

# County Highway 3/Norell Avenue North Improvement Project

Online Engagement Summary

Washington County

June 14, 2021

## County Highway 3/Norell Avenue North Improvement Project

Washington County

# Overview

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Due to health concerns from COVID-19, Washington County provided community members with various virtual engagement opportunities from May 6 – 26, 2021 to get the latest project information and share feedback on the initial design alternatives for County Highway 3/Norell Avenue North from 170th Street North/County Highway 4 to Square Lake Trail North/County Highway 7.

Engagement opportunities included:

- Online open house
- Online comment map
- Packets of project information (mailed, picked up or available for download)
- One-on-one phone calls with Washington County Project Manager Kevin Peterson
- Email and website information

## Engagement Opportunities

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### Online Open House

An online open house was held for the Washington County Highway 3 Improvements Project during the engagement period and was located at this URL:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/e76cb2187c4e4da689e8458b9a4a1226>.

There were approximately 859 visits to the online open house (some attendees may have visited the site more than once).

Online attendees had the opportunity to watch an introductory video, learn more about the project, review initial design alternatives, see existing and proposed future images for various locations along the corridor, place comments on an online comment map, and provide feedback to project staff. Online meeting pages included:

- **Introductory Video**
  - 36 online visitors watched the introductory video with Kevin Peterson giving an overview of the project and online open house.
- **Project Overview**
  - Highlighted the project area, project goals, and a project timeline.
- **Crash History and Analysis**
  - Included crash data and crash rates in the project area.
- **What We Heard**
  - Included key themes from the first phase of public engagement in August 2020.
- **Initial Design Alternatives**
  - Information on all three alternatives, including what's different from what's out there today.
- **Comment Map**
  - Online viewers had the opportunity to leave a comment/associated pin on the map with their feedback.

## County Highway 3/Norell Avenue North Improvement Project

Washington County

- **Renderings**
  - Online viewers had the opportunity to see existing and proposed future photos at various locations along the corridor, including curb and sloughing areas.
- **Survey**
  - Provided additional feedback opportunities.

For screenshots of each content section, see **Appendix A**.

### Information Packets

Packets of project information were created for community members, stakeholders and landowners to review and provide input. Packets were available for download from the project website and online open house, mailed upon request, and were available at May Township and Washington County buildings for pick-up. Approximately 30 total packets were picked up from these locations. The packet of materials included the same information presented during the online open house. Two comment cards were sent back to the project team. A copy of the information packet is included in **Appendix B**.

### One-On-One Phone Calls and Emails

Community members, stakeholders and landowners were given the opportunity to schedule one-on-one phone appointments with Kevin Peterson to discuss the project and property impacts. One appointment was conducted during the engagement period. Community members also had the opportunity to email Kevin Peterson with any questions or concerns. All comments recorded were incorporated into the final comment summary.

## Comment Summary

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Feedback opportunities were provided during the engagement opportunities. Responses were collected through various means of communication including direct calls, emails and letters to Project Manager Kevin Peterson, online survey, packet comment cards and online comment map. Table 1 indicates the number of responses received through each channel. Table 2 identifies the responses by category. Several responses contain more than one comment category. A copy of the comment report has been included as an attachment to the engagement summary. Online survey open-ended responses and submitted formal comments are included in **Appendix C**.

**Table 1: Number of Responses Received**

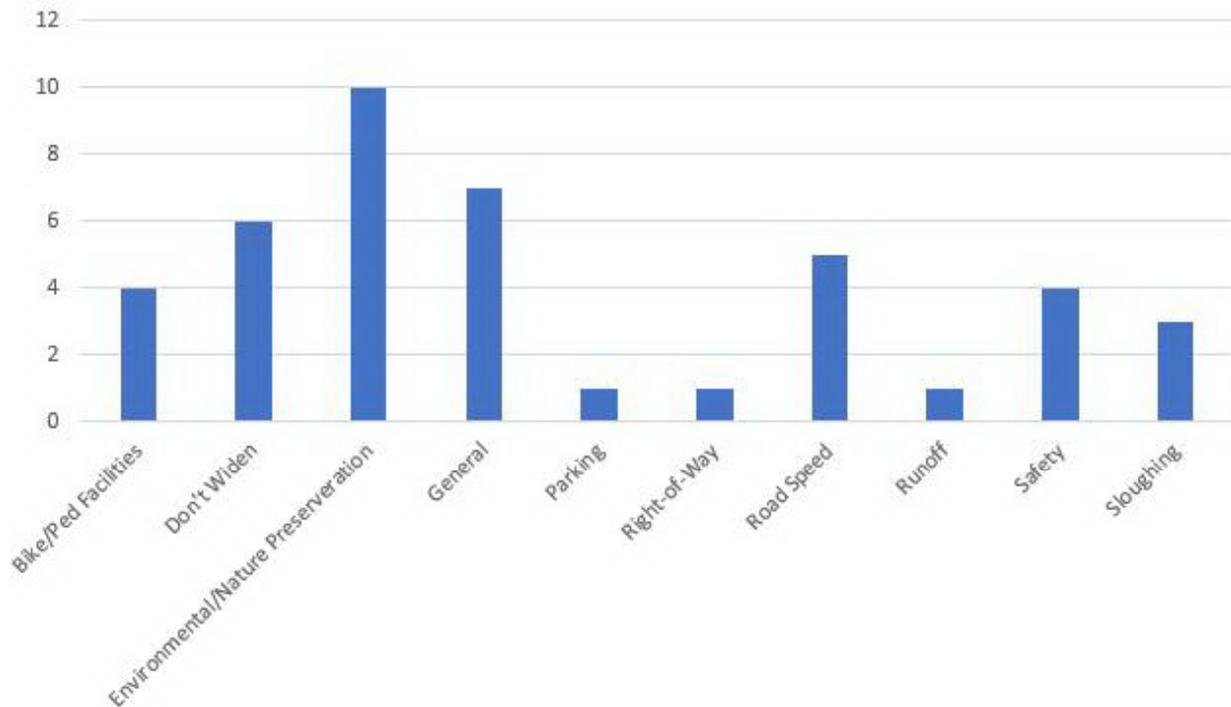
Method	Number of Responses Received to Date
Online Survey	31
Online Comment Map	2
Packet Comment Cards	2
Phone Calls	1
Emails	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>

**County Highway 3/Norell Avenue North Improvement Project**  
Washington County

**Table 2: List of Comments by Category**

Category	Comments
Bike/Ped Facilities	4
Environmental/Nature Preservation	10
General	7
Parking	1
Don't Widen	6
Right-of-Way	1
Road Speed	5
Runoff	1
Safety	4
Sloughing	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>

**Key Themes**



## County Highway 3/Norell Avenue North Improvement Project

Washington County

## Promotions

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### Postcard Mailers

- An invitation postcard was sent to approximately 348 local residents and businesses on May 5 promoting the online open house and other engagement opportunities.

### Social Media Advertisement

- A targeted Facebook advertisement was placed on May 6 and ran through May 26.
  - 4,090 people saw the advertisement at least once in their News Feeds
  - Approximately 568 people engaged with the post:
    - 12 reactions
    - 120 link clicks
    - 0 comments
    - 3 shares
  - Budget: \$20
  - Demographics
    - 10-mile radius of Stillwater, MN, ages 18-65+
    - Reached 54.2% women, 45.8% men
      - Age 65+ was the most popular viewer
- A Facebook post was also shared to the Marine on St. Croix, Fan, Supporter & Booster Group page and the Twin Cities Bicycling Club (TCBC) page
- A targeted Twitter advertisement was placed on May 6 and ran through May 26.
  - 285 people saw the post at least once in their News Feed
  - 6 people engaged with the post

### Project Website

- The project website was updated on May 5 with the online open house link, engagement packet and the postcard mailer.

### Nextdoor Alert

A post about the online open house was added to Nextdoor on May 6.

- 3,125 neighbors saw the post at least once

See **Appendix D** to view the online engagement promotions.

# Appendix A

Online Engagement Content

# County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North)

Online Engagement #2

May 6 - May 26, 2021

**Welcome to the County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue) Improvement Project Online Engagement #2**

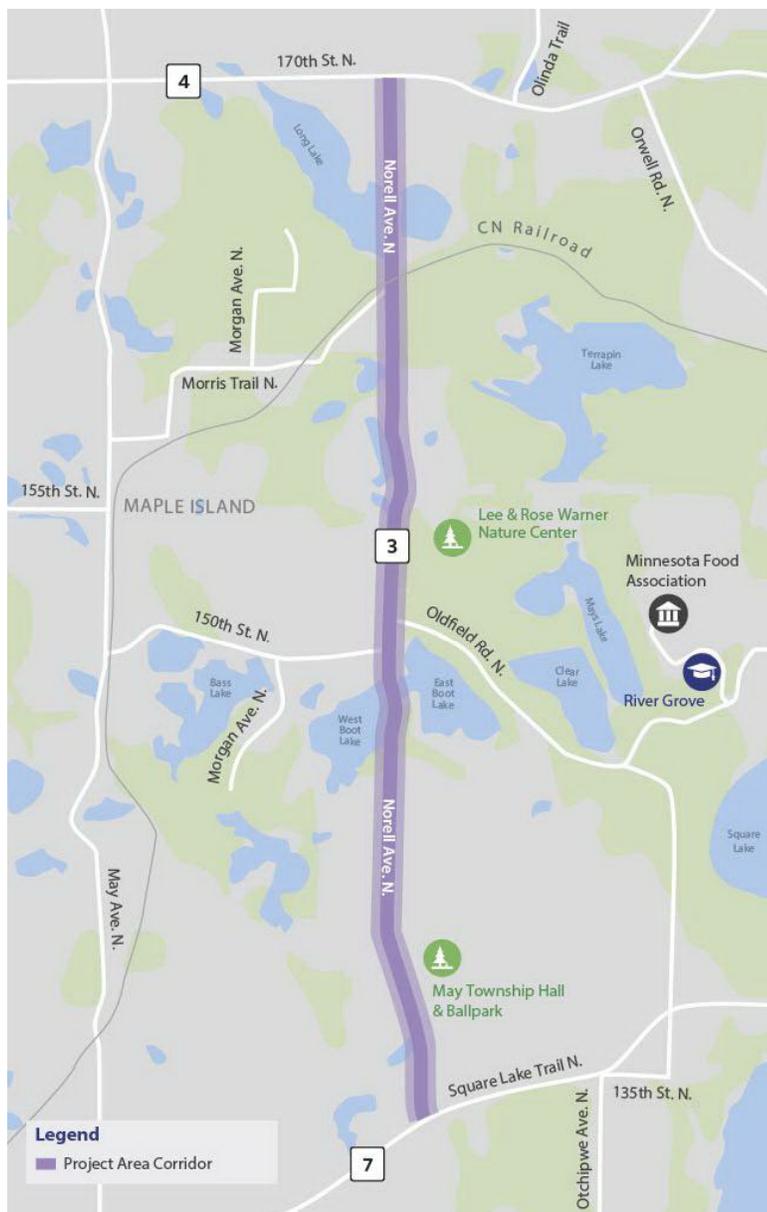


Thank you for your interest in the County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North) Improvement Project. We appreciate you joining us online to learn more about this project. Public engagement remains a top priority for Washington County as we navigate and do our part to prevent the spread of COVID-

19. Our goal is to help you understand the project and be informed of what's happening in your community. Please take this opportunity to scroll through this information to provide feedback on our initial designs.

## Project Overview

Washington County and May Township are exploring improvements on County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North) from 170th Street North (County Highway 4) to Square Lake Trail North (County Highway 7).



