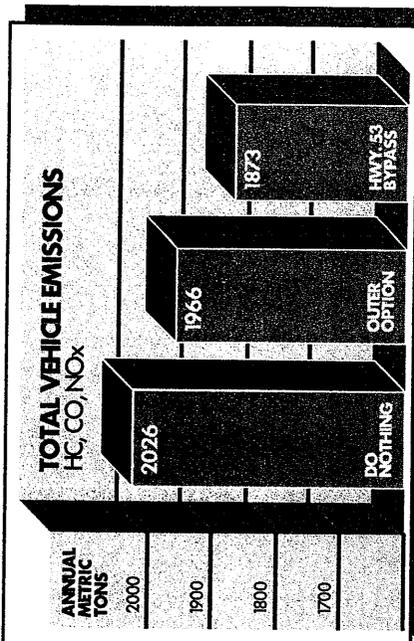
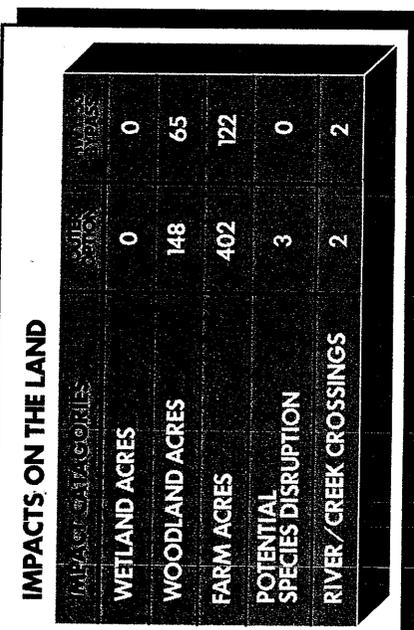
TRAFFIC IMPACT — The bypass will reduce congestion on Hastings Way.



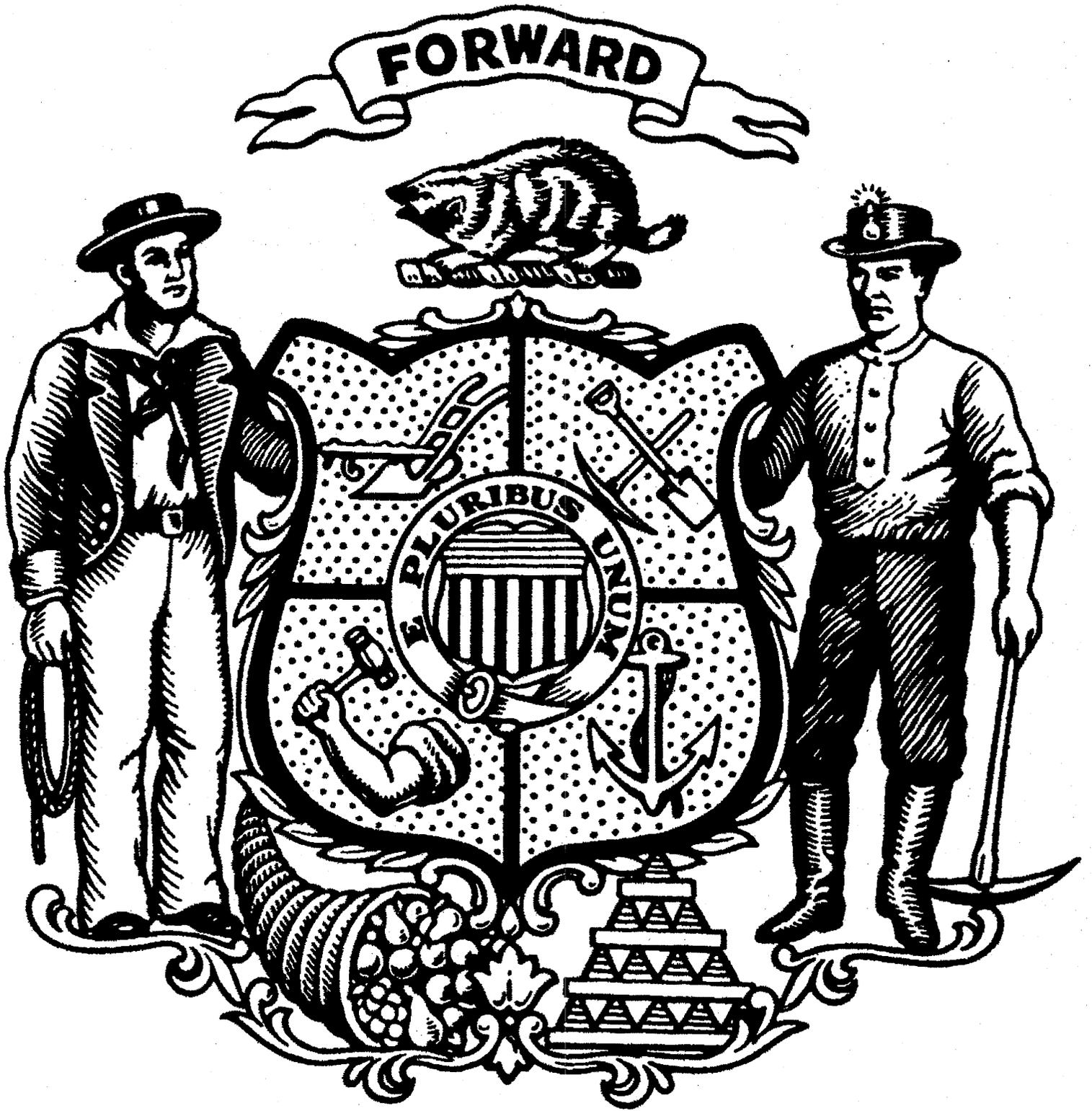
USER SAVINGS — The bypass will save us time and money.



