

Public Involvement

**WIS 29
Wausau – Wittenberg
Bass Lake Road to County D, WB
Marathon County**

Project ID: 1053-07-06



**Public Comment Period:
November 2 to November 30, 2020**

The in-person Public Involvement Meeting has moved online as a precaution against COVID-19 based on the most current health information from state, federal and local health departments.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation continues to review prioritization and potential alternatives for public meetings and events.

This handout and other items are available on the design website at:
<https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/nc/wis29/default.aspx>

Thank you for your interest in this project, we look forward to your feedback.

Purpose

Our objective is to obtain your input on the identified needs, proposed improvements, and real estate needs along WIS 29 between Bass Lake Road and County D.

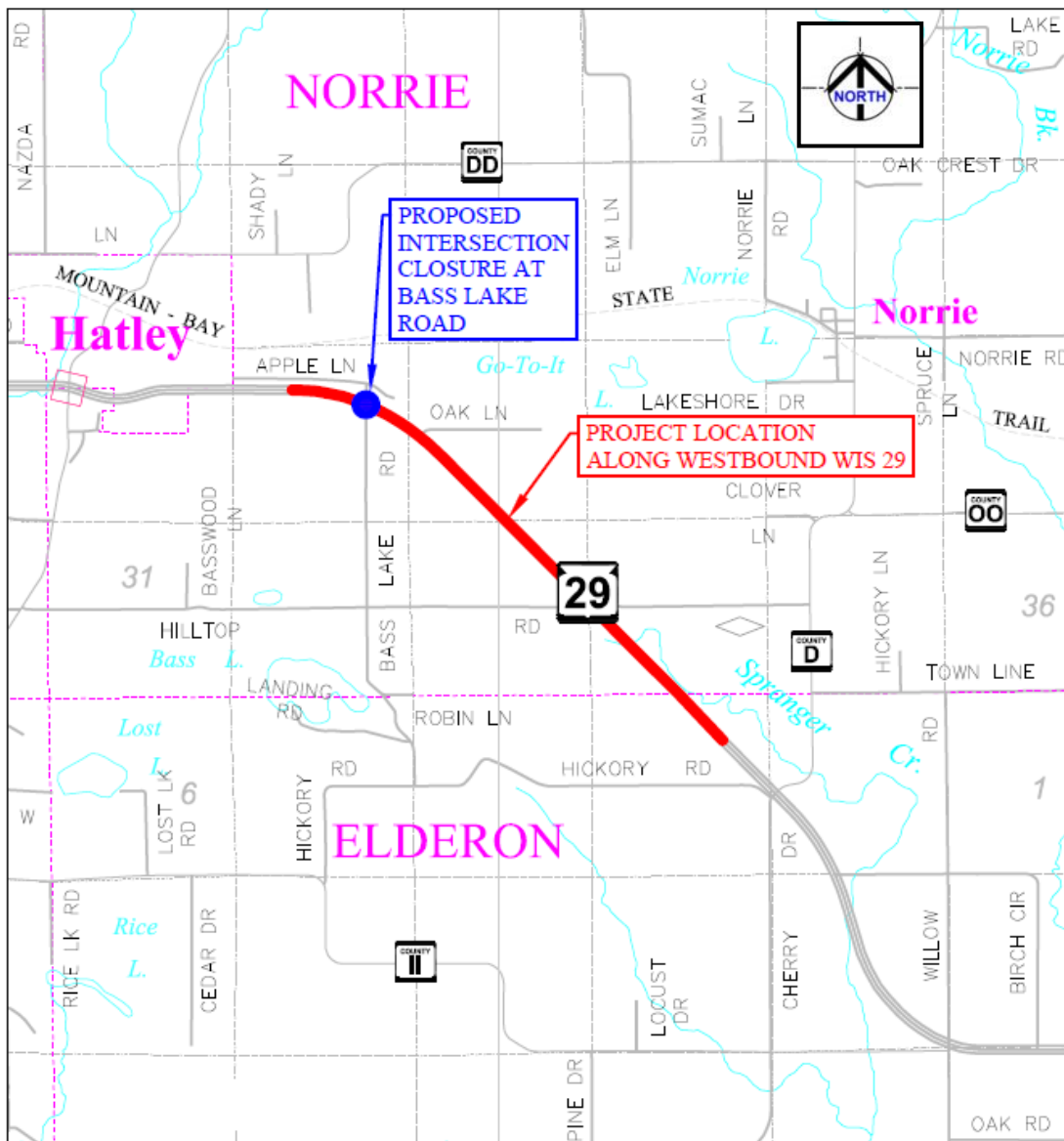
Purpose and need for roadway improvements