## PROJECT GOALS



**Fix sloughing area to prevent roadside slope from sliding into the pond**



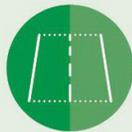
**Consider future project concepts for the existing railroad crossing**



**Receive feedback on the corridor from the community**



**Review crash history within the project area**



**Maintain the current character of the roadway, including the existing curves and 11-foot travel lanes**



**Replace existing bituminous curb with concrete curb and gutter**



**Evaluate shoulder widths for minor widening, where feasible**



**Consider areas for potential Stormwater treatment opportunities**

# Schedule

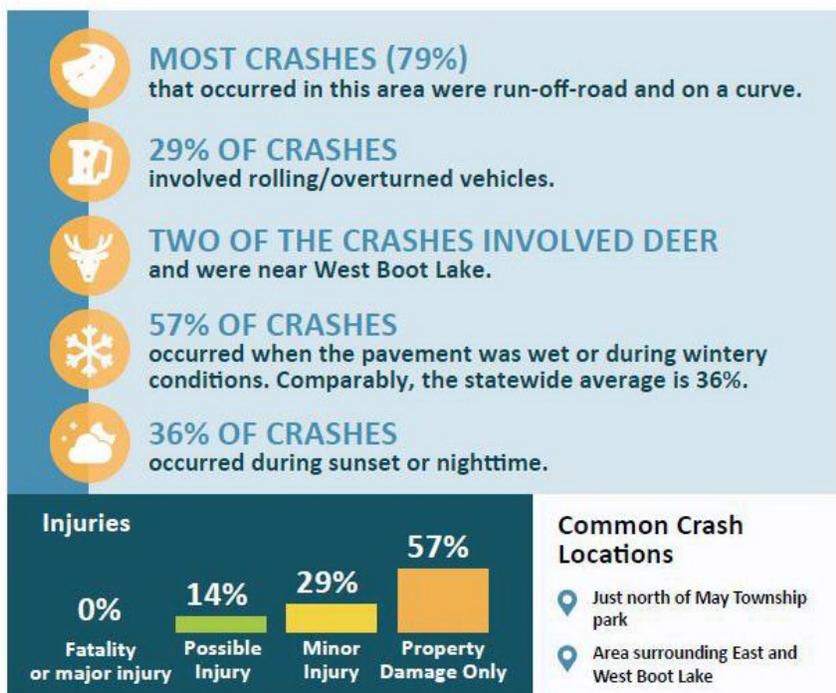


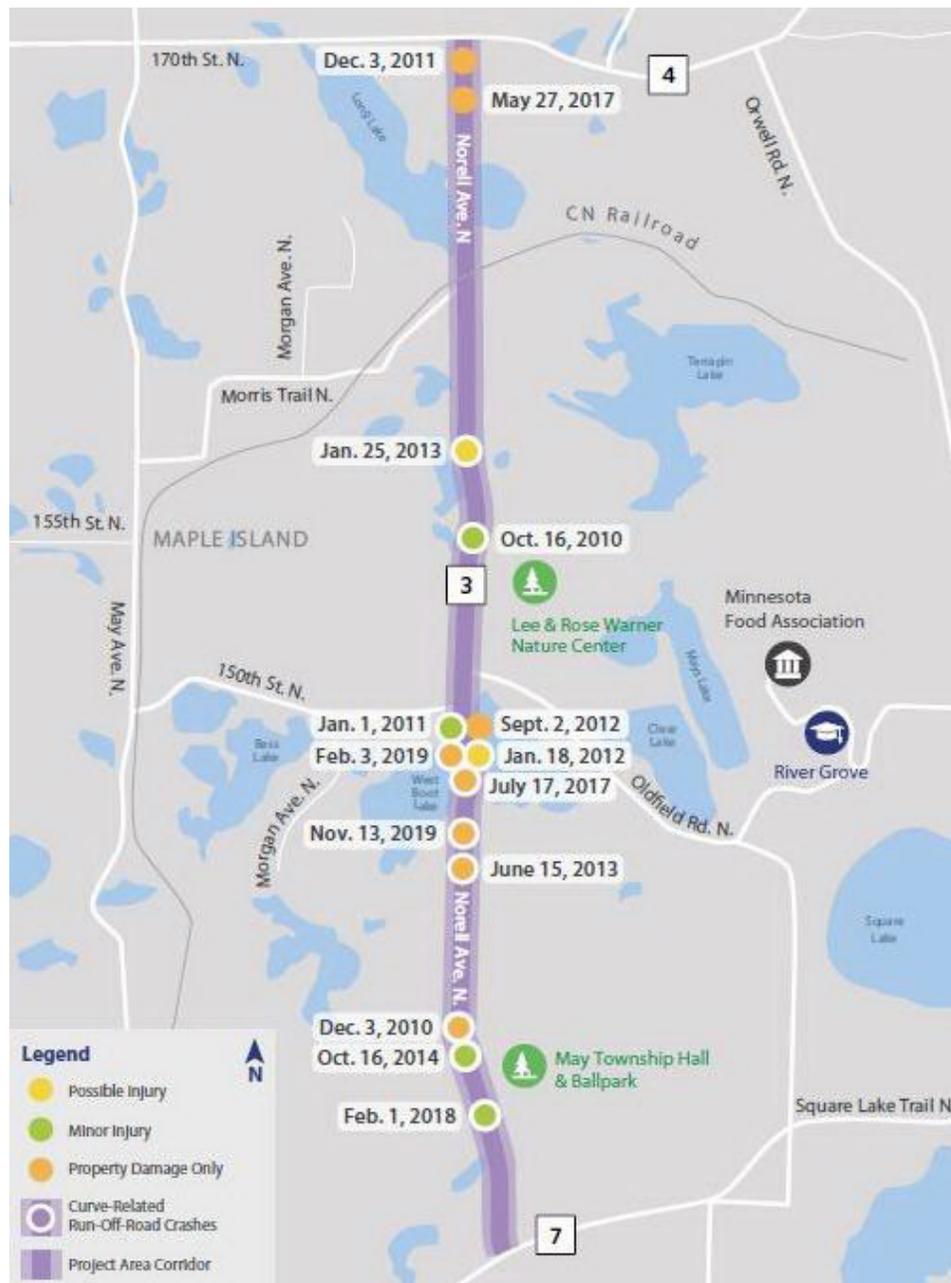
## Crash History

From 2010 to 2019, 14 crashes were documented on Norell Avenue North (County Highway 3) between Square Lake Trail North (County Highway 7) to 170th Street North (County Highway 4).

### WHAT WE KNOW

County Highway 3 from 150th Street to County Highway 7 has a crash rate above the state average. Crashes here are unusually high compared to similar stretches of highway elsewhere in the state.





## What We've Heard

We hosted our first phase of public engagement in August 2020 to provide information about the project and hear from community members about their experiences traveling through the area. We asked for your participation via online engagement and comment map, and in-person, appointment-only meetings with project team members. In total, we collected over 200 comments from the public.

**To learn more about what we heard, click on the image**

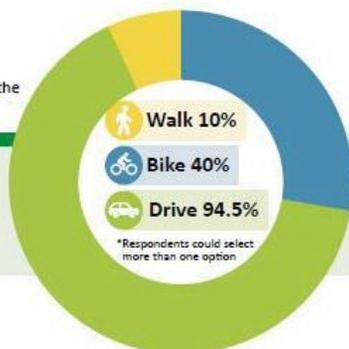
below!

Experiences using this stretch of County Highway 3

- Most people use County Highway 3 to travel somewhere else.
- Most people drive or bike in this area, while a small percentage walk.
- The highest ranked issues for evaluation were keeping the character of the area and minimizing impacts to the environment.

Top 5 mentions among general comments were related to:

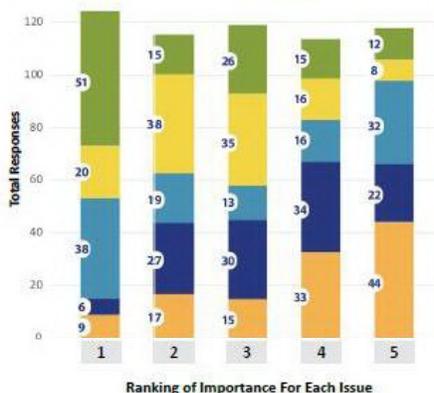
- 1 Bike/Pedestrian Facilities
- 2 Natural Preservation Route
- 3 Speed
- 4 Safety
- 5 Environment



We asked community members to rank area issues on a scale of most important (1) to least important (5). Here's what they said:

125 Answered | 3 Skipped

- Roadway Character/Minimized Impacts**  
119 Answered | Score 3.66
- Roadway Safety**  
117 Answered | Score 3.39
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities (wider shoulders or trail)**  
118 Answered | Score 3.13
- Stormwater Management/Drainage**  
119 Answered | Score 2.67
- Improve Existing Railroad Crossing**  
118 Answered | Score 2.27



# Initial Design Alternatives

## What's out there today

This is what you'll see if you drive, bike or walk the project area today.

**WHAT'S OUT THERE TODAY**  
This is what you'll see if you drive, bike or walk the project area today.

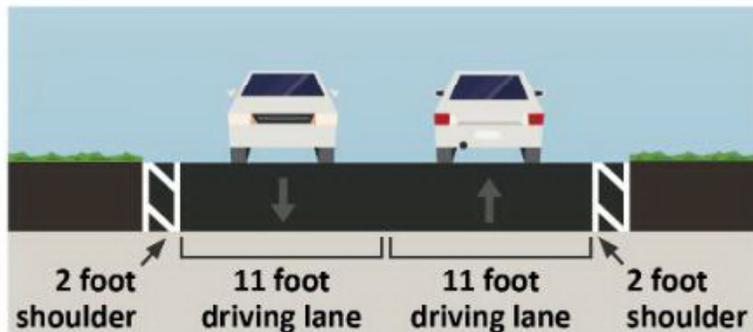
1 foot shoulder    11 foot driving lane    11 foot driving lane    1 foot shoulder

**You commented:**  
During our last round of engagement, we heard from community members that it was important to keep the character of the area and focus on minimizing impacts, while making bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements where appropriate.

**We listened:**  
With this feedback, we developed three design alternatives that we are excited to share and receive input on.

### Design Alternative 1

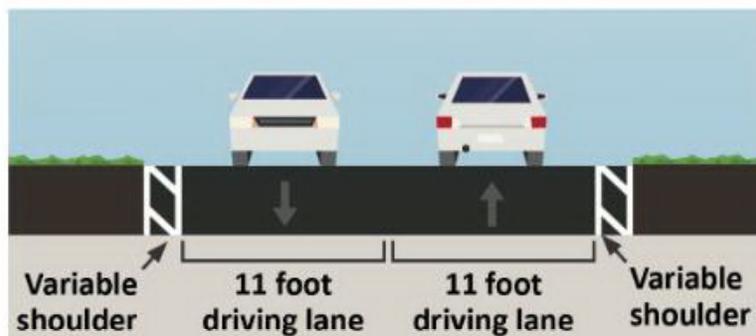
## ALTERNATIVE 1



Alternative 1 maintains the 11-foot wide driving lanes and adds a 2-foot wide shoulder throughout the project area. The new road would follow where the current road is today. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.

### Design Alternative 2

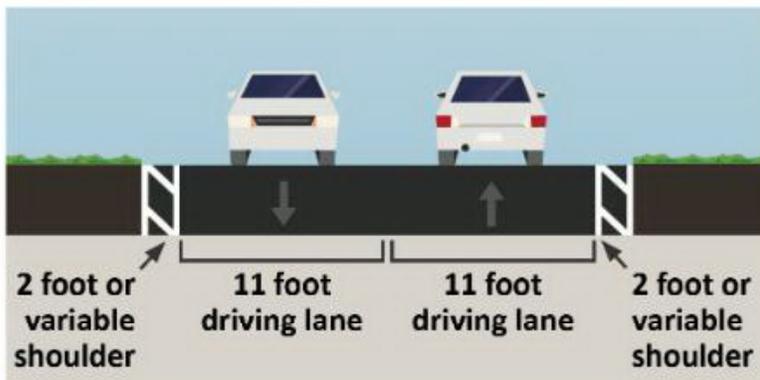
## ALTERNATIVE 2



Alternative 2 maintains the 11-foot wide driving lanes. The shoulder widths for this concept would vary leading to a road that is the same width as what's currently out there today. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.

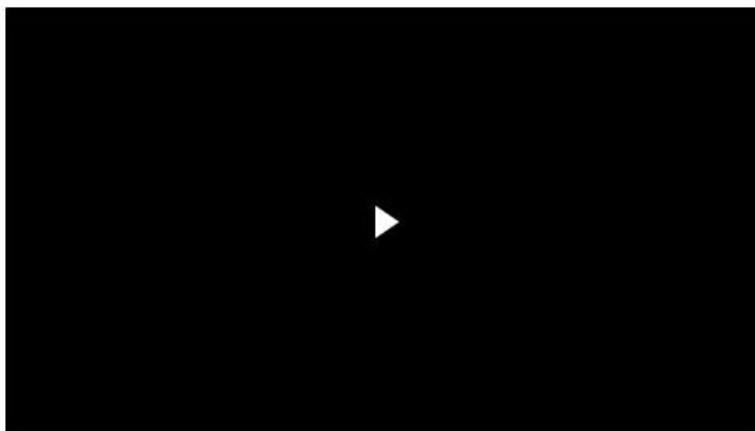
### Design Alternative 3

## ALTERNATIVE 3



### What is different about Alternative 3?

Alternative 3 is a mix of Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. This alternative also proposes 11-foot driving lanes, but only widens the shoulder width where it can be responsibly done with minimal impacts. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.