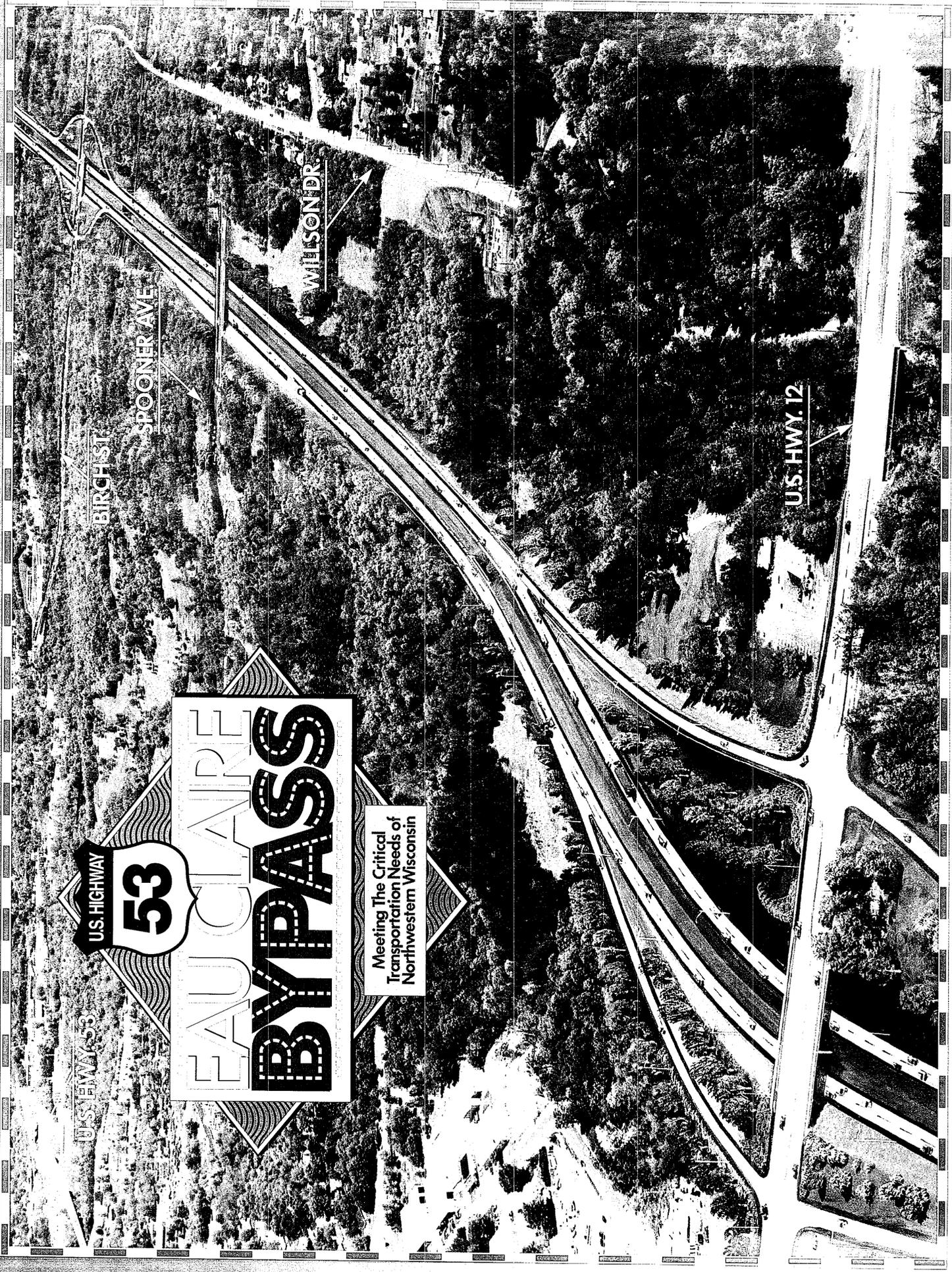
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS — The bypass is the environmentally sound alternative.



END



END



U.S. HIGHWAY
53

EAU CLAIRE BYPASS

Meeting The Critical
Transportation Needs of
Northwestern Wisconsin

U.S. HWY. 53

BIRCHIST

SPOONER AVE

WILSON DR.

U.S. HWY. 12

U.S. HIGHWAY
53
EAU CLAIRE
BYPASS

Meeting the Current
 Transportation Needs of
 Northwestern Wisconsin



FUTURE HWY. 29

MELBY ST.

CHIPPEWA RIVER

STH 124

USH 53 BYPASS

STH 124 • NORTH CROSSING

BIRCH ST.

COUNTY Q

LAKE ALTOONA

EAU CLAIRE, WI

EAU CLAIRE RIVER

USH 53 BYPASS

ALTOONA, WI

USH 12 • CLAIREMONT AVE

STH 37

USH 53

INTERSTATE 94

STH 93

GOLF RD.

