



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WisDOT must complete the Highway 12 EIS from Whitewater to Elkhorn

Whitewater, Wisc.—May 9, 2017—The Redline Coalition is made up of the Greater Whitewater Committee, Inc., Walworth County, the City of Whitewater, Township of La Grange, City of Elkhorn, Lauderdale Lake and Pleasant Lake Management Districts and Walworth County Economic and Development Alliance. The Redline Coalition is hosting the Highway 12 Transportation Forum on May 19, 2017 at Gateway Technical College in Elkhorn, Wisc. The forum is 8 a.m. to noon.

The coalition was formed to encourage the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to complete the U.S. Highway 12 Environmental Impact Study (EIS).

There will be three panels consisting of: local government officials, local business leaders and state legislators. Also speaking are Todd Berry, President of the Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance, and Michael Hahn, Executive Director of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Committee (SEWRPC).

Attendees can register at www.walworthbusiness.com under the calendar events for May 19.

The U.S. Highway 12 proposed route to the West of Lauderdale Lakes between Elkhorn and Whitewater was officially mapped out by the WisDOT in 1967 according to SEWRPC.org.

The preparation of the EIS was included in the 2013-2015 Wisconsin biennial budget and approved by state legislators and signed by the governor.

The exact language from the budget is, *notwithstanding s. 13.489 (1m) (e), the department shall, in the 2013-15 fiscal biennium, commence the preparation of an environmental impact statement, as defined in s. 13.489 (1c) (b), for a proposed major highway project involving USH 12 from the city of Elkhorn to the city of Whitewater.*

However, after a purpose and needs evaluation the Highway 12 EIS was canceled by the WisDOT.

According SEWRPC, the average annual daily traffic volumes (AADT) between the end of the four-lane segment of Highway 12 and County Trunk Highway (CTH) ES have historically exceeded the 14,000 capacity of a two-lane highway. Additionally, traffic between CTH ES and CTCH A is beginning to approach the capacity, according to the AADT.

Traffic is growing annually and causes congestion on the current Highway 12 route, which can create trouble for travelers.



“The Walworth County Board supported the completion of the EIS and urged the appropriate elected officials to make the project a priority,” said Walworth County Board Chair Nancy Russell.

SEWRPC adopted the Walworth County jurisdictional highway system plan to reroute the current Highway 12 in 1973.

“I am very disappointed with the result of what happened when the DOT stopped the EIS for Highway 12,” said La Grange Township Supervisor Marcia Sahag. “It is crucial that the study be completed as mandated and budgeted by the state legislators.”

The delay in the study keeps those affected by the highway project in a continued state of uncertainty about the future of their properties, businesses and lives. The uncertainty hinders the future development of the area in terms of possible jobs and any other developments.

“The university and industries in Whitewater have waited long enough for the widening of Highway 12,” said the President and CEO of the Greater Whitewater Committee, Inc. Jeffery Knight. “The residents want certainty and the ability to move on with their business and lives.”

For additional information about the Redline Coalition and the Highway 12 Transportation Forum contact Jeffery Knight at jpk@knightpublicaffairs.com or at 920.728.0662.

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