**CSAH 3 (Norell Ave N) - Roadway Improvements** ✕

*Washington County CSAH 3 (Norell Ave N) from CSAH 7 (Square Lake Trl) to CSAH 4 (170th St).*

*This project investigates opportunities for roadway improvements, pavement replacement, and long-term maintenance reduction.*

*Three different improvement options are displayed on this map:*

- **Alternative 1:** 11-foot lanes with 2-foot shoulder
- **Alternative 2:** Match existing roadway width
- **Alternative 3:** Hybrid

*Please leave your comments on the map as they relate to each alternative. (Use panel on the right to add new comments or like existing comments to the map)*

*Thanks!*

## Renderings

Use the slider bars below to show the before and after concepts at select areas along the project corridor.

### Alternative 1 - 2-foot Shoulder

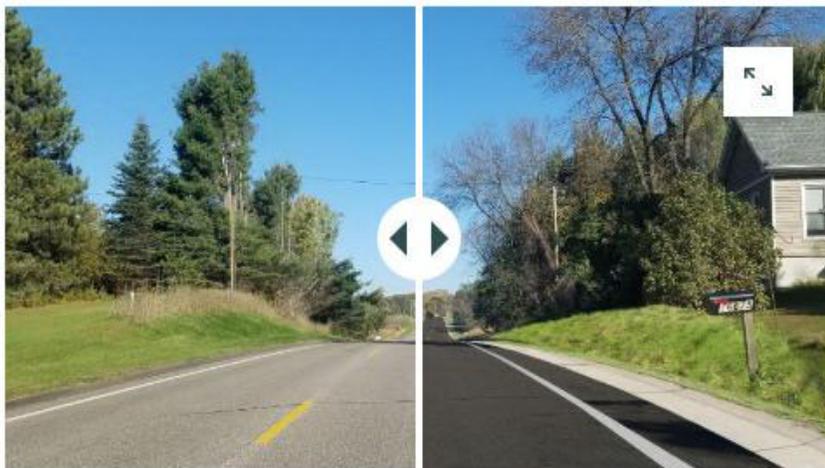


### Alternatives 2 and 3 - Match Existing Width and Hybrid



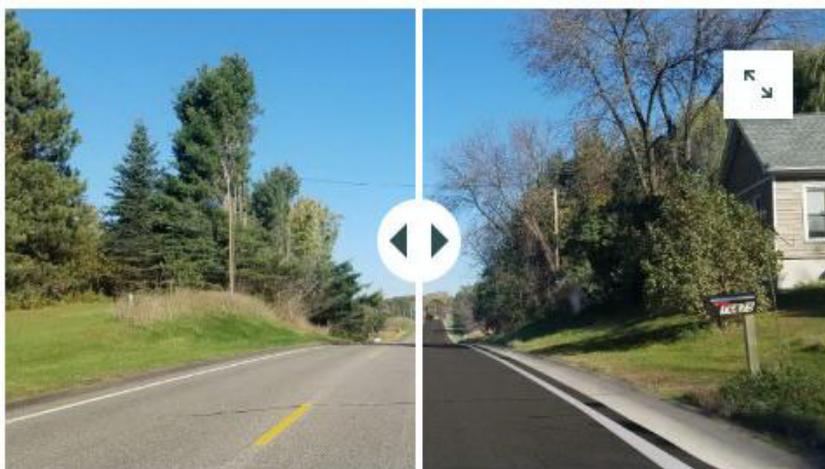
### Alternative 1 - Two Foot Shoulder

Take a look at the curb that's out there today then see the proposed future curb. Notice the different shape and material for the proposed curb.



### Alternatives 2 and 3 - Match Existing Width and Hybrid

Take a look at the curb that's out there today then see the proposed future curb. Notice the different shape and material for the proposed curb.



## Sloughing Renderings

Today the road pavement is sliding, or sloughing, into the Warner Nature Pond. The project team is looking at securing the area and protecting the pond environment. Take a look at the possible wall solutions to prevent further sloughing into the pond.

The project team eliminated an option where the slope toward Warner Nature Pond from the roadway would be flattened due to the need to grade into the water.

## Shallow Roadway Reinforcement

### SHALLOW ROADWAY REINFORCEMENT OPTION *(for sloughing area only)*



## **Modular Block Retaining Wall (for Sloughing Area Only)**



## **Sheet Pile Wall (for Sloughing Area Only)**



## Tell us your Thoughts

Now that you've reviewed the information – what did we miss? What else do you need to tell us?

### Contact Us

Visit the project website and sign up for email alerts to be the first to know about project updates and other ways to be involved in the project.

[Project Website](#)

Project Manager: Kevin Peterson (651-430-4330)

[Email Kevin](#)

# Appendix B

Information Packet



## PHASE 2 OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT: SPRING 2021

**Thank you for your interest in the County Highway 3/Norell Avenue North Improvement Project.**

The County, in partnership with May Township, is developing preliminary designs for highway improvements, pavement replacement, and long-term maintenance solutions from County Highway 7/ Square Lake Trail North to County Highway 4/170th Street North. Potential changes will impact drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists in this area.

We appreciate you reviewing this packet of information to learn more about this project. Our goal is to help you understand the project and be informed of what's happening in your community. Now is the best time to provide feedback on our initial designs. Please take this opportunity to look through this information and reach out to me with questions and comments.

Public engagement remains a top priority for Washington County as we navigate and do our part to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Our team will continue to communicate additional engagement opportunities, pending the status of COVID-19.

**Visit [www.co.washington.mn.us/NorellAvenue](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/NorellAvenue) and sign up for email alerts to be the first to know about ways to be involved in the project.**

## PACKET MATERIALS

This packet of information includes the following materials:

- Project overview
- Crash history and analysis
- A summary of what we heard from the community last summer
- Initial design concepts
- Renderings that show the potential improvements at locations within the project area
- Comment form

## NEXT STEPS

Please review these materials and share your comments on the initial designs using the comment form included in this packet. Your input will help us shape and prioritize these important improvements. There are a few ways to provide your feedback:

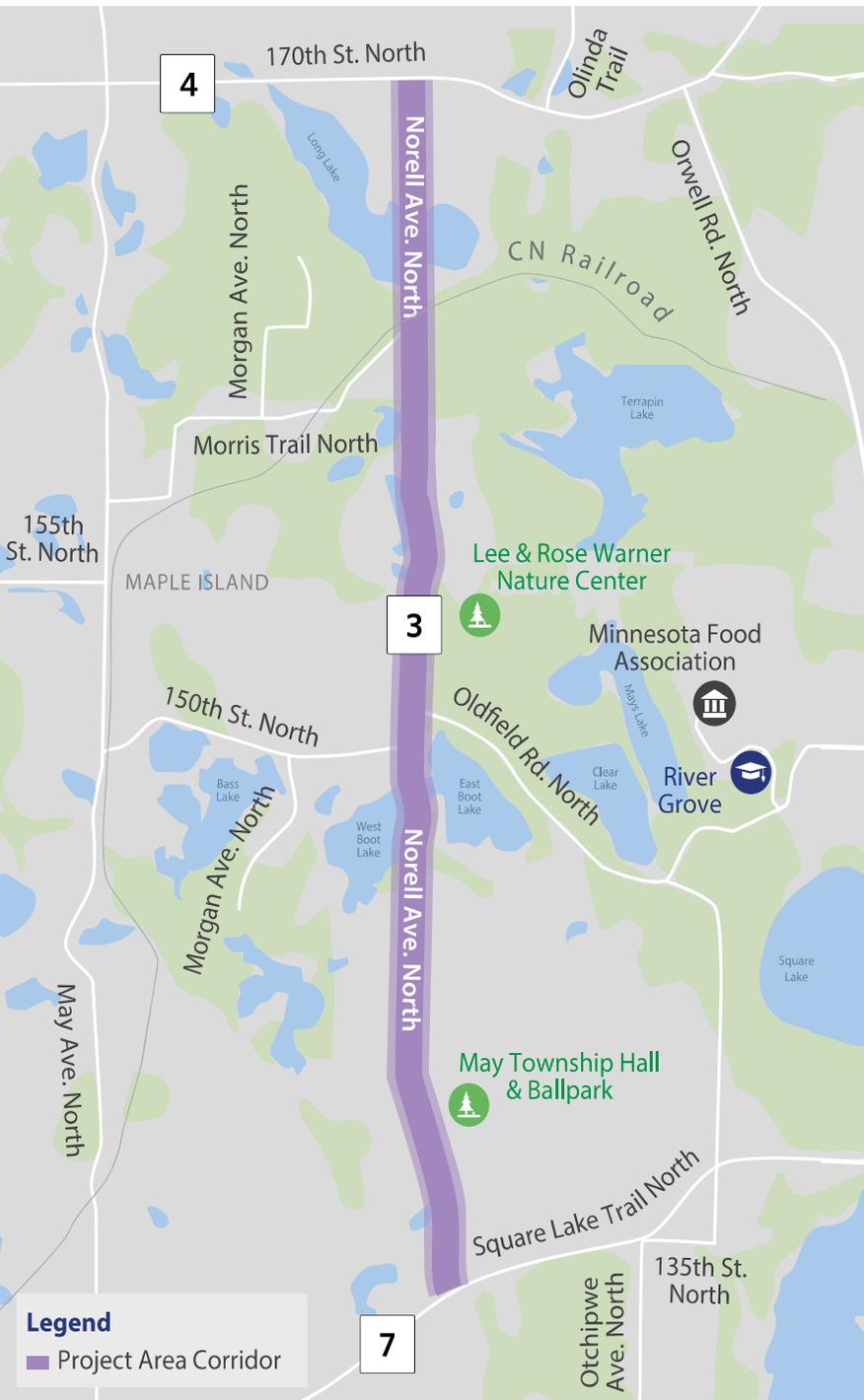
- **Mail the comment form back to our team**
- **Scan and email them to Kevin Peterson (see below for email address)**
- **Drop them off in person at Washington County located at 11660 Myeron Road North in Stillwater**





## PROJECT OVERVIEW

Washington County and May Township are exploring improvements from County Highway 7/Square Lake Trail North to County Highway 4/170th Street North.



**Legend**  
 Project Area Corridor

## PROJECT GOALS



**Fix sloughing area to prevent roadside slope from sliding into the pond**



**Consider future project concepts for the existing railroad crossing**



**Receive feedback on the corridor from the community**



**Review crash history within the project area**



**Maintain the current character of the roadway, including the existing curves and 11-foot travel lanes**



**Replace existing bituminous curb with concrete curb and gutter**



**Evaluate shoulder widths for minor widening, where feasible**

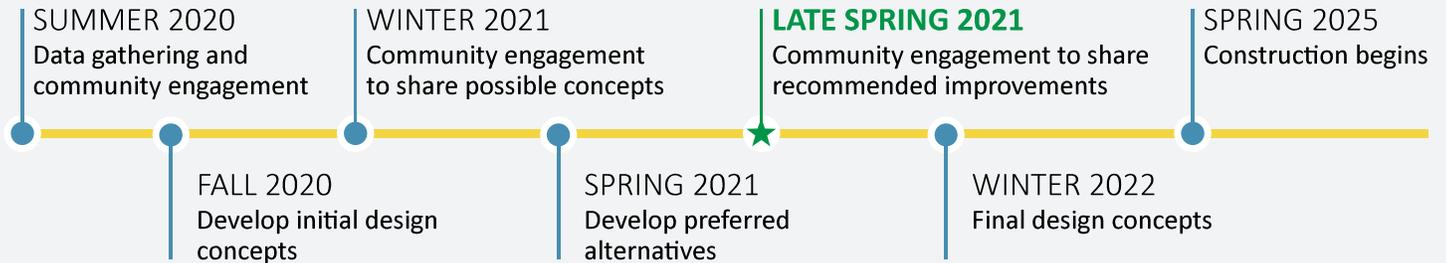


**Consider areas for potential Stormwater treatment opportunities**





## PROJECT OVERVIEW



Washington County maintenance has spent a lot of time and resources repairing the poor pavement north of Boot Lake. While the project team evaluates the engineering and construction work needed to develop long-term solutions in this area, the county is also considering corridor-wide improvements that will benefit the community.