The pavement on westbound WIS 29 is showing signs of deterioration. The pavement was originally constructed in 1997 and resurfaced previously with the last asphaltic resurfacing occurring in 2008. A cycle of well-timed pavement maintenance is required to ensure that the taxpayers' investment continues to be maximized.

There are also ongoing crashes at the Bass Lake Road intersection and intersection modifications are required to improve safety.

Additional needs along this section of WIS 29 include:

- Deteriorating guardrails and concrete barrier crash cushions
- Deteriorating drainage inlets near the existing concrete barrier



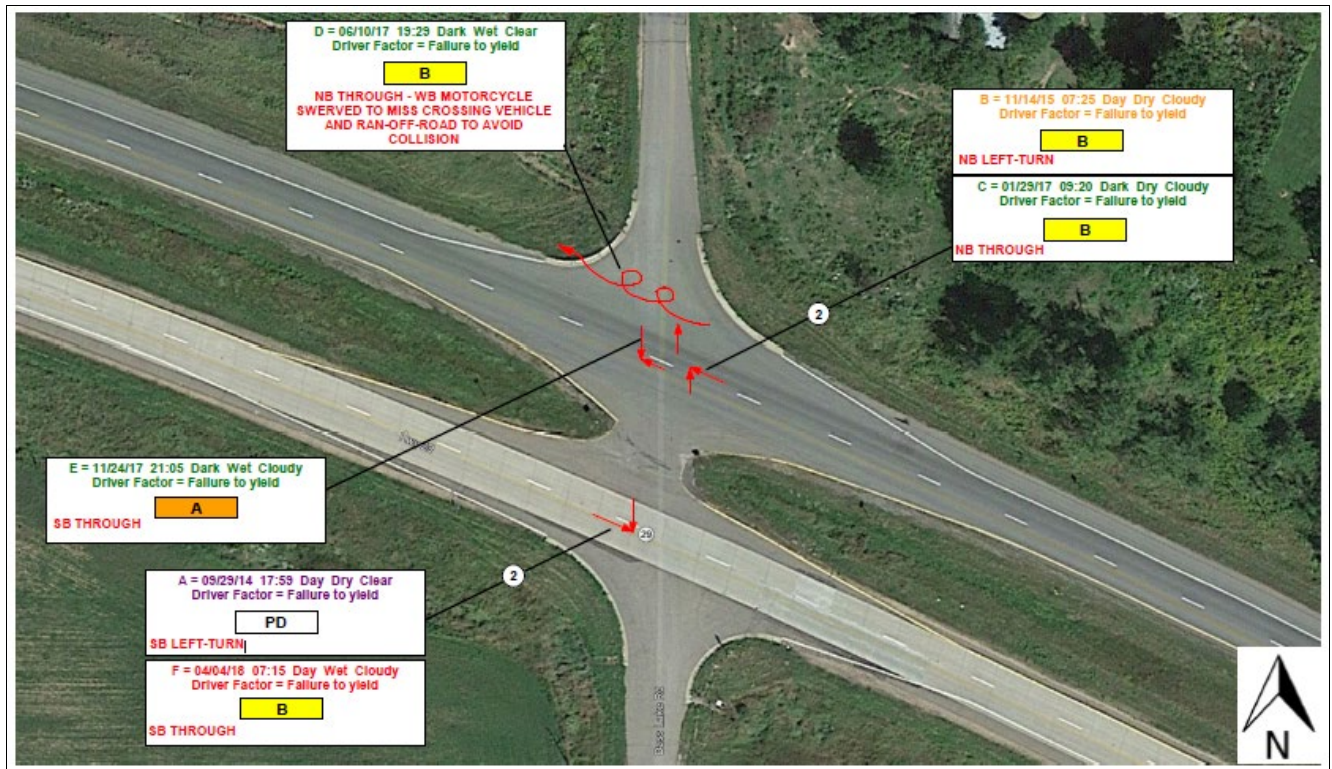
Bass Lake Road intersection safety conditions