INTERSTATE 94

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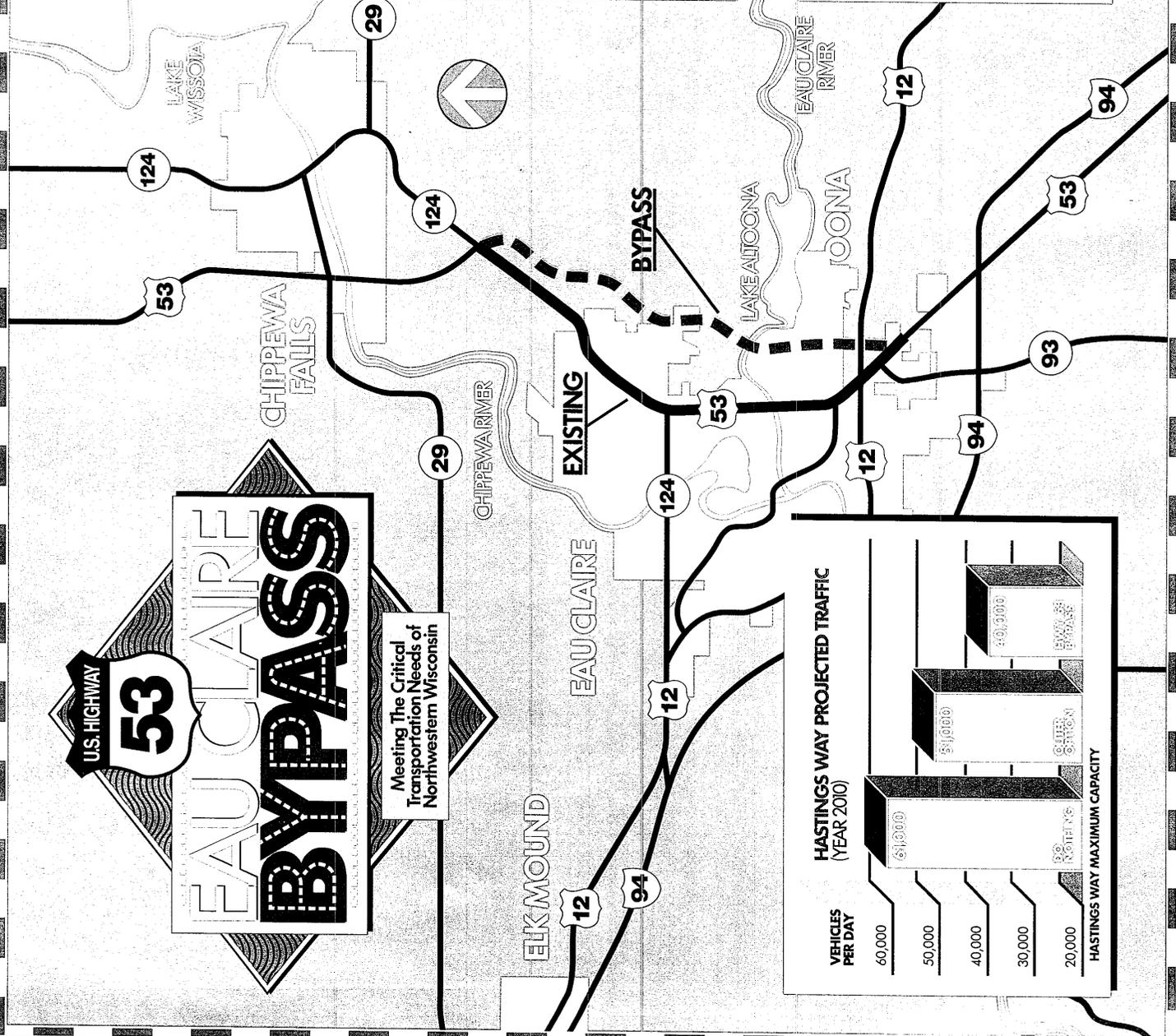
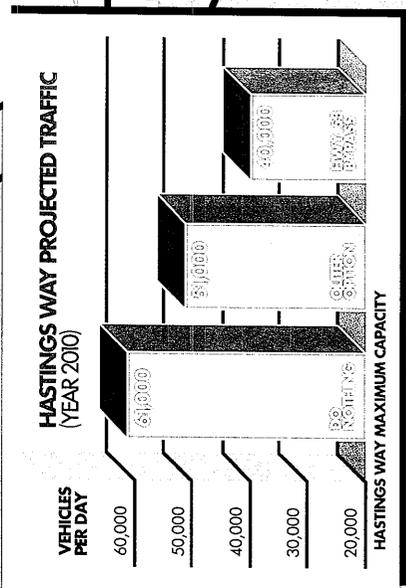
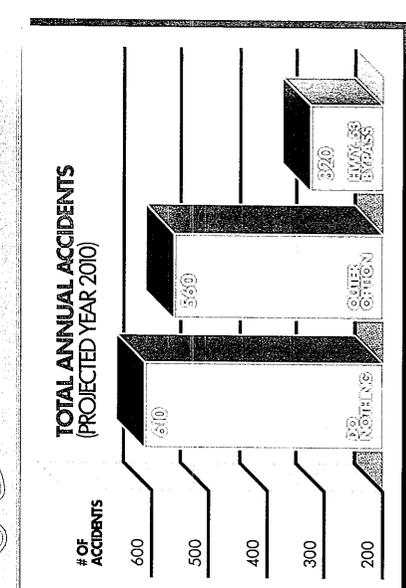
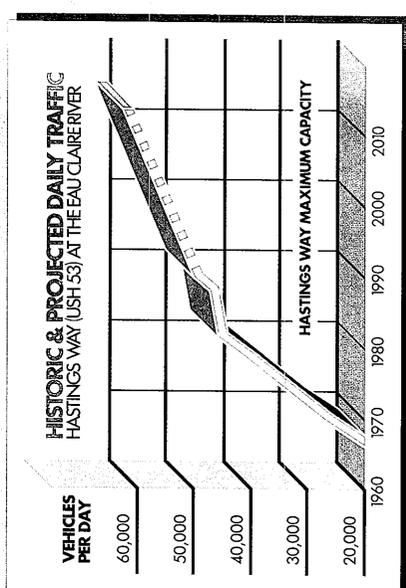
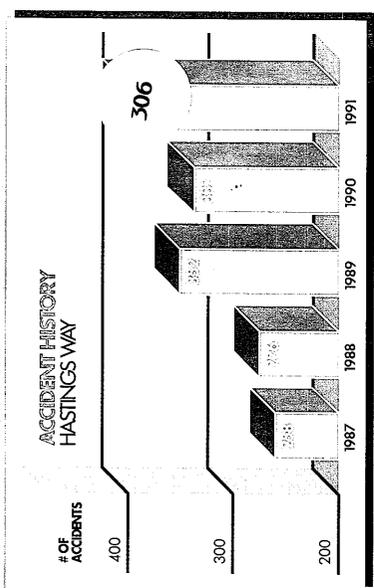
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EAU CLAIRE BYPASS