## KEY ISSUES

Key issues requiring further investigation and community engagement include:

- **County Highway 3 from 150th Street to County Highway 7 has a crash rate above the state average**
- **Community interest in pedestrian and bicyclist improvements in this area**
- **Restricted sight lines for vehicles approaching the railroad crossing**

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Community engagement remains a top priority for Washington County as we navigate and do our part to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In place of an in-person open house, we are offering the following engagement opportunities:

### Engagement Opportunities through May 26

-  Visit our website to access the online open house any time.
-  Schedule a one-on-one phone call with Project Manager Kevin Peterson to discuss the project and your property.
-  Leave a comment on the online comment map.
-  Receive a packet of detailed project information
  - Request a mailed or emailed information packet by contacting Kevin Peterson at 651-430-4330 or [kevin.peterson@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:kevin.peterson@co.washington.mn.us).
  - Pick up an information packet at May Township on May 10 and May 12 between 11a.m. - 2p.m.
  - Packets are also available for pick up at Washington County located at 11660 Myeron Road North in Stillwater between 8a.m. - 5p.m.
  - Download a packet from the project website: [co.washington.mn.us/NorellAvenue](http://co.washington.mn.us/NorellAvenue)



**Fill out the comment form included in this packet to provide your feedback!**

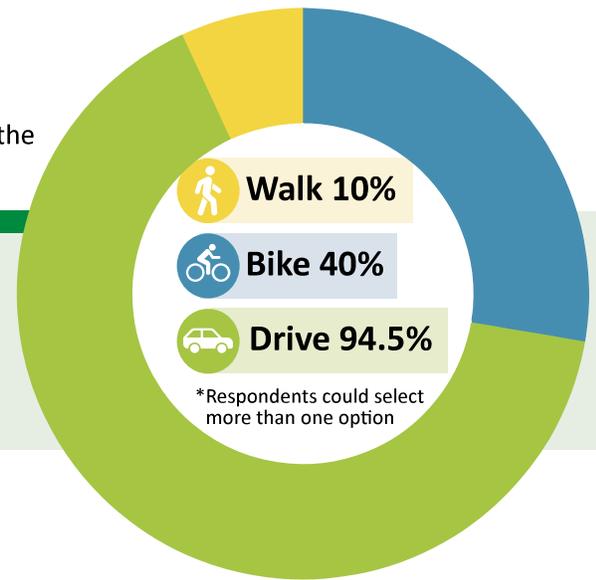
## WHAT WE HEARD

### Overview

We hosted our first phase of public engagement in August 2020 to provide information about the project and hear from community members about their experiences traveling through the area. We asked for your participation via online engagement and comment map, and in-person, appointment-only meetings with project team members. In total, we collected over 200 comments from the public.

### Experiences using this stretch of County Highway 3

- Most people use County Highway 3 to travel somewhere else.
- Most people drive or bike in this area, while a small percentage walk.
- The highest ranked issues for evaluation were keeping the character of the area and minimizing impacts to the environment.



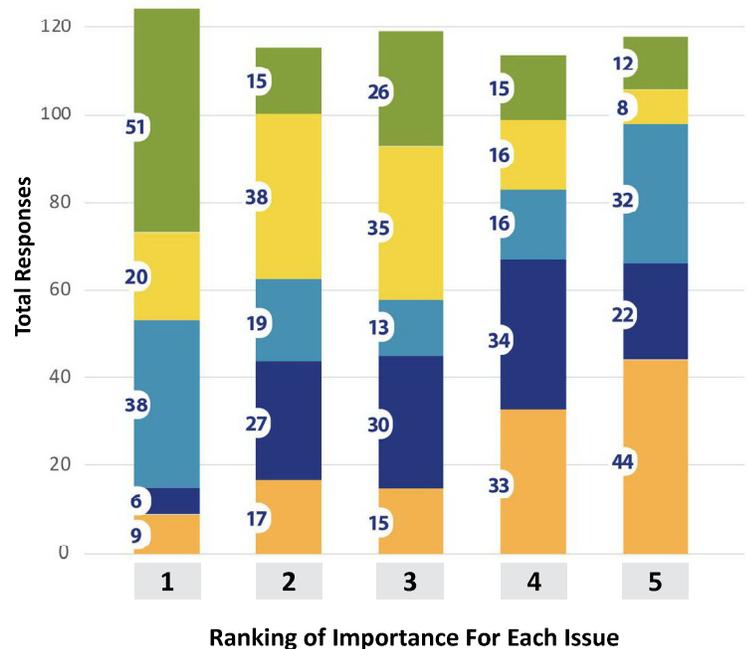
### Top 5 mentions among general comments were related to:

- |                                     |                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>1</b> Bike/Pedestrian Facilities | <b>4</b> Safety      |
| <b>2</b> Natural Preservation Route | <b>5</b> Environment |
| <b>3</b> Speed                      |                      |

### We asked community members to rank area issues on a scale of most important (1) to least important (5). Here's what they said:

125 Answered | 3 Skipped

- Roadway Character/Minimized Impacts**  
119 Answered | Score 3.66
- Roadway Safety**  
117 Answered | Score 3.39
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities (wider shoulders or trail)**  
118 Answered | Score 3.13
- Stormwater Management/Drainage**  
119 Answered | Score 2.67
- Improve Existing Railroad Crossing**  
118 Answered | Score 2.27



## CRASH HISTORY

From 2010 to 2019, 14 crashes were documented on Norell Avenue North (County Highway 3) between Square Lake Trail North (County Highway 7) to 170th Street North (County Highway 4).

## WHAT WE KNOW

County Highway 3 from 150th Street to County Highway 7 has a crash rate above the state average. Crashes here are unusually high compared to similar stretches of highway elsewhere in the state.



**MOST CRASHES (79%)**  
that occurred in this area were run-off-road and on a curve.



**29% OF CRASHES**  
involved rolling/overturned vehicles.



**TWO OF THE CRASHES INVOLVED DEER**  
and were near West Boot Lake.

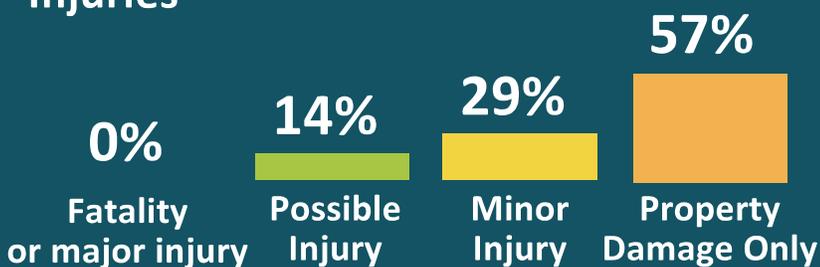


**57% OF CRASHES**  
occurred when the pavement was wet or during wintery conditions. Comparably, the statewide average is 36%.



**36% OF CRASHES**  
occurred during sunset or nighttime.

### Injuries

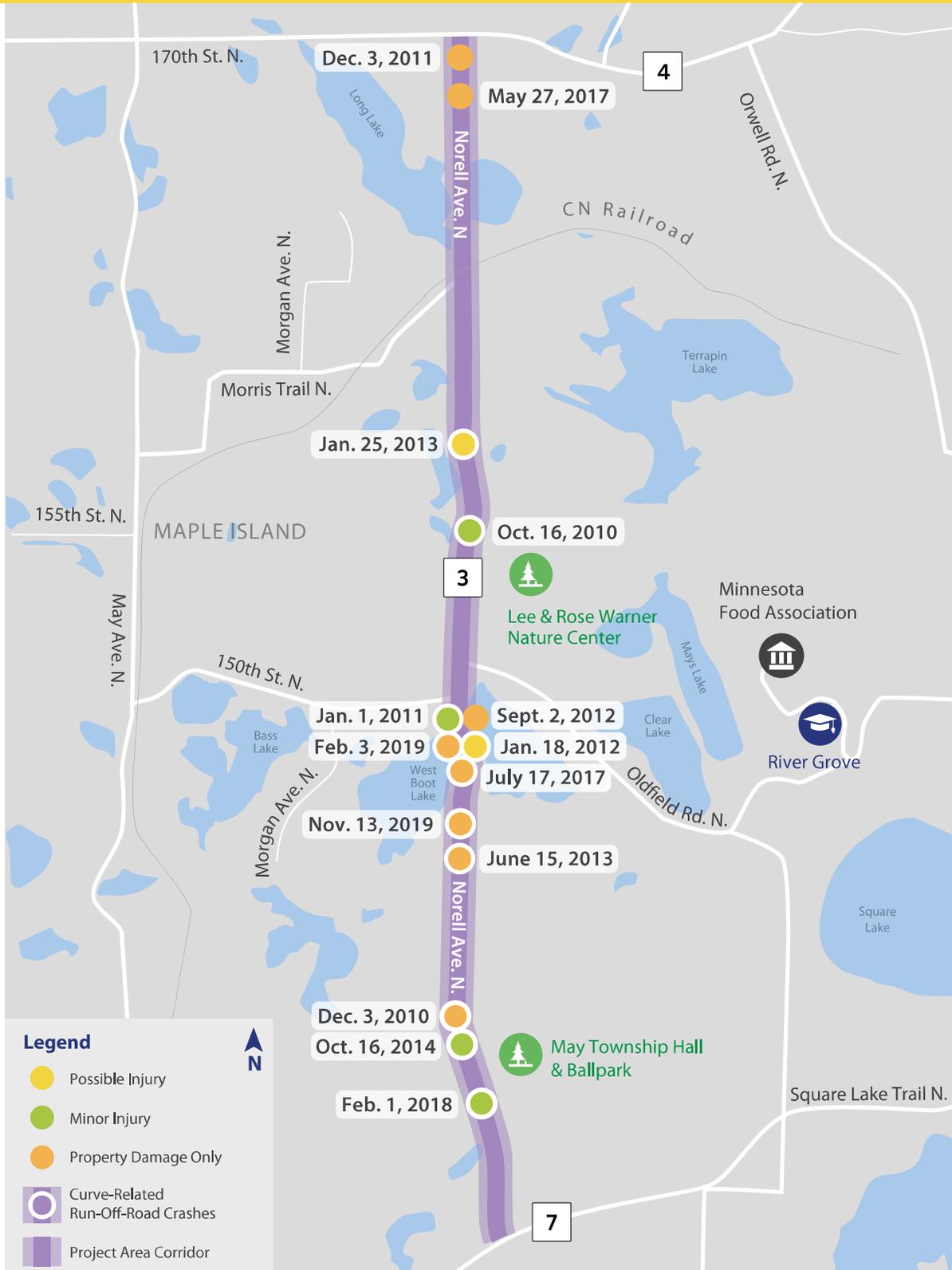


### Common Crash Locations

-  Just north of May Township park
-  Area surrounding East and West Boot Lake



## CRASH HISTORY

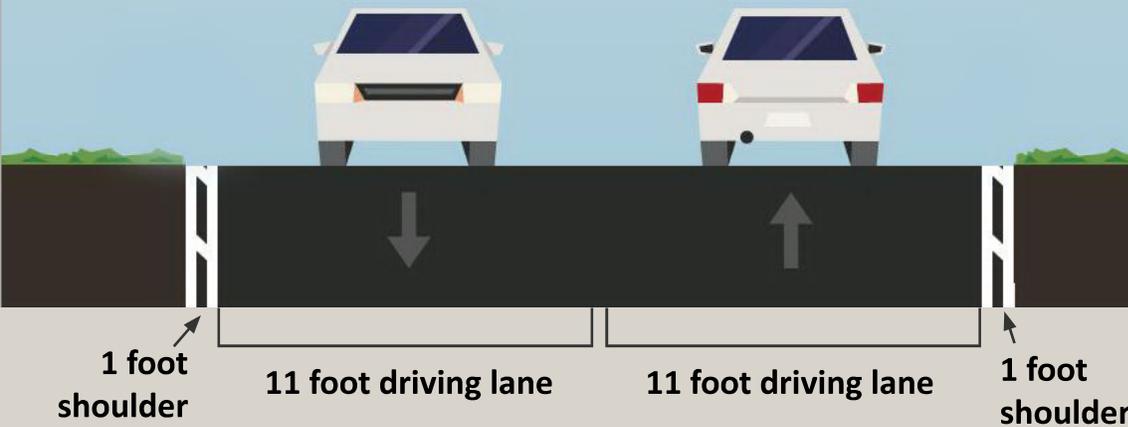




## INITIAL DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

### WHAT'S OUT THERE TODAY

This is what you'll see if you drive, bike or walk the project area today.