The Bass Lake Road intersection is located approximately 1.5 miles east of the County Y interchange that serves the village of Hatley. The intersection is located on a curve, which may be contributing to some drivers misjudging available traffic gaps to safely enter WIS 29

As part of the alternative evaluation and project scoping process, crashes were analyzed for a 5-year period. Between 2014 and 2018, six crashes occurred. No crashes have occurred in 2019 and 2020 (thru September).

Crashes are given a value (or grade) based on the severity of the injury that results with Type A being the most severe type of injury and Type C being the least severe type of injury.

- Five crashes resulted in more severe injuries (Type A and Type B)
- One crash resulted in property damage
- Crashes occurred on both eastbound and westbound WIS 29
- One of the crashes in 2018 was a school bus crash resulting in injuries
- All crashes occurred with traffic crossing at Bass Lake Road



STH 29 AT BASS LAKE RD MARATHON COUNTY 2014-2018 CRASH DATA

CRASH LEGEND			
CRASH YEAR	SEVERITY	CRASH TYPES	
2014=PURPLE	K=FATAL	ANGLE	
2015=ORANGE	A=TYPE A	RUN-OFF-RD	
2016=BLUE	B=TYPE B	REAR-END	
2017=DARK GREEN	C=TYPE C	HEAD-ON	
2018=RED	PROP DAMAGE	SIDE SWIPE	
		OVERTURN	
		PEDESTRIAN	
		BACKING	
		ALCOHOL/DRUG	

Crashes at other WIS 29 intersections

- WisDOT completed a review of reported crashes at all other intersections along WIS 29 within the project limits between January 2014 and September 2020
- While reported crashes have occurred, safety improvements are not warranted at other intersections
- A summary of the number of reported crashes (2014 to 2020) is outlined below:
 - County Y – 2018 (1) and 2019 (2)
 - Hilly Acres Road/Falstad Road – 2015 (1), 2017 (1), 2020 (2)
 - County D – 2014 (1), 2020 (2)
- Detailed information on the manner of crashes at each intersection is further outlined in the project presentation available on the project website
<https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/nc/wis29/default.aspx>

Previous studies

Wis. Stat. s. 84.295(10) is a long-term official mapping and planning tool available to WisDOT to help protect and preserve right of way for future transportation needs. The purpose of Wis. Stat. s. 84.295, as stated in s. 84.295(1), is to more adequately serve the present and anticipated future needs of highway travel and prevent conflicting and costly economic development on lands needed for future highway right of way. This proactive tool allows WisDOT to address safety, operation, mobility, and capacity issues in advance of impending long-term needs on freeways and expressways.

A freeway preservation study was completed for WIS 29 in Marathon County in 2012 and updated in 2016. The preservation study completed the required environmental documentation in order to allow for designation only of WIS 29 as a freeway. Extensive public involvement including local official meetings, public involvement meetings, and a public hearing were held during the freeway conversion study.

While WisDOT did not complete the steps for official freeway designation and mapping to preserve right of way for future freeway conversion, the preservation study can be used as a long-term vision and management strategy for WIS 29 so that when intersection or other improvements become necessary as traffic and safety conditions change, a comprehensive approach can be applied. The previous freeway conversion study also allows for local officials, agencies, and property owners to proactively plan land uses in concert with anticipated future highway improvements.

When construction of any future freeway improvements is required; additional planning, design, environmental studies, and public involvement would be required. No freeway conversion improvements are currently scheduled along WIS 29.