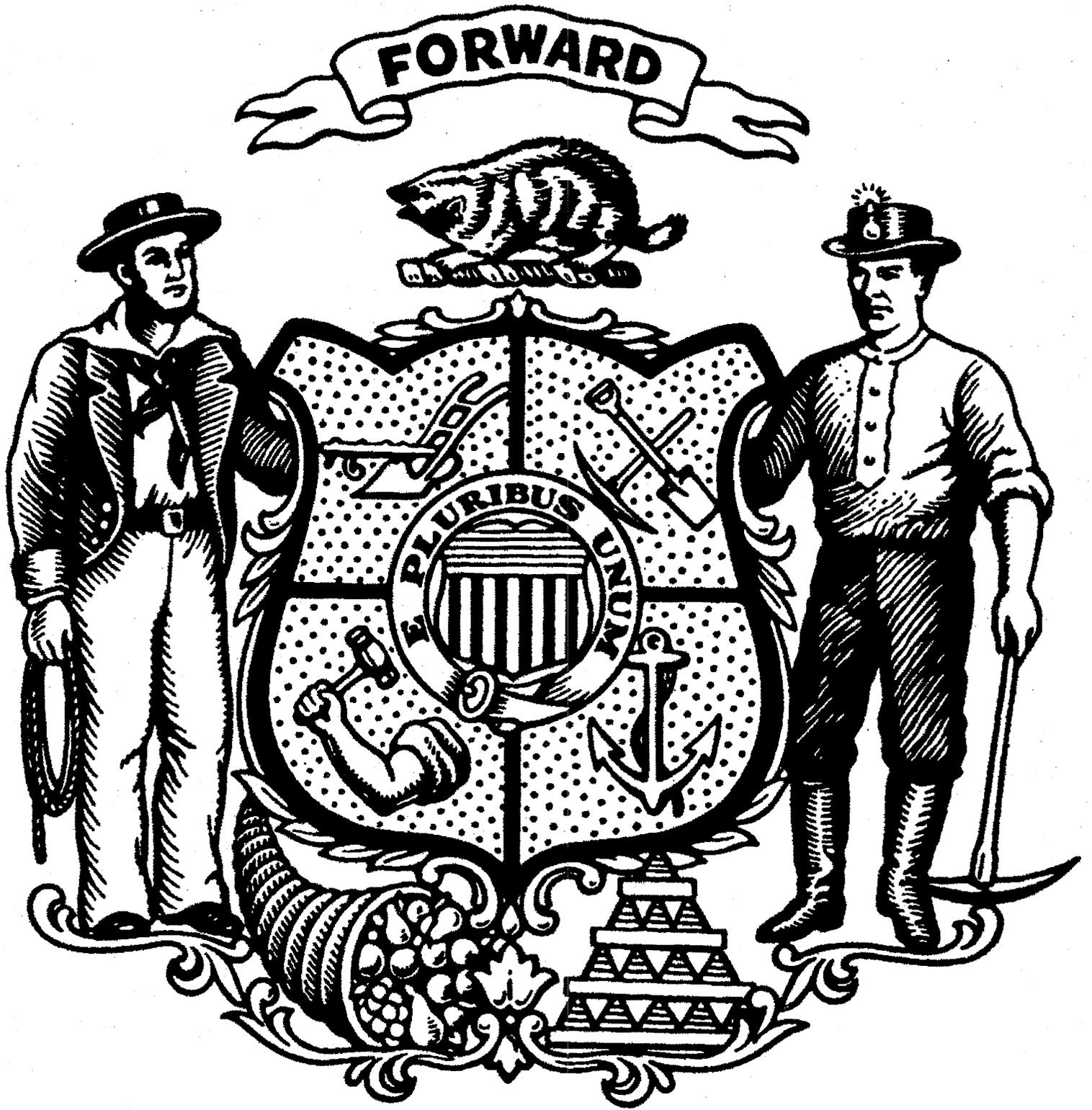
U.S. HIGHWAY 53

Meeting The Critical Transportation Needs of Northwestern Wisconsin

Meeting The Critical Transportation Needs of Northwestern Wisconsin



END



END

Report of the Joint Committee on the

USH 53 BYPASS CORRIDOR STUDY

American Society of Civil Engineers, Wisconsin Section, Northwest Branch
and
Wisconsin Society of Professional Engineers, Northwest Chapter

As requested by the Boards of Directors of ASCE-Northwest Branch and WSPE-Northwest Chapter, this Joint Committee has studied the USH 53 Bypass Corridor issue and hereby submits this report of its findings for review and approval by the respective memberships.

BACKGROUND

USH 53, also known as Hastings Way within the project study area, is a principal arterial through the Chippewa Valley. From USH 12 on the south side of Eau Claire to the USH 53/STH 124 interchange south of Chippewa Falls, Hastings Way is almost completely bordered with commercial and industrial developments. The roadway section varies from four to six lanes of divided roadway, with a maximum design capacity of 35,000 vehicles per day (vpd). The average daily traffic (adt) has grown to over 46,400 vpd, with a special traffic count in 1993 showing 50,150 vpd.

