

# Public Involvement Meeting Handout

**Wausau – Merrill**  
**WIS 64 Southbound Ramp to**  
**Northbound Ramp**  
**US 51**  
**Lincoln County**  
**Project ID: 1176-15-00**

**Wausau – Merrill**  
**Bridge Abutments B-35-0028**  
**US 51**  
**Lincoln County**  
**Project ID: 1176-15-01**

**Merrill – Antigo**  
**Pine Ridge Avenue to WIS 17**  
**WIS 64**  
**Lincoln County**  
**Project ID: 9000-15-00**



**Tuesday, October 27, 2015**  
**5:30 to 7 p.m.**

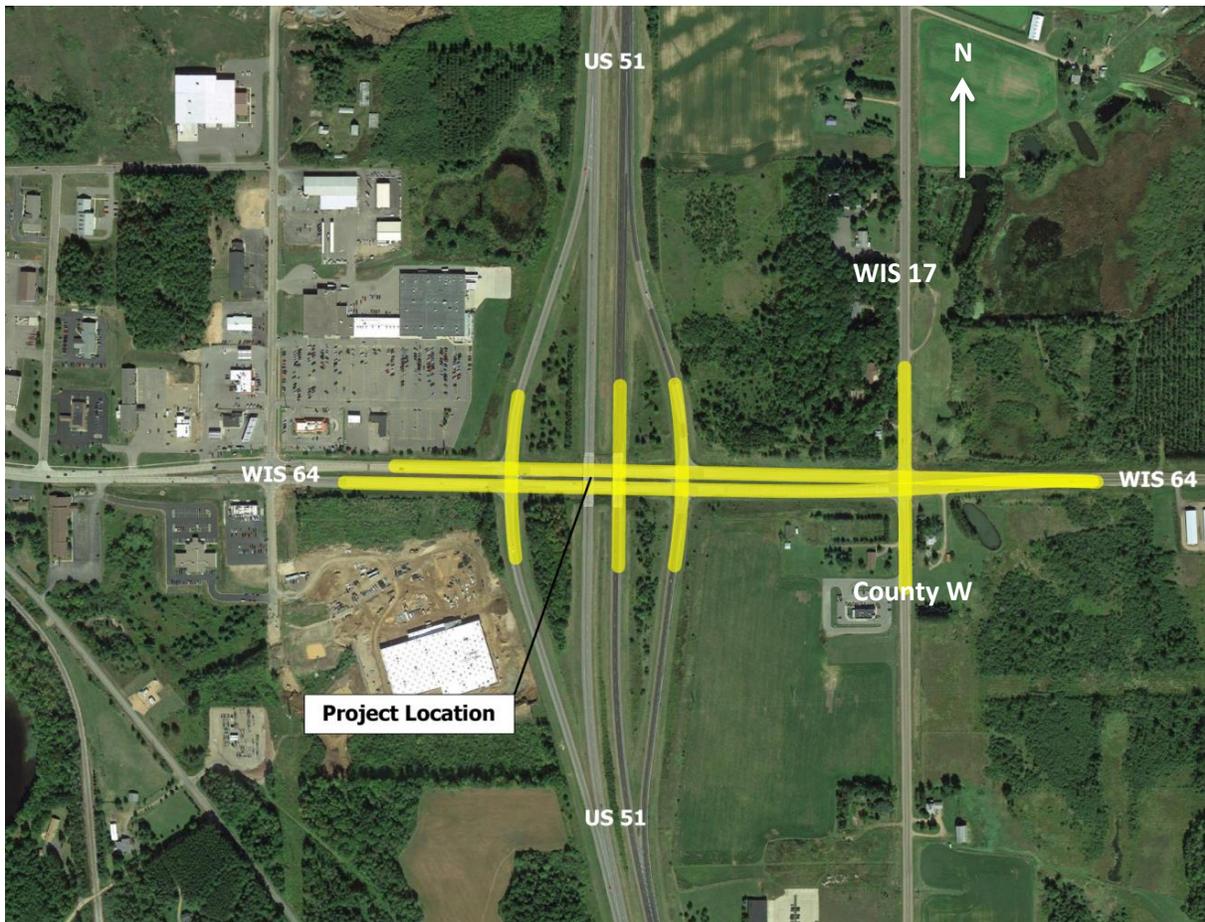
**Lincoln County Service Center, Room 255**  
**801 North Sales Street**  
**Merrill**

## Purpose of the meeting

Welcome to the US 51 and WIS 64 public involvement meeting.

The objective of today's meeting is to present information regarding the purpose and need for improvements at this location, discuss conceptual design alternatives, answer questions and obtain input from the public.

A brief presentation will begin at 5:30 p.m. The remainder of the meeting will follow an open house format.



## Project purpose and need

Some of the needs that have been identified at this location include:

- The pavement on WIS 64 at the interchange is deteriorating.
- The abutment of the northbound US 51 bridge over WIS 64 requires repairs.
- The traffic demands at the WIS 64 intersections with the US 51 interchange ramps and the WIS 64 intersection with WIS 17/County W are creating inefficient operations at the intersections.