*The adopted long-term plan for WIS 29 included full closure of Bass Lake Road with cul-de-sacs, when warranted. Closure of Bass Lake Road is proposed as part of this resurfacing project in 2023 (see **Proposed Improvements section below**).*

Proposed improvements

- Asphaltic pavement mill and overlay along westbound WIS 29
- Closure of Bass Lake Road to improve safety
- Inlet repairs to address deterioration
- Guardrail and concrete median crash cushion replacement to maintain safe conditions
- New pavement marking including installation of shoulder rumble strips

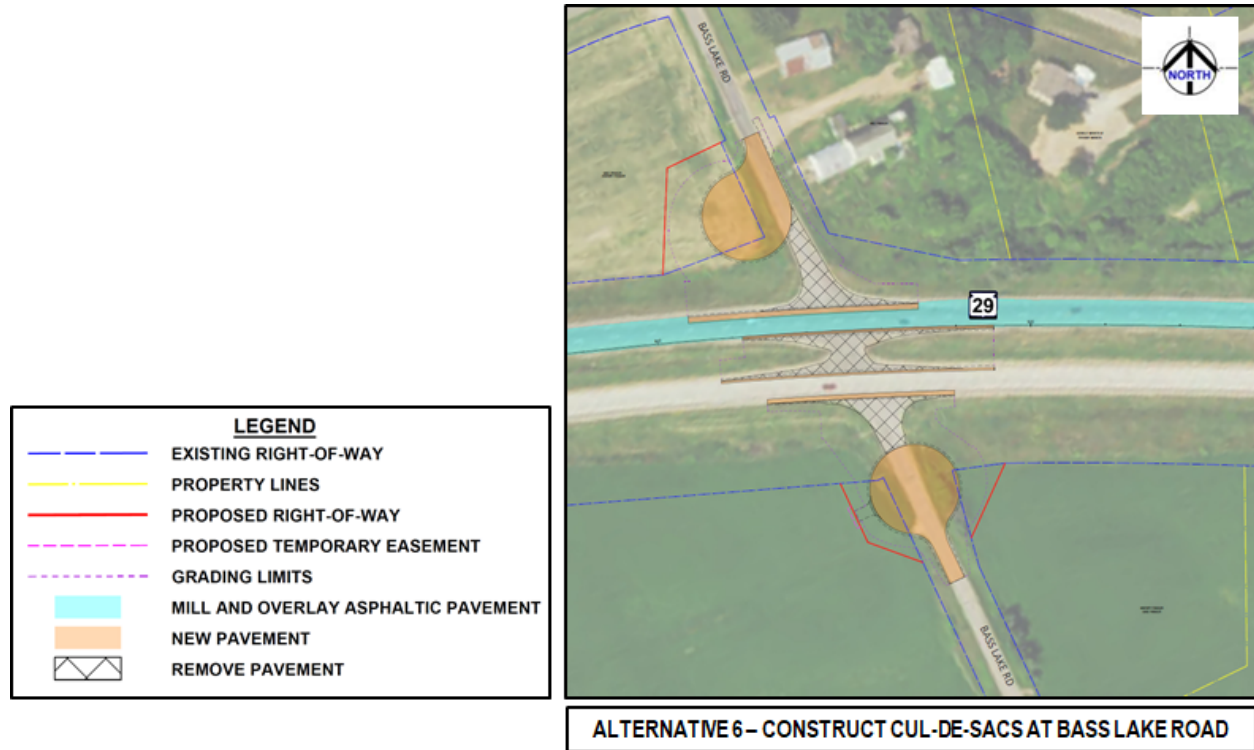
Bass Lake Road intersection alternatives

The intersection improvement alternatives evaluated include a combination of WIS 29 median closure along with construction of cul-de-sacs to close Bass Lake Road at WIS 29. All alternatives are feasible and provide a positive benefit for reducing crashes (i.e. the benefit of crash reduction as compared to the required investment is positive)

Bass Lake Road Intersection Alternatives						
Alternative Number	1	2	3	4	5	6
Description	Close (cul-de-sac) North Bass Lake Road	Close (cul-de-sac) South Bass Lake Road	Close WIS 29 Median	Close WIS 29 Median and Close (cul-de-sac) North Bass Lake Road	Close WIS 29 Median and Close (cul-de-sac) South Bass Lake Road	Close WIS 29 Median and Close (cul-de-sac) North and South Bass Lake Road (RECOMMENDED)
Close North Bass Lake Road	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Close WIS 29 Median	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Close South Bass Lake Road	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Right of Way Needed	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Estimated Construction Cost	\$158K	\$125K	\$60K	\$218K	\$184K	\$332K