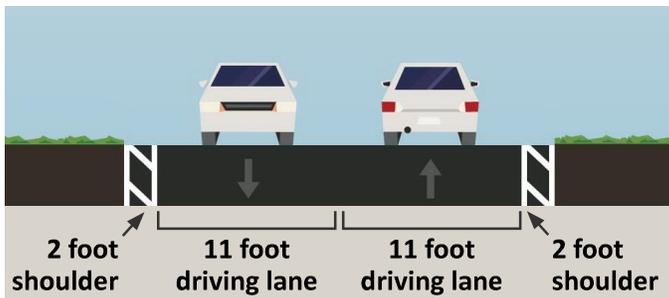
#### You commented:

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#### We listened:

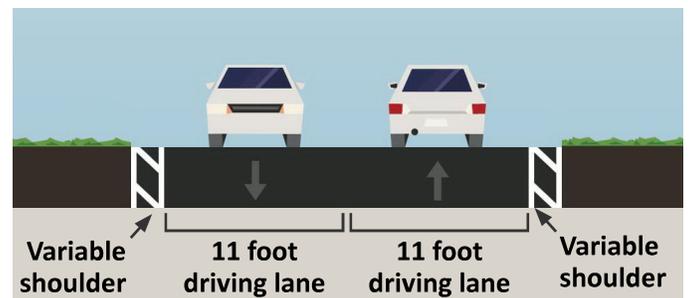
With this feedback, we developed three design alternatives that we are excited to share and receive input on.

### ALTERNATIVE 1



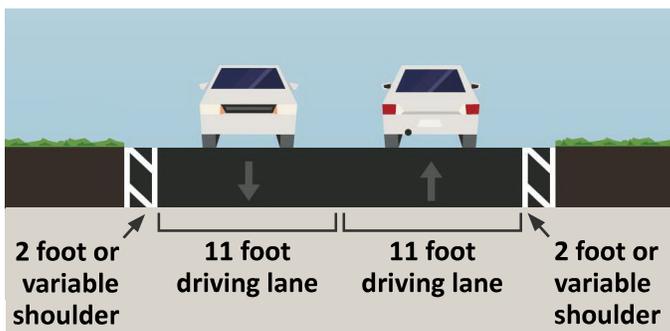
Alternative 1 maintains the 11-foot wide driving lanes and adds a 2-foot wide shoulder throughout the project area. The new road would follow where the current road is today. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.

### ALTERNATIVE 2



Alternative 2 maintains the 11-foot wide driving lanes. The shoulder widths for this concept would vary leading to a road that is the same width as what's currently out there today. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.

### ALTERNATIVE 3



#### What is different about Alternative 3?

Alternative 3 is a mix of Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. This alternative also proposes 11-foot driving lanes, but only widens the shoulder width where it can be responsibly done with minimal impacts. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.



What do you think of these design concepts? Fill out the comment form included in this packet and tell us your thoughts.



## CURB RENDERING

Take a look at the curb that's out there today then see the proposed future curb at the bottom of the page. Notice the different shape and material for the proposed curb.

### WHAT'S OUT THERE TODAY



### PROPOSED CURB: ALTERNATIVE 1



### PROPOSED CURB: ALTERNATIVE 2 & 3





## POTENTIAL SLOUGHING SOLUTIONS

Today the road pavement is sliding, or sloughing, into the Warner Nature Pond. The project team is looking at securing the area and protecting the pond environment

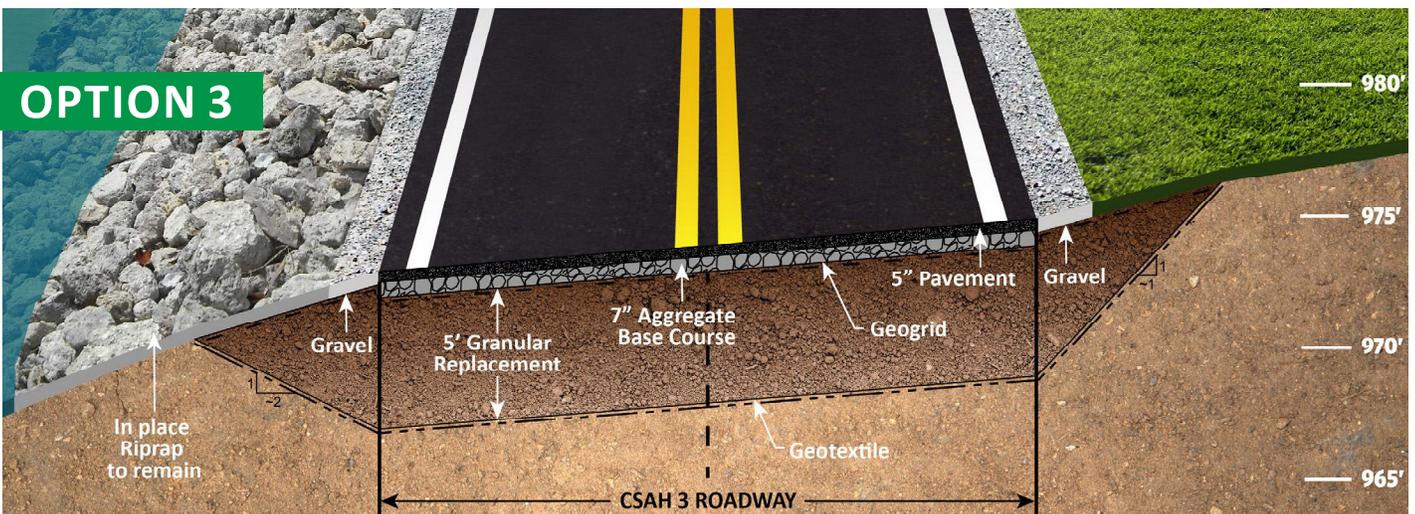
### OPTION 1



### OPTION 2



### OPTION 3





## WIDENING RENDERINGS

Today the road has 11-foot driving lanes and 1-foot shoulders. Take a look at some of the options for widening the road to increase the shoulder width.

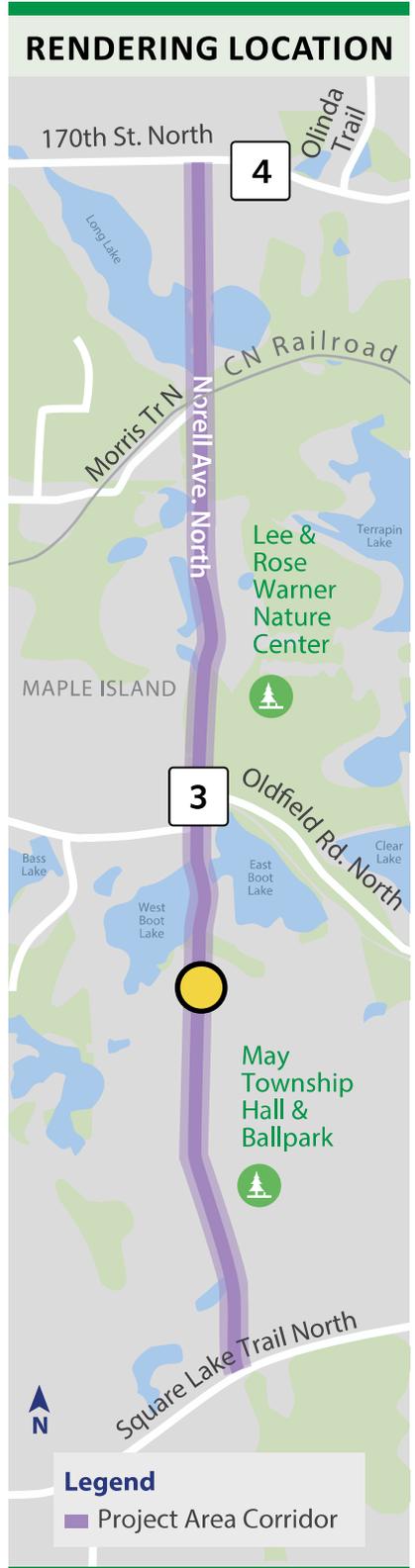
### WHAT'S OUT THERE TODAY



### PROPOSED WIDENING: ALTERNATIVE 1



### PROPOSED WIDENING: ALTERNATIVES 2 & 3





**TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS**

Please mail this comment form back to us or scan and email to [kevin.peterson@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:kevin.peterson@co.washington.mn.us) by **May 26**.

**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 1?**

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**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 2?**

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**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 3?**

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Do you have any other comments for the project team to consider?

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**Join the project email list:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

Online Comment Map  
Survey Monkey Reports  
Email Comments  
Packet Comments

Comment	Key Theme	Secondary Key Theme
I have lived near the Warner pond Sloughing area for 30+ years and have watched you dump rocks between the pond and road at least 3 times. It has never been a long term solution. It seems either the retaining wall or the sheet piling would work better. I suspect sheet piling is a more cost efficient alternative and although the retaining wall looks much better because of its location it would not be visible, therefore if I had to choose one it would be the sheet piling.	Sloughing	
Please add share the lane and Bike sharrows for families traveling this corridor to get to the nature centers, Square Lake, Pine Point and Big Marine park loops. Please identify how you can continue to improve bicycle safety in the corridors, with bike lane or separated paths, as options.	Bike/Ped Facilities	
The one thing I haven't heard is creating changes to this roadway that will be good for the long-term. What could/should be done for the long-term vitality of that corridor, or so that we don't have to be going back in 15-25 years to do major repairs or reroutes?	General	
I'm concerned if there is any widening the speed and unsafe driving will increase. I love driving and riding bike on this section. Please retain the character that's there.	Road Speed	
Thanks for the opportunity to participate. I appreciate the minimalist approach as it is the most protective of the natural area and water bodies.	General	
Using it to drive from Stillwater to Marine or Marine into the Twin Cities.	General	
As someone who drives this road most days and lives nearby, I would support Alternative #2 as the best option for the least environmental impact and preservation of the unique beauty of the area. I strongly urge you to use Alternative #2. Thank You!	Environmental/Nature Preservation	
Prioritize transportation safety for both vehicles and pedestrians. Alternative 1 clearly is the best to achieve this.	Bike/Ped Facilities	Safety
The Strike household and Balsam Tree & Shrub Care wants option 2 with a reduced speed limit from 50 mph to 45 mph. This road is a gem to all who have ever had the opportunity to walk, bike, or drive on it, regardless of the season. Please respect our requests to leave it as is. Swans, loons, and a myriad of other flora and fauna would benefit from this as your decision. Thank you.	Road Speed	
As a citizen of Marine on St. Croix, who frequently drives on this road, I oppose widening it due to the environmental impact on wetlands.	Environmental/Nature Preservation	
This road is a one of a kind a joy to travel. Please keep it the way it is! Thank you or this opportunity to comment.	Preserve Area	
Roads such as Norell are not something to alter in any way. They are truly a gift of this region and so fragile and vulnerable to human impact. Please let this one be as it is.	Preserve Area	
I favor a uniform speed limit for the road. However, it would be useless without enforcement, which would pay for itself. I drive the limits, and get tailgated, and even passed on double yellows. Many, but not all, drivers go as fast as the curves allow. I favor the shallow roadway reinforcement option for the sloughing area. I live nearby and have not noticed much change in several years, since the last repair. Perhaps it has reached a level of relative stability. A neighbor talks about there being springs in the pond. I attended a talk at Warner about the ponds and other wetlands given by then director Ron Lawrenz, who said there are no springs in the ponds on Warner. There are some "seeps" where rainfall percolates through the soil from higher ground, but no underwater springs anywhere in Warner, if that is relevant to your planning. Widening the road in the name of cyclist safety would produce a paradoxical result of increased traffic and speed, thus jeopardizing cyclists. Some people I talk to about this clearly say they are annoyed by having to slow for them, rather than concerned about their safety. I have to slow for farm machinery, school buses, deer, and slowpoke cars more than for bicycles.	Road Speed	
On your maps, I see no difference between options #2 and #3, there's no indication of what trees would need to be removed or how the road might be changed; I believe this is misleading and may cause confusion to others filling out this survey	General	
I am concerned about land owners' rights of way and turtle habitat.	Right-of-Way	Environmental/Nature Preservation
If you build it, they will come. Widening and expanding this road will just cause more traffic, both vehicles and bicycles, and the problems will grow to match. I realize this road is unlike many other county roads, but I hope the county will recognize its unique scenic, natural, ecological, historic, and other values and find a solution to the minor problems it's facing without destroying its special character.	Don't widen	Environmental/Nature Preservation
This area is highly traveled by bikers, and makes up a piece of MANY great cycling routes in the area. Square lake trail (7) has great (safe) bicycling, it would be nice to have additional safe routes that go North of 7. I would like to ask if the Norrell cycling path that is south of 7 can be extended to the North?	Bike/Ped Facilities	
More detail and analysis is needed. How do the anticipated permits mentioned in the Environmental Memo vary by alternative? On Alternative 2, would the various permits be required anywhere outside the sloughing area? If so, what and where and why? What are the pros and cons of the new curb style? Will it require excessive grading in the right of way? Are there places where the existing curb style is more appropriate due to impacts? Please quantify the differences in impacts between the alternatives (area of impervious surface, area of filled wetland, area of grading, area of trees removed or impacted). Do not alter the landscape along the RR tracks, but consider better signage or other enforcement aimed at people who run the stop sign. If you're serious about Context Sensitive Design, please do a better job of describing the important natural features of the corridor that you aim to preserve, beyond the minimal description in the Environmental Memo, which in no way reflects the ecological significance of the area. Thanks for the opportunity to offer input.	Environmental/Nature Preservation	
I would just once again mention that you had to go back 10 years to get enough safety information for your study. My point is that it is a safe corridor now.	Safety	
Current street-side parking is sufficient for Bone Lake fisherman. Would need to make sure this parking is not impacted if shoulders are widened.	Parking	
Thank you for this information regarding County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North) Improvement Project. Since this area is part of the Carnelian Creek Corridor, a Top 10 Conservation Priority of Washington County and is also recognized by the MN DNR as a Regionally Significant Ecological Area, it is an important discussion and I appreciate the opportunity to be a part of it. As a resident of the Carnelian-Marine-St. Croix Watershed District with concerns that our infrastructure projects minimize the impact to the water quality of wetlands, lakes and habitat diversity in this important area, I support Alternative 2. This alternative appears to be the best environmental option, especially since there is no projected increase in traffic between now and 2040 and thus no real need to widen the road with increased impervious surface.	Environmental/Nature Preservation	
Important not to have runoff to the Warner Nature Bog	Runoff	

