



WIS 164 study

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WIS 164 study - public involvement, Richfield resolution

Resolution 99-10-01

A resolution of the town board of the town of Richfield, Washington County, Wisconsin Regarding the Wisconsin Department of Transportation WIS 164 Corridor Study and highway improvement alternatives

WHEREAS, the Town Board recognizes the importance of and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) responsibility for providing and maintaining a safe, convenient, and efficient system of highways, including the roadway formerly known as "County Highway J" and now known as "State Highway (WIS) 164", that serve residents traveling to, from, and within the town of Richfield and surrounding communities in southeastern Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, the town board of the town Richfield recognizes and supports the WisDOT WIS 164 Corridor Study process as an important and necessary step toward identifying the need for and timing of safety, capacity enhancing, and/or other improvements that may be necessary to maintain the intended function and integrity of WIS 164; and

WHEREAS, the town board recognizes that, in addition to serving the collective needs and desires of those traveling to and from the surrounding communities and throughout the southeastern Wisconsin region, WIS 164 has been and will continue to be an important component of the local road system serving those traveling to, from and within the town of Richfield; and

WHEREAS, the town Board acknowledges and accepts the town's responsibility to regulate and manage future growth, development and traffic circulation within the WIS 164 corridor and throughout the town in a manner that will both preserve the function and efficiency of WIS 164 and enhance the quality of life for the town's residents; and

WHEREAS, the town board and plan commission for the town of Richfield are, in cooperation with the Citizen's For a Better Environment (CBE) and Planning Design Institute (POI), preparing a detailed land use and transportation circulation plan for the WIS 164 corridor as a means of achieving the goals of preserving the function and efficiency of the highway while enhancing the quality of life for the town's residents; and

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WHEREAS, the town's existing Comprehensive Land Use Plan designates specific areas within the WIS 164 corridor as being suitable for additional commercial and residential development that, in combination with additional commercial, residential, and industrial development allowed in other areas of the Town but

also served by WIS 164, will further change the character of the WIS164 corridor from that of a more traditional "rural highway" setting to that of an urban setting; and

WHEREAS, representatives for WisDOT's consultants, CH2M-Hill, provided information to the Town Board indicating that traffic projections used as the basis for the WIS 154 Corridor Study do not justify the need for an overall four-lane, capacity-enhancing improvement to that portion of WIS 164 within the Town of Richfield for at least another 15 years (6,700 to 10,500 vehicles/day by 2015): and, that although the projected traffic volumes for that time period exceed the acceptable level of service "capacity" standard for a two-lane rural highway (approximately 7,000 vehicles/day), said projections do not exceed the standard for a two-lane urban roadway (approximately 13,500 vehicles/day);

WHEREAS, the town board agrees that, the combination of steep topography, limited sight distance, excessive travel speed above and inadequate enforcement of posted travel speeds along WIS 164, increasing volumes of "through" traffic, truck traffic, and a higher percentage of turning vehicles, have all contributed to higher accident rates and unsafe travel conditions at selected locations and intersections along WIS 164 in the town of Richfield; and

WHEREAS, the town board agrees that, despite the intended function of an arterial highway like WIS 164 and the ideal design requirements for such a highway, and, given the type, amount, proximity, and, in some instances, historical significance of the existing residential, commercial, institutional, and agricultural properties located along the roadway that was just recently transferred to and re-designated as "WIS 164," WisDOT has the responsibility to first identify any potential detrimental Impacts any improvement(s) to WIS 164 might have on these existing properties and then modify the design requirements for such an improvement or provide other, mutually acceptable measures necessary to mitigate the detrimental impacts on such existing properties; and

WHEREAS, the town board and plan commission did, on September 28, 1999, hold a public information meeting and, on October 7, 1999, hold a public hearing, both for purposes of gathering information and receiving comments, concerns, questions, and ideas from the residents and property owners of the Town of Richfield concerning WisDOT's WIS 164 Corridor Study and the potential safety and capacity-enhancing alternatives, e.g. four-lane expansion, off-line realignment, etc., that are being evaluated as part of that study; and

WHEREAS, the town board agrees that, as the collective body elected by the residents of the town of Richfield to take actions and make decisions and/or recommendations on their behalf concerning local matters affecting town residents and property owners, including those issues and decisions made by other governments and agencies like WisDOT, and