## Proposed solutions

We are evaluating several solutions to address the identified needs. These include:

- Replacing the northbound bridge abutment of US 51
- Replacing the pavement on WIS 64 between the US 51 interchange and the WIS 17/County W intersection
- Improving the intersection operations of the US 51 ramp terminals and the WIS 64/WIS 17/County W intersection.

## Ramp terminal and intersection improvement alternatives

Based on the analysis of existing and future traffic volumes at this location, we are evaluating various alternatives to improve the operations of the US 51 ramp terminals and the WIS 64/WIS 17/County W intersection.

The preferred alternative will be determined based on:

- Safety
- Overall corridor operations
- Cost
- Public input
- Regulatory agency and local government input
- Information gathered regarding natural and social impacts

### US 51 southbound ramp terminal options include:

- Stop signs at the off-ramp (current condition)
- Install traffic signals
- Construct a roundabout

Safety	Statistical studies have indicated that traffic signals or a roundabout would result in fewer crashes than the off-ramp stop. Historically, roundabouts result in fewer injuries and fatalities than traffic signals.
Operations	All three options provide acceptable and safe, long-term operations. The construction of a roundabout would provide the most efficient operations for the off-ramp.
Cost	The current off-ramp stop condition is the least expensive. Costs to install traffic signals, or construct a roundabout would be similar.
Real Estate	None of the alternatives require real estate acquisition.

An all-way stop alternative was evaluated, but was not deemed feasible because it would result in unacceptable traffic backups on WIS 64.

**US 51 northbound ramp terminal options include:**

- Install traffic signals
- Construct a roundabout

Safety	Historically, roundabouts result in fewer injuries and fatalities than traffic signals.
Operations	The roundabout and traffic signal options provide acceptable and safe, long-term operations. The construction of a roundabout would provide the most efficient operations for the off-ramp.
Cost	Costs to install traffic signals, or construct a roundabout would be similar.
Real Estate	Neither alternative requires real estate acquisition.

The off-ramp stop (current condition) and all-way stop alternatives were evaluated, but not deemed feasible because they both would result in unacceptable traffic backups on the off ramp towards the freeway and on WIS 64.

**WIS 64/WIS 17/County W intersection options include:**

- Two-way stop at WIS 17 and County W (current condition)
- Install a four-way stop
- Construct a roundabout

Safety	Statistical studies have indicated that traffic signals or a roundabout would result in fewer crashes than the off-ramp stop. Historically, roundabouts result in fewer injuries and fatalities than traffic signals.
Operations	The four-way stop and roundabout options would provide acceptable and safe, long-term operations at this location. The two-way stop would not provide acceptable operations for County W. The construction of a roundabout provides the most efficient operations for the intersection.
Cost	Constructing a roundabout at this location would cost more than the two-way stop or four-way stop options.
Real Estate	The roundabout would likely require permanent real estate acquisition.

The traffic signal alternative was evaluated, but not deemed feasible because the traffic demands of the intersection do not warrant the use of traffic signals.

## Proposed traffic impacts

Depending on the alternative selected, traffic impacts may vary, but will generally consist of:

- US 51, WIS 64, WIS 17, and County W will remain open to traffic during construction. Motorists can expect to encounter possible lane closures, flagging operations, and reduced lane widths.
- Northbound and southbound US 51 traffic may be reduced to single lane. All traffic may be shifted into the southbound lanes during the northbound US 51 structure work.
- Some weekend and night time construction activities may be necessary.
- Construction will be scheduled to avoid peak travel weekends such as holidays and special events.
- Interruptions in access may occur temporarily at driveways near the WIS 64/WIS 17/ County W intersection. The contractor will contact homeowners and businesses in advance of the work to notify you of the schedule of work, which may temporarily impact your access.

Construction is currently scheduled for 2020, but may occur as early as 2019.

## Real estate

Depending on the alternative selected, additional temporary and permanent right of way acquisition may be required for this project at the intersection of WIS 64 with WIS 17/County W. If acquisition is necessary, we expect to begin real estate acquisition in 2017.

## Project update/next steps

Representatives from the WisDOT project team met with local officials on May 20, 2014 and October 14, 2015, to discuss the improvement needs of this location.

After tonight's public meeting we will continue with the preliminary design process, while considering your comments.

Current project schedule:

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| • Preliminary Plans                     | April 2016           |
| • Environmental documentation           | April 2016           |
| • Third Local Officials Meeting         | Late 2016/Early 2017 |
| • Second Public Involvement Meeting     | Late 2016/Early 2017 |
| • Real estate acquisition (if required) | 2017 to 2018         |
| • Construction currently scheduled      | 2020**               |

*\*\*Construction could occur as early as 2019*

For information about the US 51 and WIS 64 project, and to sign up for project updates, please visit the project website:

<http://wisconsin.dot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/nc/5164merrill/default.aspx>

## Public input/comments

We encourage you to talk to the project representatives and ask questions. Attached to this handout is a sheet for your written comments and input regarding the proposed project. Please mail any written comments about the project before **November 13, 2015** or leave them in the comment box tonight. You can also email your comments to the contacts listed below.

Your comments assist us in developing a project that will serve the needs of the traveling public as well as the needs of the local community. Your input is welcome and appreciated throughout the design process.

For more information, please contact:

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