Traffic projections indicate that if Hastings Way is left in its current state, by the year 2010 the roadway will experience prolonged periods of gridlock every day. In addition, Hastings Way currently has an accident rate 320 percent greater than the statewide average for this type of facility.

In the late 1980's, recognizing the growing traffic and safety problems on Hastings Way, regional governments and organizations petitioned the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WDOT) to undertake a study to determine possible routes for a four-lane divided freeway through or around the Eau Claire area. WDOT began the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process, culminating in the issuance of a Draft EIS (DEIS) in January 1992 and a Final EIS (FEIS) in April 1994. The DEIS and FEIS investigated three possible corridors in detail, including the Existing Corridor, an Inner Corridor between USH 53 and Lake Altoona east of Eau Claire, and an Outer Corridor east of Lake Altoona (see attached map).

Every two years since 1984, some form of a USH 53 Bypass project has come before the Transportation Projects Commission (TPC), which meets every two years to recommend projects to the state legislature for funding. It has been rejected each time because either the proposed corridor could not attract sufficient traffic (i.e. it had a low benefit/cost ratio) or the region could not come to a consensus on a proposed corridor. The latter was the case in both 1990 and 1992.

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES AND FINDINGS

The Joint Committee has carefully reviewed the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements and other project-related documents, and listened to the viewpoints of the City of Altoona, the City of Eau Claire, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

The Committee found the proposed USH 53 Bypass has two goals: 1) To relieve traffic congestion and improve safety on existing Hastings Way; and 2) To provide a link in the Corridors 2020 highway network. During the EIS process, seven alternative layouts were investigated. Of these seven, only two - a freeway in the Existing Corridor and a freeway in the Inner Corridor - were shown to fulfill the two project goals.

Some groups favoring the Outer Corridor Bypass maintain that the WDOT traffic projections are inaccurate. The Committee reviewed traffic projection reports provided by one of these groups and found them to be lacking in credibility. The author(s) of the reports, their qualifications, and the methods of analysis used were not stated. In addition, the reports in general appeared to be more statements of opinion than documentation of the results of rigorous traffic analyses. By comparison, traffic analyses done for the DEIS and FEIS involved extensive traffic counts, application of state-of-the-art traffic projection techniques by qualified traffic specialists, and numerous reviews by various agencies to verify their accuracy. The Committee has a high degree of confidence in the WDOT traffic projections and has concluded that an Outer Corridor Bypass will not attract enough traffic to justify its construction at this time.

The Committee has concluded that a USH 53 bypass on the Inner Corridor best balances environmental, economic, and social impacts. Specific reasons for the Committee's conclusions are set forth in the attached "Resolution". Also attached for informational purposes are a summary of impacts from the FEIS and a location map from a WDOT handout.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Committee recommends the attached "Resolution" be put before the memberships for approval, and, if approved, that it be forwarded to the Transportation Projects Commission and other parties as determined by the respective Branch and Chapter Boards of Directors.

This Report is respectfully submitted.

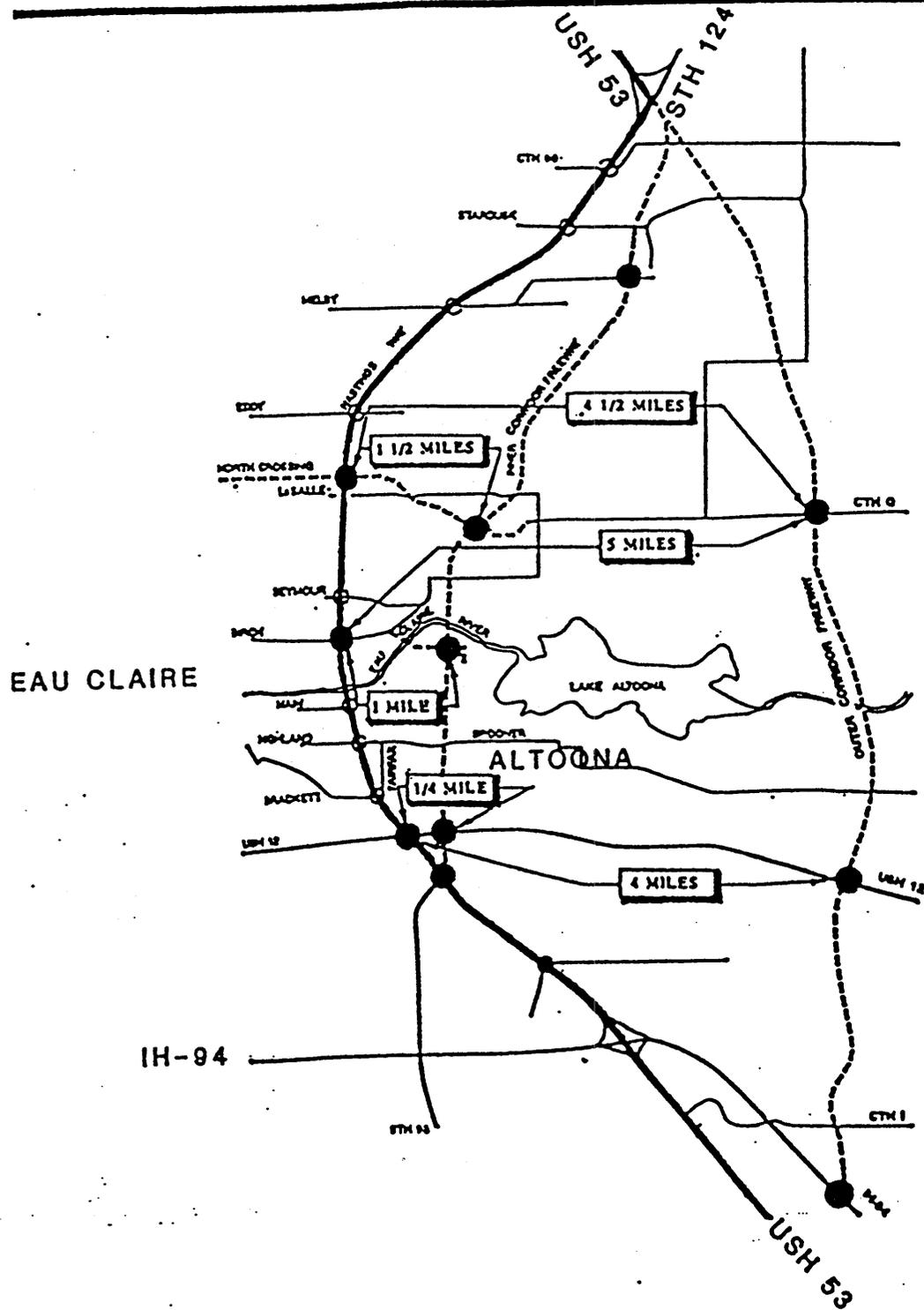
Hubert Fischer, Chairperson
James Buggs, Secretary
C.B. (Chuck) Gustafson
Brian Knutson
Francis Ogden
Peter Skorseth