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WHEREAS, the town board has reviewed and considered the information provided by and/or on behalf of WisDOT concerning the WisDOT WIS 164 Corridor Study and possible outcomes, the comments, concerns, and recommendations provided by the plan

commission and town staff, and finally, the written and oral comments, concerns, appeals, petitions, and interests of affected residents and property owners of the town:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF RICHFIELD, WASHINGTON COUNTY, WISCONSIN, THAT:

The town board requests that the following be considered by WisDOT, their consultants, and other appropriate individuals and governmental representatives involved in and/or having authority and influence over the decision making process regarding the corridor study and any resulting plans for improvement to WIS 164:

1. Expand the current WIS 164 corridor study and future transportation system planning efforts to further evaluate alternative routes comprised of other new and/or existing roadways that may provide a greater and more equitable distribution of traffic throughout the regional highway system serving southeastern Wisconsin.

Greater effort and consideration should be given to identifying and creating a system of highways that serves the entire region in a manner that is more cost-effective, convenient, efficient and less encroaching and intrusive than the existing and potentially more expansive WIS 164 route through the town of Richfield and surrounding communities. Alternative routes that should be considered include, but should not be limited to, the "old" WIS164/County Y and the existing Wisconsin Electric Power Co. easement routes to the east route and the WIS 83 route to the west.

2. In terms of existing and projected traffic volumes, levels of service and standards for capacity expansion, the WIS164 Study and future transportation system planning efforts should be revised to evaluate the existing WIS 164 roadway as an "urban" vs. "rural" facility. Despite the past, the communities within which WIS 164 traverses continue to grow and reflect the travel and development characteristics of an urbanizing area and not those of the expansive, rural and agricultural areas they used to be.

Being aware that Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) Land Use Plans are the basis upon which the regional transportation system plans are prepared and potential improvements to the State's rural highway system are evaluated, and, being aware that past development decisions and future land use and development plans made by the town of Richfield and other surrounding communities have and will continue to allow an amount and density of development that is greater than the lower amount and density of development assumed for this area in SEWRPCs land use and transportation plans, the designation of and potential improvements to WIS 164 should be reevaluated In an urban vs. rural context,



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3. The town board can and will support WisDOT efforts to evaluate and improve WIS 164 as an urban, two-lane facility, given the following facts: (1) current WisDOT traffic projections for the WIS 164 corridor through the town of Richfield do not exceed the level of service and capacity-related thresholds for a two-lane facility if evaluated as an urban vs. rural roadway; (2) WisDOT design standards to a typical urban two-lane roadway require less right-of-way, lower design and posted travel speeds,

and provide more vehicle capacity at the same level of service when compared to a rural, two-lane facility; (3) the installation of intersection turn-lanes, traffic signals, improved shoulders and pavement conditions all have the effect of increasing the capacity and efficiency of a two-lane roadway; and (4) the town of Richfield is working cooperatively with WisDOT in preparing development plans and regulations for the entire WIS 164 corridor through the town, including an access management plan, that will create the opportunity for alternative means of travel, reduce the amount of local vehicle traffic and, in turn, maintain the integrity, function, and capacity of a two-lane WIS164 in the Town of Richfield.

4. The town board requests that WisDOT focus it's most immediate attention and consideration to eliminating the safety problems and turning-lane deficiencies at the principal intersections along WIS 164 at County Q, Hubertus Road, WIS 167, and Pleasant Hill Road, and, the steep grades south of WIS 167, Hubertus Road, and north of Monches Road. These problems currently exist and will continue to worsen as a result of limited sight distances, excessive travel speed above and inadequate enforcement of the posted travel speeds along WIS 164, increasing volumes of non-local "through" traffic, increasing percentages of heavy truck vs. automobile traffic, and increasing percentages of turning vehicles at these intersections with WIS 164.

Recommended improvements that warrant evaluation should include, but not be limited to, an immediate reduction and increased enforcement of the posted travel speed to 45 mph, and the reduction of the steep grades as noted above, the installation of intersection turn-lanes, traffic signals, and other traffic control and warning devices within two years.

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