Survey Monkey Comments (continued)

I am thankful for your hard work in preparing these plans and options. It is useful to see the renderings; however, they would offer better perspective on the very curvy parts of the road, where we residents see the greatest potential for deviation from the current roadway. Thank you!	General	
widening the surface only raises speeds....won't make it any safer!	Don't widen	
PLEASE, do as little as you can to change the existing character of this road. I have seen sandhill cranes, swans flying over a field and a bear cub on the side of the road. One of my sons friends lives right of Norell and the road is a gem in a very important watershed.	Don't widen	
Wall type - sheet pile	Sloughing	
This might be the prettiest stretch of road for cycling in Washington County. Maintaining the character of the road is extremely important.	Don't widen	
While the bicyclist activists from outside the area deserve to be heard, their input should be taken with a grain of salt. They are extremely well organized and vocal. They may represent the majority of people at the some meetings, but they do not represent the majority of users and do not represent the majority of cyclists (and do not represent me as a cyclist). As a result, the volume of their input does not proportionately represent their priority in this issue. It's pretty easy for them to bring in a well developed presentation and overshadow a quiet land owner or resident who just wants to get along with their neighbors and enjoy the country setting.	General	
I prefer the appearance of the retaining wall for the sloughing area.	Sloughing	
One of the goals was to address the railroad crossing - I am not sure any of the current proposals speak to that area of the roadway.	General	

## Online Map Comments

Comment	Key Theme
Steep bank in this area should be addressed.	Safety
Speed limit changes. Given the history of one car accidents , limited visibility, limited speed curves and the desire to maintain rural character why not just set the speed limit at 40 mph for the whole length. 50 / 45mph are going to cause accidents	Road Speed

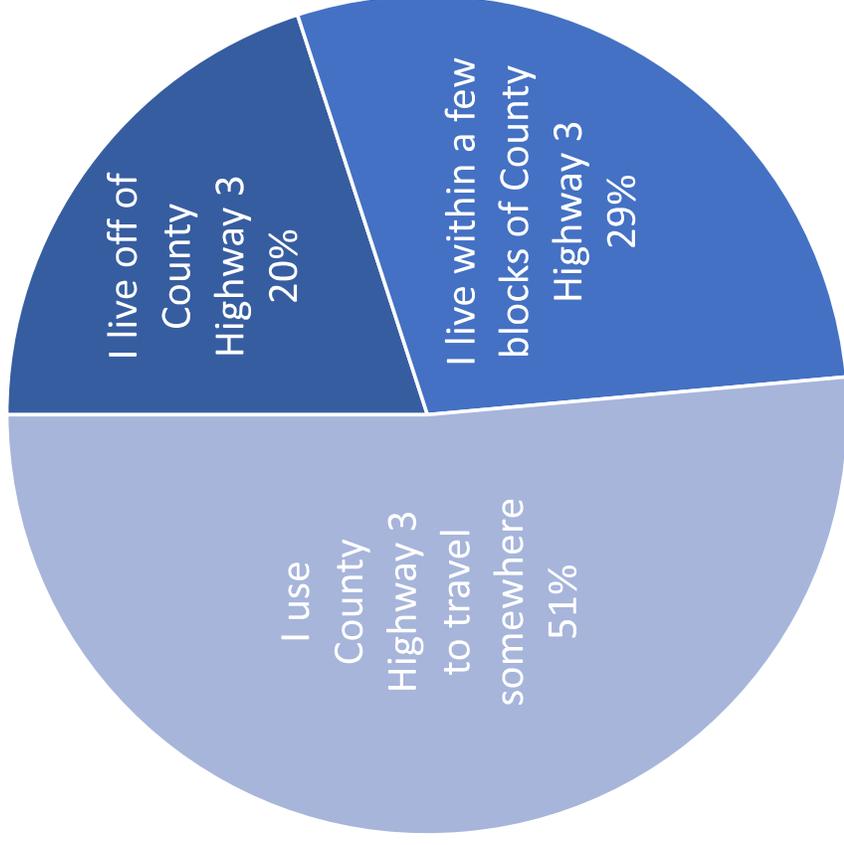
## Emails and Phone Calls

Comment	Key Theme
<p>We would like to suggest keeping the speed limit as posted. Is it possible to have a solar powered flashing speed limit sign, many communities have them to help with the speeders. Located between Boot lake and the rail road tracks to the north. We have a lot of speeding, way over 45 mph and someone will get hurt especially with a new road. Ask any one that lives on the road about speeders.</p>	Road Speed
<p>Do not clear cut rite of ways, keeping the existing road width with 2ft asphalt shoulders where its flatter makes sense. Widening the road or making 2ft shoulder on the hills would remove to many trees and do excessive damage to the landscape that is why we live here and so many people travel the road on a leisure day of driving.</p>	Environmental/Nature Preservation
<p>A turn lane from county Rd 4 at Norell (SW corner) would make that corner a lot safer.</p>	Safety
<p>As a resident of the Marine Carnelian St. Croix Watershed District (MCSCWD), multi-decade Square Lake homeowner, and Vice-President of the Square Lake Association, I would call upon Washington County to recognize the outstanding ecological significance of the surrounding area and the documented high value natural features that could be directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed construction in the Norell Corridor in 2025. From design through construction, this project should serve as a model for what Washington County means by "Context Sensitive Design." After careful consideration, of the three currently proposed alternatives, I recommend selection of Alternative 2, since the project materials provided suggest that it would stay within the existing footprint of the road. This Alternative is preferred because it protects water quality and adverse environmental impact by minimizing impervious surfaces. Further, I recommend minimal construction impacts to the right of way, taking every possible measure to protect wetlands, trees, and natural vegetation within the corridor, in the interest of preserving surface and groundwater quality and continuity of habitat for wildlife. Additionally, I recommend making every effort to avoid those practices or activities that would permit filling of wetlands, a take permit for Blandings' turtle and other rare/listed species, and development in defined buffer zones and/or additional impervious surfaces. This project should be seen in light of all the other good local efforts by citizens and planners working to serve as good stewards of this area's remarkable natural features and water resources. In the short and long run, these efforts will serve to benefit quality of life for residents and visitors, economic vitality and public health.</p>	Environmental/Nature Preservation
<p>While you said to me that you are confident in all proposed fixes to the shoulder and sloughing, there is no information of the effects on wildlife or the environment. I do not want to make decisions based on aesthetics. Given this, I will choose alternative #2 for the shoulder. It represents the least amount of impact. A sloped curb will be good for turtles. I will also choose option # 2 to fix the sloughing area as that maintains vegetation on the water side to comply with shoreline regulations. I "assume" the schematics of the road diagram are the same for all 3- we're are just to choose - again it appears to be a choice of aesthetics - of the edge material.</p>	Environmental/Nature Preservation

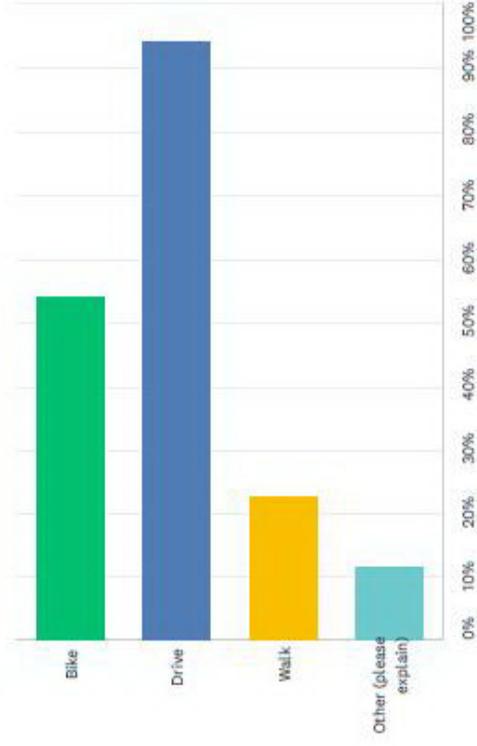
## Information Packet Comment

Comment	Key Theme
Alternative 1 will provide the best results for traffic and bikes	Bike/Ped Facilities

What role best describes your primary use of County Highway 3?

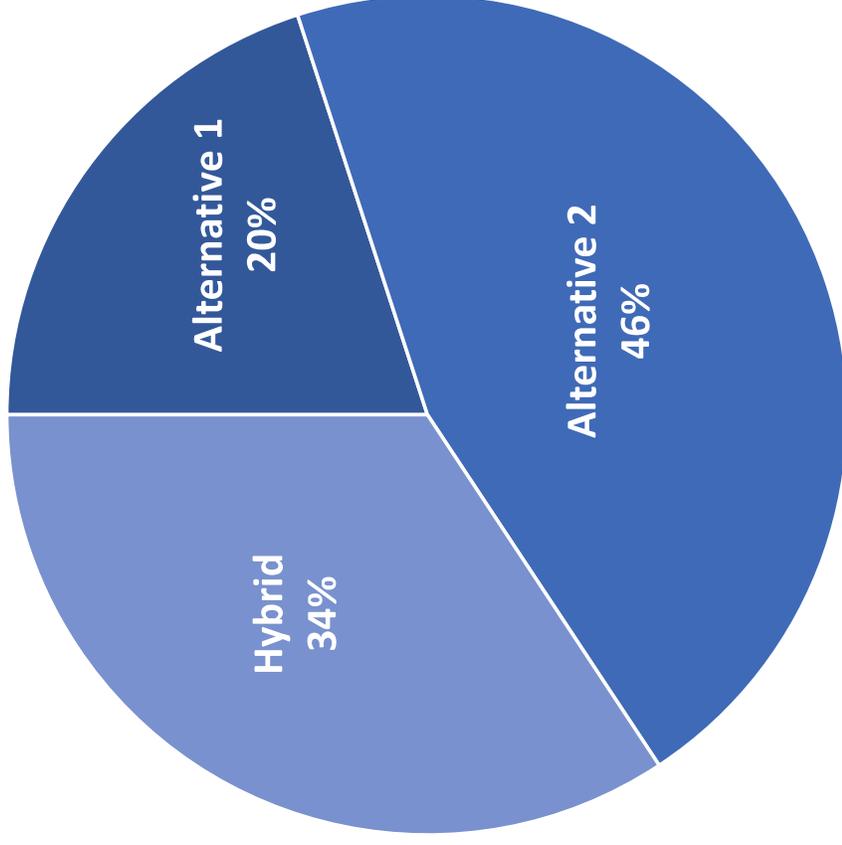


How do you travel on  
County Highway 3?  
Select all that apply.



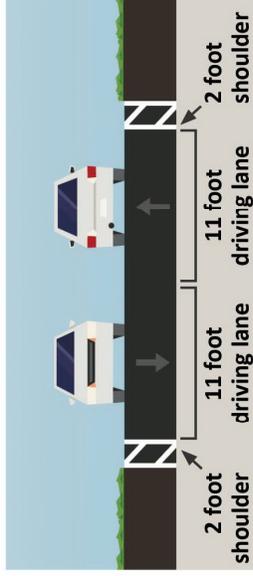
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Bike	19
Drive	33
Walk	8
Other (please explain)	4
Total Respondents: 35	

After reviewing the materials provided; do you have a preferred Alternative?