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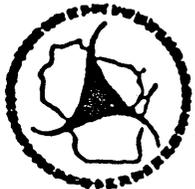


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Inner Corridor Freeway Accessibility to Attract Traffic from Hastings Way Compared to that of Outer Corridor Freeway



USH 53 Inner Corridor Traffic and Safety Program



Wisconsin Department of Transportation

**SUMMARY OF IMPACTS OF BUILD ALTERNATIVES
CONSIDERED FOR
USH 53 E.I.S. CORRIDOR STUDY**

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Leader-Telegram

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Inner bypass gains support

Courage has been in short supply among the Chippewa Valley's legislative delegation concerning the U.S. 53 bypass issue.

Instead of facing the issue head-on and deciding to press for what is best for the valley, the delegation generally has run for cover, trying to find a comfortable position that straddles both sides.

But then came the surprising announcement Wednesday

Editorial:

that Rep. Michael Wilder,
a Chippewa Falls

Democrat, has re-thought
his position and will push for construction of the inner
bypass route west of Lake Altoona.

Hooray!

Maybe Wilder's courage in backing the only sensible solution to the mess along the U.S. 53 corridor will shake up the rest of the legislators with an interest in this issue. But the track records of state Sens. David Zien, R-Eau Claire, and Rod Moen, D-Whitehall, and state Rep. Rob Kreibich, R-Eau Claire, leave us with little optimism.

Wilder now joins state Rep. Dave Plombon, D-Stanley, in supporting the inner bypass, which the state Department of Transportation has picked as the only route that a U.S. 53 freeway could take.

That correct, logical position is being fought vociferously by a small group in Altoona that continues to push for an outer bypass route east of Lake Altoona. The DOT, after thoroughly examining this alternative, has said it would not relieve enough of the traffic congestion on Hastings Way and would damage the environment much more than the inner bypass route.

This is crunch time for the bypass issue, and Wilder's announcement likely will enhance the prospects of the state Transportation Projects Commission recommending funding for the project.

The push for the inner bypass was set back, however, by the unfortunate and unenlightened vote of the Seymour Town Board, which switched positions Tuesday night and supported the outer bypass.

Studies by town residents concluded that the inner bypass would be best for the town, but the two board members who voted for the outer route - Gary McFarlane and Cindy Davis - ignored this advice.

These two board members caved in to the emotional arguments of the inner bypass foes who simply don't want any U.S. 53 improvement to be built in the Chippewa Valley. That is the only logical way of viewing this vote because the facts overwhelmingly are on the side of the DOT's support for the inner bypass, and the chances of the outer bypass being built over the objections of the DOT are nil.

But if legislators like Wilder can come around to see this issue in its proper perspective, maybe there is hope for the Seymour Town Board. But time is growing short - hearings on the project will be held this summer - and officials and residents alike must decide if they want a freeway built or not.

And they have to realize that the only one that will be built will run west of Lake Altoona.



DOT's New Name for the Inner Bypass



EAU CLAIRE FREEWAY

Because of omissions by the DOT, the following additions were made to this DOT map by the **USH 53 Outer Bypass and Hastings Way Improvement Action Committee.**