- Alternative 3 has the lowest cost.
- Options that include partial closure of the intersection (Alternative 1 to Alternative 5) would reduce some crashes, but these alternatives do not eliminate the most severe (right angle) crashes since side road traffic could still conflict with high speed WIS 29 through traffic
- Alternative 6 is the safest alternative; removes all traffic conflicts between the high speed WIS 29 traffic and the low speed Bass Lake Road traffic
- Alternative 6 implements a component of the long-term freeway conversion without additional future expenditure at this intersection.
- There is safe access to WIS 29 at the nearby County Y interchange
- The County Y interchange minimizes the severity of conflicts between high speed and low speed traffic by having WIS 29 traffic come to a stop condition
- There are no ongoing crash patterns at the County Y interchange
- Diversion of the low volume of traffic from Bass Lake Road will not change the operating conditions at the interchange
- The County Y interchange provides safe access to and from WIS 29 including access for emergency services

Therefore, **Alternative 6 is the WisDOT recommended option** which includes full closure of the intersection with construction of two cul-de-sacs and closure of the median opening. Selection of the proposed alternative is subject to public input and environmental document approval.



Real estate

Additional right of way will be required for this project. This will include areas of permanent (fee) and temporary (temporary limited easement) land acquisitions to accommodate the proposed improvements at Bass Lake Road. Estimated right of way impacts are shown on the exhibits posted on the project website.

A landowner rights pamphlet is available on the project website. Real estate acquisition is expected to begin in the spring of 2021. Direct mailings and coordination will occur with impacted property owners.

Proposed traffic impacts

An improvement project is currently scheduled for 2023. Motorists can expect to encounter single lane closures during construction along westbound and eastbound WIS 29. Bass Lake Road would be closed, and all other side roads would remain open.

Access to adjacent properties will be maintained during construction. Brief interruptions in access may occur temporarily at driveways. The contractor will be required to notify property owners prior to construction.

Project update/next steps

- Local official meeting December 2019
- Concept plans December 2019
- Local official meeting October 2020
- Public involvement October/November 2020
- Preliminary plans December 2020

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|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Environmental document | Winter 2021 |
| • Right of way plat | Spring 2021 |
| • Real estate negotiations | Spring 2021 to fall 2022 |
| • Final plans | August 2022 |
| • Construction currently scheduled | 2023 |

Project design website

Access the following materials on the project design website:

<https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/nc/wis29/default.aspx>

- Project background
- This handout and comment form to mail
- Project presentation and exhibits
- Landowner Rights brochure

How to provide your input

There are several ways to submit your feedback by **November 30, 2020**:

1. Fill out the comment form attached to this document and mail it to WisDOT
2. Or complete the fillable online survey on the project website:
<https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/nc/wis29/default.aspx>
3. Or email comments or questions to the contact listed below

Your input is welcome and appreciated throughout the design process. Deaf or hard of hearing persons needing assistance should contact the Wisconsin Telecommunications Relay system (dial 711). For more information, please contact:

Jeffrey Stewart, P.E.
WisDOT North Central Region
1681 2nd Avenue South
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495
715-459-4525
Jeffrey.Stewart@dot.wi.gov

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Public Involvement Comment Form

Project ID: ID 1053-07-06
Wausau – Wittenberg
Bass Lake Road to County D, WB
WIS 29
Marathon County

Please place mail by **November 30, 2020** to the address on the back of this sheet. Comments can also be emailed to Jeffrey.Stewart@dot.wi.gov. 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.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number (optional): _____

Email Address (optional): _____

Please Print Comments (attach additional sheets if necessary)

The information in this document including names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, and signatures is not confidential, and may be subject to disclosure upon request, pursuant to the requirements of the Wisconsin open records law, sections 19.31 - 19.39 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

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Here

WisDOT North Central Region – Wisconsin Rapids
1681 2nd Avenue South
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495
Attn: Jeffrey Stewart, P.E.

To mail, fold here and tape.