# Why do you prefer Alternative 1?

## ALTERNATIVE 1



Alternative 1 maintains the 11-foot wide driving lanes and adds a 2-foot wide shoulder throughout the project area. The new road would follow where the current road is today. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.

The widest shoulder possible will improve the safety of bikes and of the sportsmen that often fish in this area. It will also make it easier and safer to drive in inclement weather. The minor widening will have little impact on the environment.

Improves safety for both motorists and cyclists. The hilly terrain and minimal shoulder make it difficult to safely pass cyclists. It's difficult to see oncoming traffic, which results in close passing cyclists. Often times large groups of cyclists riding shoulder to shoulder greatly increase risk of crash.

even with lowered speed limits -excessive traffic speeding (10mph and more above speed limit) makes this too dangerous while biking. I could not tell where the 1 foot sections would be on the map. if we can get some speeding data in the interim, you could do the hybrid factoring in each section. It seems like line-of-sight with hills and curves is an issue for most of the roadway in question.

Biking

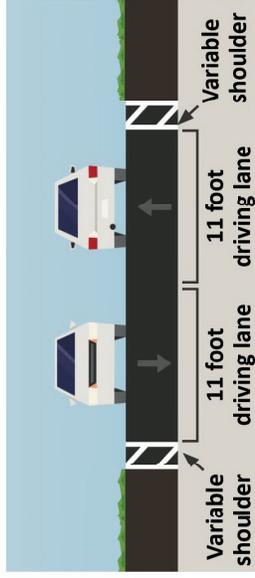
I believe this would be the option with the most consistently wide shoulders. As a cyclist, wider shoulders are always appreciated.

yes bike lanes for safety , I don't bike on this road but may do and its not safe for bikes or cars when people are biking

Safety for cyclists and pedestrians

# Why do you prefer Alternative 2?

## ALTERNATIVE 2



Alternative 2 maintains the 11-foot wide driving lanes. The shoulder widths for this concept would vary leading to a road that is the same width as what's currently out there today. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.

This has the least impact on the existing roadway, which is keeps Norell in it's natural state and places the least amount of environmental change to the flora and fauna.

This road is one of the most healthy and naturally beautiful roads I have had the pleasure of traversing multiple times a day. This road embraces all that is beautiful of this region.

Least damaging to the area

It appears to offer the least impact and change. #1 is a non starter because it would require massive amounts of fill to widen the shoulders where they currently drop off steeply just 18" from the asphalt, in some places over ten feet down, some places more. I have climbed up and down those banks many times getting litter. It would fill in wetlands in some of these banks, and just require huge amounts of work to secure the fill in other places, likely going outside of the right of way. Plus, #1 would surely increase the speeds and traffic as it gives the road more of an appearance of a highway. It would also shorten the distance from asphalt to trees, resulting in removal of lots of trees, especially those in front of peoples' houses, the last ones we residents would like to see go. I don't get #3, since it is a "hybrid" that includes #1, which is a blanket widening all the way.

It's important to protect the natural environment which this road crosses. We want to preserve the habitat for the abundant wildlife, which means preserving the wetlands, preserving the trees which provide canopy and protection for wildlife, and to avoid more impermeable surfaces which would increase run-off in our very special watershed. We also want to preserve the gorgeous rural nature of this road. We also want to keep this road safe, and I feel the way to do this is for bicyclists to continue to be very careful and for drivers to need to drive relatively slowly and carefully. Widening the road would not only require lots of disruption to wetland and steep banks but also make people feel that they could drive faster, which is the real risk for bicyclists and pedestrians on the road.

I like the road as it is now.

Because it maintains the road's scenic character and narrow width, while making necessary improvements.

Less impervious surface that would impact water quality. Less direct impact to adjacent wetlands and vegetation. Preservation of rural character and scenic beauty. Since traffic is not projected to increase between now and 2040, and this part of Norell is not a route suggested in the County's Bike and Ped plan, it doesn't make sense to degrade the truly outstanding natural features of the corridor and surrounding landscape (including habitat for rare, state-threatened wildlife) by over-developing this road. To the extent possible, we should try to retain the quality and continuity of habitat throughout the Carmelian Creek Corridor and enhance rather than degrade the conservation value of the Long Lake Conservation Area.

Seems the most reasonable

I believe that widening the shoulder, even only at a few select points, will begin degrading the rural character of the road. When non-resident motorists travel the road and see it wider, they feel emboldened to travel faster. They also begin to select the road as their preferred travel route. As I stated in my previous comments, there are two alternate North-South routes for commuters to use: Highway 95 and Manning Avenue. Norell Avenue should remain rural and reflect the wishes of the residents. Alternative 2 is the option that most closely resembles Norell as it is currently.

Least environmental impact.

Keeps paved areas on the same road way . Reduces run off water going into the wetlands!

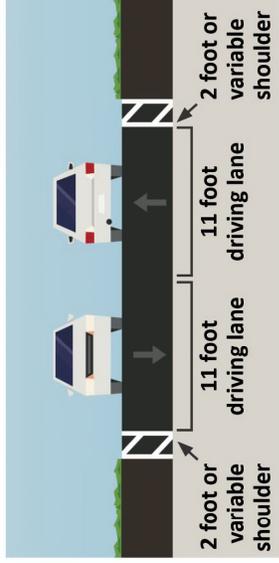
I prefer the least impactful option to preserve the area while making the improvements that are required

It does the least to change the existing character of the road. It adds the least impervious surface to the watershed. The road as is has a beautiful unique and rustic character and is one of my favorite places to bike and drive.

I believe it will help protect the environment, the wetlands, the flora & fauna which is the reason we love it out here.

# Why do you prefer Alternative 3 (hybrid)?

## ALTERNATIVE 3



### What is different about Alternative 3?

Alternative 3 is a mix of Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. This alternative also proposes 11-foot driving lanes, but only widens the shoulder width where it can be responsibly done with minimal impacts. It also includes new paved roadway surface, striping and long-term repairs to the sloughing area.

Good balance between safety, durability and preservation of the environment and character of the area.

I'd like to see us have as little impact to the natural environment along the road. I believe the 3rd plan will allow us to not only fix the areas that need attention, but place a shoulder where the natural area will allow for it.

I think it is important to minimize the surface area so I do not think it is appropriate to just put in a 2 foot shoulder along the whole roadway. But, since I do bike on the roadway I like the idea of increasing the shoulder width where appropriate to give a little more room for bikes.

nature impact is important, keep traffic on thoroughfares  
Consider turtle crossing and access

If there is evidence that increasing the shoulder by a foot will be safer for bicycles, then I support it.

Increases bike safety while also minimizing environmental impact. Maintains character of the road.  
It is used by cars, bikes and joggers

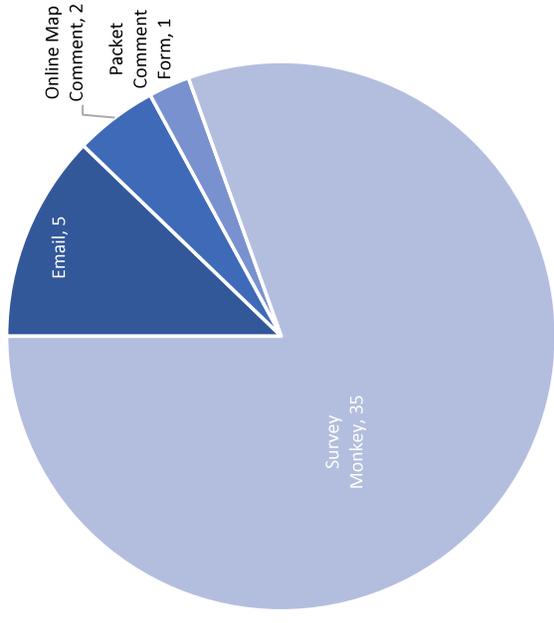
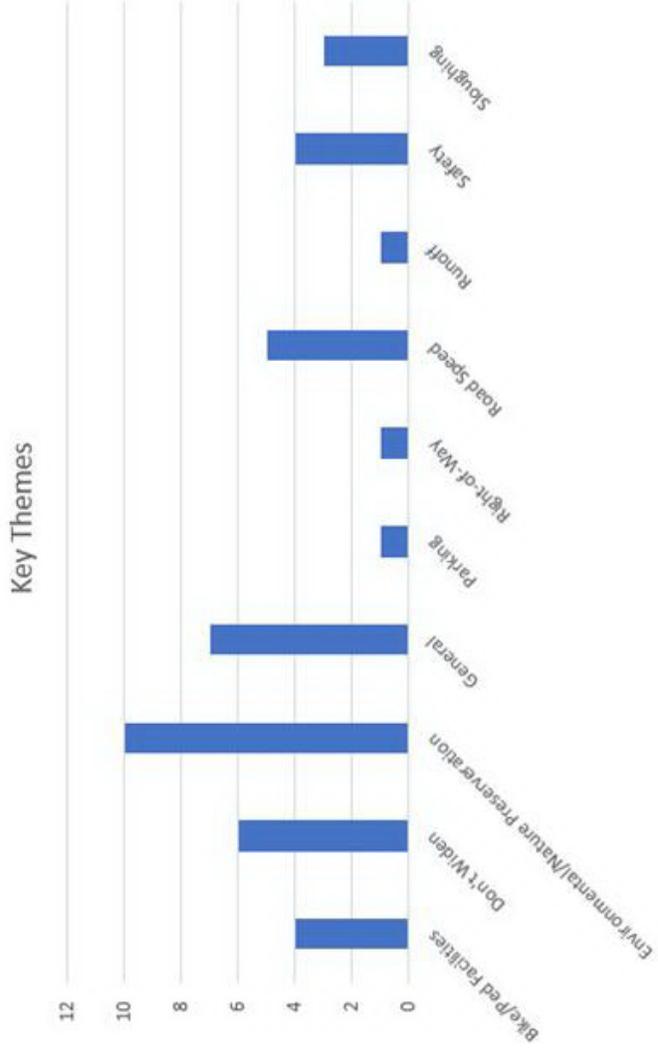
The 2 foot shoulder I feel would be safer

Hybrid maintains the rural character of Highway 3 and improves the protection of the wetlands. Hybrid also allows targeted improvements. Example is that accidents seem to be most concentrated in the intersection area north of Boot Lake. If one area could be widened and maybe hills lowered and sight lines improved, this would be my first proposed area. I oppose wider, continuous shoulders and higher speeds because these would tend to increase traffic which decreases the rural aesthetic. In fact, if safety is a driver in this project, I propose decreasing the speed limit to 40. Reduction in speed improves the safety for all users of the road way. Highway 3 does not need to be a high speed corridor to get from one place to another; Highways 15 and 96 serve that purpose.

Maintains character of road while increasing bicycle safety.

It has the least amount of impact, maintains the roadway character as it is today and opens up options for more space where is can be accomplished

# Open-Ended Comments



## Email Comment 1

Dear Kevin:

As a resident of the Marine Carmelian St. Croix Watershed District (MCSCWD), multi-decade Square Lake homeowner, and Vice-President of the Square Lake Association, I would call upon Washington County to recognize the outstanding ecological significance of the surrounding area and the documented high value natural features that could be directly and indirectly impacted by the proposed construction in the Norell Corridor in 2025. From design through construction, this project should serve as a model for what Washington County means by "Context Sensitive Design."

After careful consideration, of the three currently proposed alternatives, I recommend selection of Alternative 2, since the project materials provided suggest that it would stay within the existing footprint of the road. This Alternative is preferred because it protects water quality and adverse environmental impact by minimizing impervious surfaces. Further, I recommend minimal construction impacts to the right of way, taking every possible measure to protect wetlands, trees, and natural vegetation within the corridor, in the interest of preserving surface and groundwater quality and continuity of habitat for wildlife. Additionally, I recommend making every effort to avoid those practices or activities that would permit filling of wetlands, a take permit for Blandings' turtle and other rare/listed species, and development in defined buffer zones and/or additional impervious surfaces.

This project should be seen in light of all the other good local efforts by citizens and planners working to serve as good stewards of this area's remarkable natural features and water resources. In the short and long run, these efforts will serve to benefit quality of life for residents and visitors, economic vitality and public health.

PS, I submitted this via your online Comment app tonight, but it was rejected even when I pared it down to less than 1000 words. Would you please confirm receipt of this email.

## Email Comment 2

Morning,

It was nice to speak with you again last week.