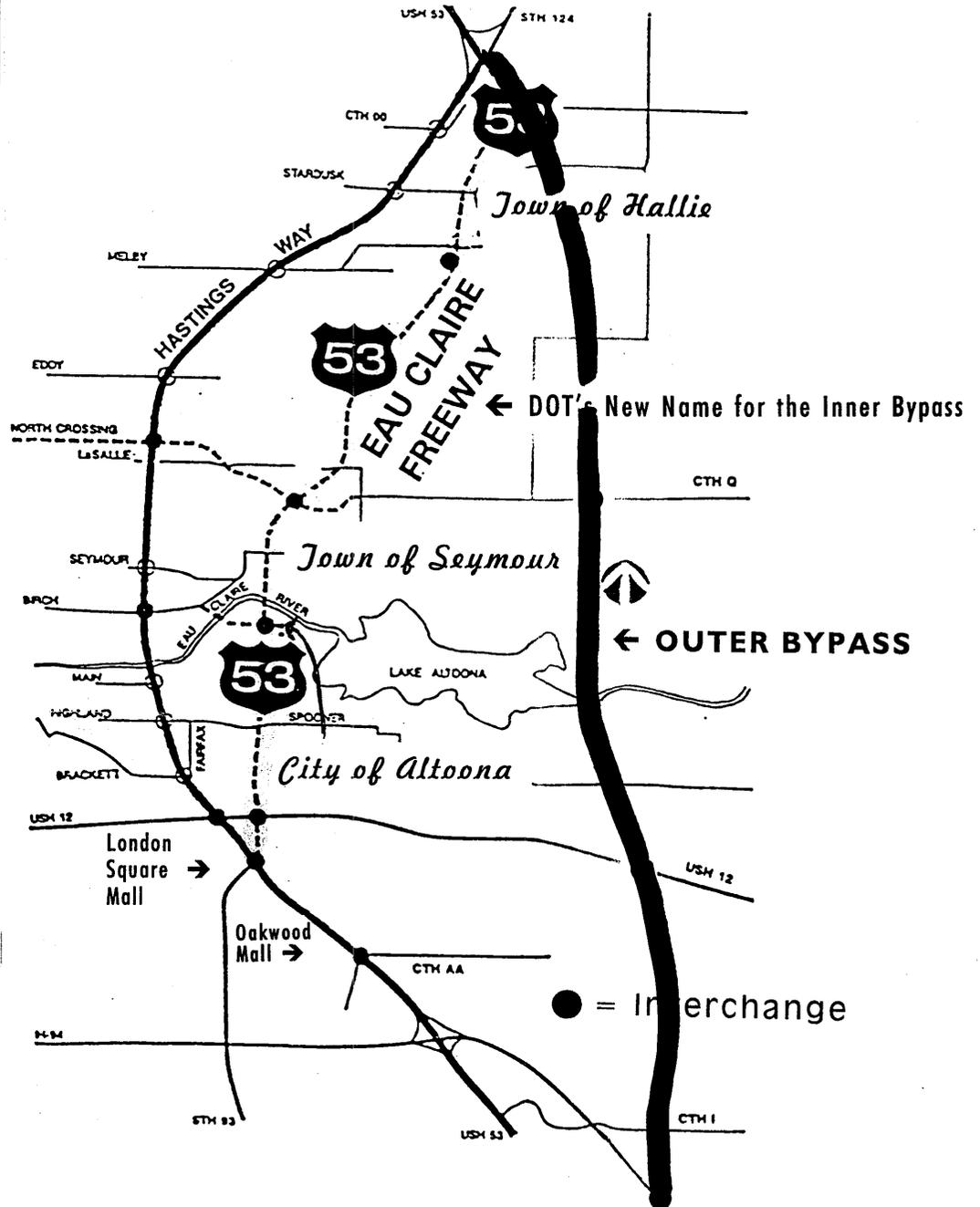
- Labels for:
City of Altoona
Town of Seymour
Town of Hallie
- The Outer Bypass route
- London Square Mall and Oakwood Mall locations
- Notes indicating that the DOT is now using a new name for the Inner Bypass

Here are the names used by the DOT for the bypass over the years:

- Eau Claire Bypass
- Inner Bypass
- Inner Corridor
- Eau Claire Freeway

Does the DOT want to confuse the public concerning the location of the Freeway? Doesn't the DOT want the public to know that the Eau Claire Freeway (Inner Bypass) runs through the City of Altoona, through the Town of Seymour, and through the Town of Hallie?

This DOT map is not dated but it was distributed in Spring 1994.



Dear
DAVID

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS SINCE WAYY BECAME NEWSTALK WE HAVE SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME STUDYING THE HIGHWAY 53 PROJECT THAT HAS BEEN PROPOSED TO SOLVE ONE OF OUR AREAS MOST PRESSING PROBLEMS. THE OVERBURDENED FLOW OF TRAFFIC THROUGH THE CITY OF EAU CLAIRE ON US 53.

WHY DO WE NEED A CORRIDOR?

TO LET TOURIST AND TRUCK TRAFFIC PROCEED THROUGH OUR AREA ON THEIR WAY TO TOURIST RESORT AREAS LIKE CHETEK..RICE LAKE HAYWARD ETC WITHOUT TAKING FOREVER TO PASS OUR METRO AREA. FOR HEAVY TRUCK'S HEADING FOR DULUTH...OR WAUSAU OR GREEN BAY TO SPEED COMMERCE ON ITS WAY.

TO ALLOW A ROUTE WHERE BUSINESS VECHILES THE ABILITY TO EXIT INTO EAU CLAIRE...AND ALTOONA FOR DELIVERIES AND THEN RETURN TO A FREEWAY THAT WILL INTERSECT WITH THE NORTH CROSSING AND THE NEW 4 LANE HIGHWAY 29.

BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT IS TO RETURN HASTINGS WAY TO A LESS STRESSFUL FLOW OF TRAFFIC. THE DOT HAS WORKED LONG AND HARD AND WHILE NO ORGANIZATION IS PERFECT IN ITS EXECUTION I BELIEVE THEY HAVE FOUND A WAY TO TAKE 21,000 VECHILES PER DAY OFF OF HASTINGS WAY. THEY HAVE PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE AND THEIR PLAN HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY GOVENOR THOMPSON IN MEETINGS THAT I HAVE ATTENDED. THEY HAVE PROPOSED A ROUTE THAT WILL BENEFIT THAT PROBLEM.....THE INNER CORRIDOR ROUTE IS THAT SOLUTION. IT IS THE ROUTE THAT NEWSTALK WAYY ENDORSES

THE PUBLIC WHILE NOT COMMING UP WITH A UTOPIAN CONSENSUS HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT NO ONE WANTS ANOTHER 5..10 OR 15 YEARS OF BICKERING AND NASHING OF TEETH.