I wanted to reiterate my comments, as you asked me to do, so that I am clear.

\* I feel that the 5 bar graphs were completely confusing. Even you could not explain them until you went back into the survey.

\* I feel that to list crashes going back to 2010 is to misrepresent statistics. In fact, there have only been 2 since 2019, and both are in the winter, both in the same area.

You say in the info that there are more crashes than the state average. In my discussion with you, you said the crashes are not a problem, and then I read to you what is written on the info packet. This doesn't square, and by doing this it feels like an agenda is being pushed. Speed control is the solution to these - if not involving a deer.

\* While you said to me that you are confident in all proposed fixes to the shoulder and sloughing, there is no information of the effects on wildlife or the environment. I do not want to make decisions based on aesthetics.

Given this, I will choose alternative #2 for the shoulder. It represents the least amount of impact. A sloped curb will be good for turtles.

I will also choose option # 2 to fix the sloughing area as that maintains vegetation on the water side to comply with shoreline regulations. I "assume" the schematics of the road diagram are the same for all 3- we're are just to choose - again it appears to be a choice of aesthetics - of the edge material.

## Email Comment 3

Kevin,

We would like to suggest keeping the speed limit as posted. Is it be possible to have a solar powered flashing speed limit sign, many communities have them to help with the speeders. Located between Boot lake and the rail road tracks to the north. We have a lot of speeding, way over 45 mph and someone will get hurt especially with a new road. Ask any one that lives on the road about speeders.

**Do not clear cut rite of ways**, keeping the existing road width with 2ft asphalt shoulders where its flatter makes sense. Widening the road or making 2ft shoulder on the hills would remove to many trees and do excessive damage to the landscape that is why we live here and so many people travel the road on a leisure day of driving.

A turn lane from county Rd 4 at Norell (SW corner) would make that corner a lot safer.

 TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS

Please mail this comment form back to us or scan and email to [kevin.peterson@co.washington.ma.us](mailto:kevin.peterson@co.washington.ma.us) by **May 26**, **WASHINGTON COUNTY**

**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 1?**

MAY 19 2021

*Preferred Alternate*

PUBLIC WORKS

*will provide the best results for traffic & bikes*

**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 2?**

**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 3?**

Do you have any other comments for the project team to consider?

 TELL US YOUR THOUGHTS

Please mail this comment form back to us or scan and email to [kevin.peterson@co.washington.mn.us](mailto:kevin.peterson@co.washington.mn.us) by **May 26**.

**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 1?**

POTENTIAL SLOUGHING SOLUTIONS: PREFER 1 OR 3  
BUT 2 IS FINE ALSO

**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 2?**

CURB RENDERING: ALTERNATIVE 2 + 3

**WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ALTERNATIVE 3?**

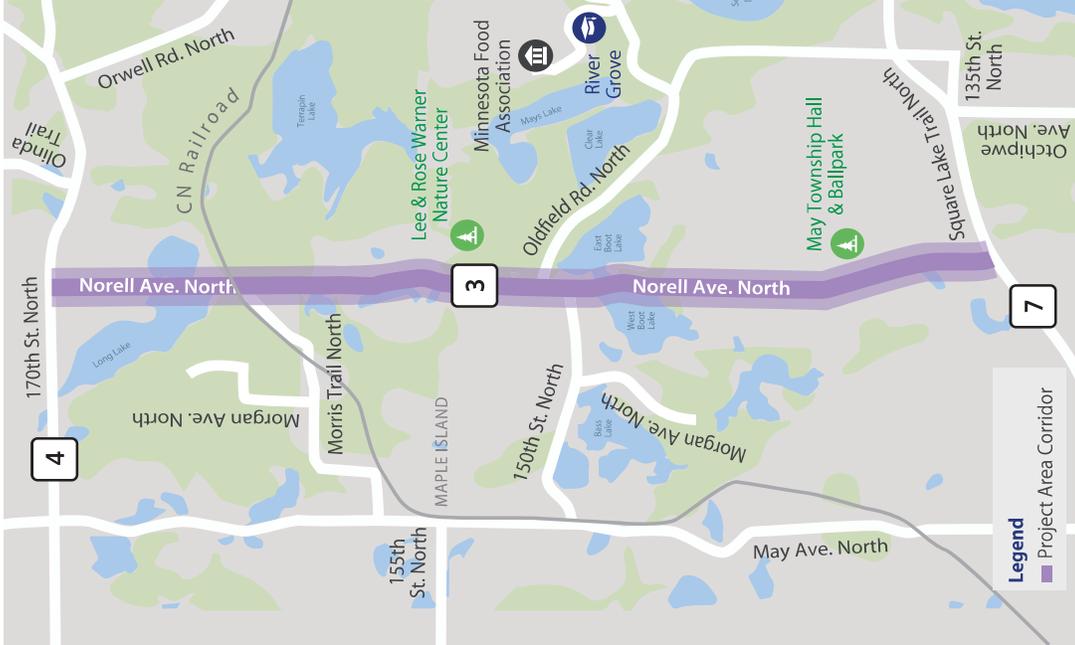
RE: INITIAL DESIGN - VARIABLE MAKES SENSE

Do you have any other comments for the project team to consider?

## Appendix D

Postcard Mailer  
Targeted Facebook Advertisement  
Targeted Twitter Advertisement  
Nextdoor Alert  
Website Update

# County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North) Improvement Project



## About the Project

The County, in partnership with May Township, is developing preliminary designs for highway improvements, pavement replacement, and long-term maintenance solutions for County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North) from 170th Street North (County Highway 4) to Square Lake Trail North (County Highway 7). Potential changes will impact drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and bicyclists in this area.

## We want to hear from you!

We want your input on our early designs. Community engagement remains a top priority for Washington County as we navigate and do our part to prevent the spread of COVID-19. In place of an in-person open house, here's how to get the latest information and share your feedback with our project team.

## Engagement Opportunities May 5 through May 26

-  **Visit our online open house any time on the project website.**
-  **Leave a comment on our online comment map.**
-  **Contact Project Manager Kevin Peterson at 651-430-4330 to schedule a one-on-one phone call to discuss the project and your property.**
-  **Receive a packet of detailed project information.**
  - Request a mailed or emailed information packet by contacting Kevin Peterson.
  - Pick up a packet of project information on May 10 and May 12 between 11a.m. - 2p.m. at the May Township building.
- Pick up a packet Monday-Friday between 8a.m. - 4p.m. at Washington County located at 11660 Myeron Road North in Stillwater.
  - Download from the project website.

**Learn More**  
Scan the QR code below with your smartphone to view the online engagement.





Washington County Public Works Department  
Attn: Kevin Peterson  
11660 Myeron Road North  
Stillwater, MN 55082

**County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North)  
Improvement Project**



**New Online  
Engagement  
Opportunities  
Begin May 5!**

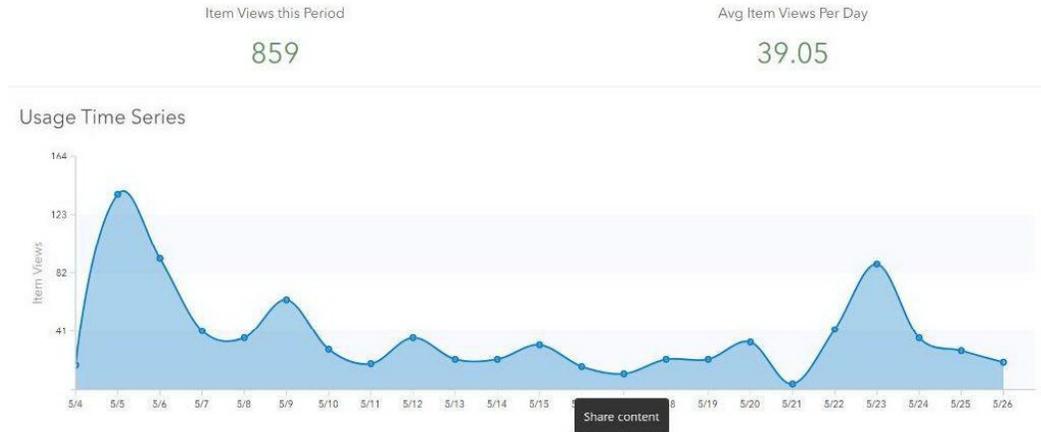
*See details on reverse side*



Kevin Peterson | 651-430-4330 |  
kevin.peterson@co.washington.mn.us

## Online Engagement Statistics

- Online engagement views (total number of visitors for comment period): 859
  - 39.05 average views per day
  - 36 full video views



## Social Media Statistics

- Facebook ad reached 4,090
  - 568 engagements
    - 12 reactions
    - 120 link clicks
    - 0 comments
    - 3 shares
  - Facebook post was shared to the Marine on St. Croix, Fan, Supporter & Booster Group page, Twin Cities Bicycling Club (TCBC)



## Social Media Statistics (continued)

 23h · 🌐

▶ Marine on St Croix, Fan, Supporter & Booster Group

Important local environmental news: please comment by May 26. Although construction on Norell Ave. N. has been moved to 2025, design decisions affecting the scope of the project are being made now. Norell passes through lands and waters that are part of the Carnelian Creek Corridor, one of the top conservation priorities for the county and state. Of the three alternatives being proposed, "Alternative 2" is the only one that keeps the paved surface of the road at its current width and does not add impervious surface to the watershed, minimizing impacts to water quality of wetlands & lakes, and habitat for a rich diversity of wildlife, including documented rare species. Please express your views on your preferred alternative by May 26 on the online survey provided by the County as part of its Online Engagement.  
Find the survey here: (scroll to the end to comment).  
<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/.../e76cb2187c4e4da689e8458b...>  
And an Environmental Memo here: (This memo does not compare impacts by alternative, but County Engineer Kevin Peterson described Alternatives 2 and 3 as the least impactful alternatives.)  
<https://www.co.washington.mn.us/.../CSAH-3-Environmental...>



 Twin Cities Bicycling Club (TCBC) May 9 at 7:43 PM · 🌐

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=1597365613789889&id=760526224140503](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1597365613789889&id=760526224140503)



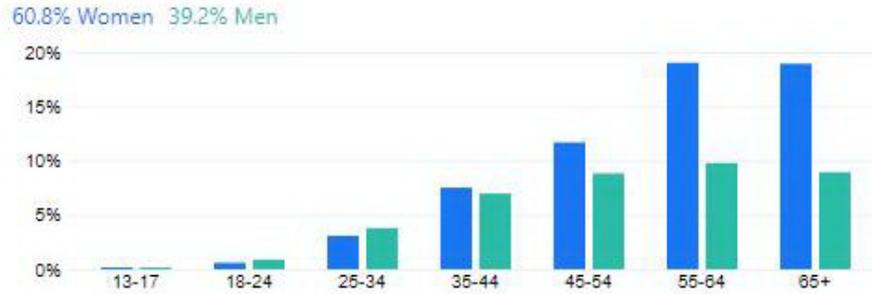
STORYMAPS.ARCGIS.COM  
**County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North)**  
Online Engagement #2

👍 2

👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share

- \$20 budget
- 19 day duration
- Demographics
  - 10 mile radius of Stillwater, MN, ages 18-65+
  - Demographics reached:

## Social Media Statistics (continued)



 **Washington County, MN Government** ✓  
· May 6 at 6:00 PM · 🌐

Washington County is hosting an online engagement regarding future improvements to County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue) in May Township from 170th Street North to Square Lake Trail North beginning today - Wednesday, May 26. Visit the link below to view the online engagement and provide comments.



STORYMAPS.ARCGIS.COM  
**County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North)**  
Online Engagement #2

### NextDoor Post

- Nextdoor impressions (times people saw the post): 3,125

 **Washington County** ✓  
Washington County Public Works · 19 hr ago

County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue) Online Engagement #2. Washington County is hosting an online engagement regarding future improvements to County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue) in May Township from 170th Street North to Square Lake Trail North beginning today - Wednesday, May 26. Visit the link below to view the online engagement and provide comments. See more...



**County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North)**  
storymaps.arcgis.com

Posted to **Subscribers of Washington County**

### Twitter Post

- Twitter impressions: 285
  - 6 engagements
    - 1 likes

## Twitter Post (continued)



## Website Updates

# County Highway 3 (Norell Avenue North)

Project Overview

Public Involvement

## Online Engagement #2 (May 6, 2021)

[Online Engagement #2 Invitation](#)

In light of the COVID-19 situation, this open house was in an online format. Please click on the button below to view the online engagement.

- [Online Engagement #2](#)
- [Engagement Packet](#)
- [Environmental Memo](#)