WE MUST MOVE NOW TO UNITE BEHIND THE INNER CORRIDOR. THE ROUTE THAT MAKES SENSE FOR OUR FUTURE. 20 YEARS FROM NOW A OUTER CORRIDOR MAY WELL BE A REALITY. BUT WITH THE 2002 AS THE DATE OF EARLIEST CONSTRUCTION 8 YEARS AWAY. THE INNER MUST MOVE FORWARD NOW.

HASTINGS WAY WILL BE IMPROVED AND RETURNED AS A VIABLE CITY STREET. GROWTH FOR EAU CLAIRE AND ALTOONA WILL PROCEED IN AN ORDERLY WAY WITHOUT URBAN SPROLL.

WE MUST CAPTURE THE MOMENT AND LET THE DOT DO ITS JOB AND CONSTRUCT THE INNER BY PASS.

OR WASTE THE MOMENT AND ALLOWMADISON...GREEN BAY. MILWAUKEE TO HAVE THEIR PROJECT'ST CITED AND APPROVED WHILE WE CONTINUE OUR NO WIN FIGHT.

I PRAY WE CAN GO FORWARD.....AND IN THE END EVERYONE WILL PROSPER.

MARTY GREEN WAYY STATION MANAGER



Marty Green
1-800-866-9299
P.O. 6000
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54702

MARTY GREEN
Eau Claire, Wisconsin

CALL 832-1530
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Marty says you'll get more bang for your buck
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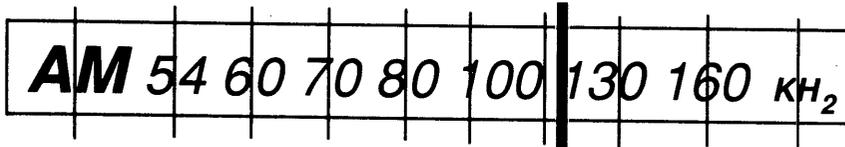
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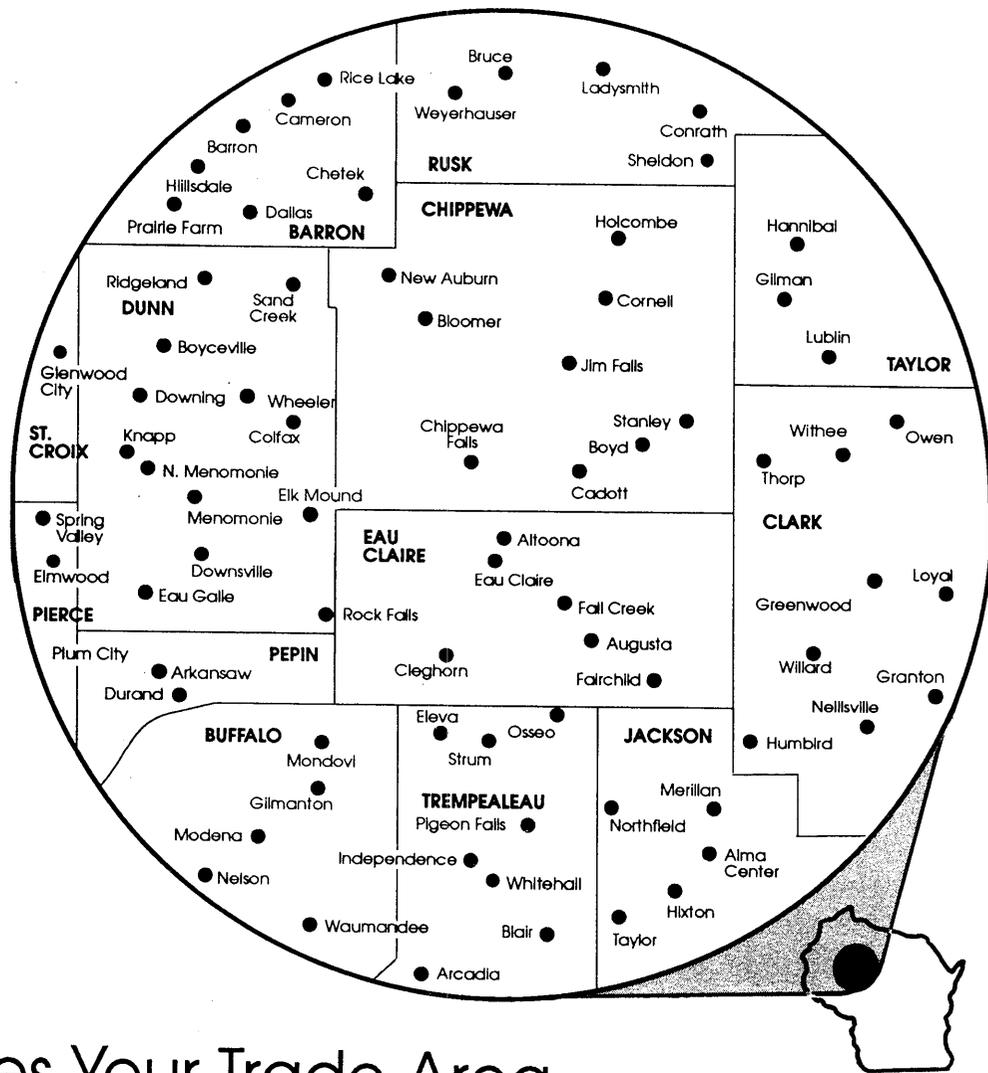
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