

HIGHWAY 18 PROJECT – PUBLIC INPUT AND RESPONSE DOCUMENT (Based on written input received at the November 15, 2017 Open House, and emails & letters prior to the open house)

INTRODUCTION – County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 18 Project Public Input

The following information provides pertinent information to the highway 18 project, located between Maciver Avenue NE and Naber Ave NE, in both Saint Michael and Albertville. The highway 18 project is planned for construction in 2018, and is approximately one-mile in length.

A Public Hearing was held on May 4, 2017 to gather public and stakeholder input on implementing a special ½ percent County-wide sales tax to fund transportation projects.

On June 13, 2017 the Wright County Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution 17-30 implementing a special ½ percent County-wide sales tax to fund transportation projects. The County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 18 project was identified as a short-term project on the list of projects to be funded with the sales tax revenue.

A notice dated May 5, 2017, was mailed to landowners adjacent to highway 18 project segment informing them of the proposed highway improvement project and associated surveying work and data gathering that would be needed both within and outside the existing highway right-of-way.

A notice was mailed out to both adjacent landowners along highway 18, and surrounding neighborhoods inviting them to a public open house on November 15th at Saint Michael City Hall to provide input and comments on the proposed project.

Project Background:

The CSAH 18 (50th Street NE) improvements, approximately one mile in length, from Maciver Ave NE to Naber Ave NE, are being done to address current and long term safety and capacity needs of the corridor, and improve the structural strength of the roadway. The 50th Street NE (Highway 18) project is identified as a Mid-Term (2015-2025) improvement in the Northeast Wright County Sub-Area Transportation Study, dated June, 2004. The project is also included in the Wright County Local Option Sales Tax projects list (approved June 13, 2017) as a short-term project (2018-2022). The project will improve safety and capacity by widening the roadway to provide for left-turning traffic, providing right-turn lanes, and intersection improvements to meet current state aid design standards. This route is identified in the NE Wright County Sub-Area Study as an important arterial route that will provide a continuous east-west connection between highway 19 and highway 22 (Naber Ave. NE).

Comments Received

Approximately 25 people attending the open house meeting that was held on November 15th, 2017. We received a total of six (6) written comments regarding the project – five (5) of which were received at the public open house meeting. A summary of comments are attached to this document. Please note that the comments in this document are those that were received in writing, at or prior to the public open house that was held on Wednesday, November 15th.

#	Written Comments from	Date
1	Diane Piechocki	Emails, Nov. 9, 16, 2017
2	Sheila Zachman, 5425 Lambert Ave NE; Albertville	Open House, Nov. 15, 2017
3	Ray Lindenfelser, 12664 50 th St NE; Albertville	Open House, Nov. 15, 2017
4	Larry Barthel, 12074 50 th St NE; Albertville	Open House, Nov. 15, 2017
5	Darlene Haus, 4742 Maciver Ave NE; St. Michael	Open House, Nov. 15, 2017
6	Jack Fulton, 4742 Maciver Ave NE; St. Michael	Email, 11/14 & Open House 11/15/17

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comments are responded to according to the number listed above. Comments are reproduced exactly as received (no changes to spelling and grammar). Responses here are to the written input/questions/concerns/comments that our staff received either at the public open house or prior to it (via email or letter). Highway Department staff, city staff, or consultant staff may have responded already to some of the input, verbally, either at the open house or by phone with residents.

Diane Piechocki:

1. Could you explain the need for the three lanes since the land to the north is currently ag and no development plans are in the forseen future, and east bound traffic on 50th has designated turn lanes?

Response: A three lane section has been determined to be the safest and most appropriate lane configuration for both the present and future traffic. Dedicated Left turn lanes are needed for the south bound movement to both Mayelin Ave and McAllister Ave to serve the residential developments. In addition, the road must be widened at Maciver and Naber for either a median if roundabouts are constructed, or for left and right turn lanes if a traditional 4-way intersection is constructed. With the tapering in and out for the turn lanes, the majority of the roadway would need some widening. For consistency, it makes sense to maintain the uniform width. A continuous center turn lane will also allow for easier expansion in the future, if needed.

In addition, for higher volume undivided roadways a significant safety benefit is realized by providing a buffer strip in the center of the road to provide separation for opposing vehicles. The center left would provide that buffer.

2. What would the estimated cost difference of two vs three lanes be for this project?

Response: We have not completed detailed cost estimates yet, as the project is in the preliminary design phase at this time. It will be difficult to determine exact differences in cost of a two vs three lane design, because as stated above, as even with a two lane design the majority of the roadway would have to be wider than two-lanes as we taper in and out of the turn lanes needed at Mayelin and McAllister. The road will also be widened for either the roundabout or turn lanes at Maciver and Naber.

3. Can that aspect of the project be revisited and reevaluated to meet the more current needs of our community?

Response: Projects are designed for both the current needs and the needs of the future. We typically look out 20 years, which is the expected “life” of the bituminous that will be placed.

4. Could we receive a more detailed map/plan for the Maclver portion of this project, in particular from our property north through Wray’s?

Response: Yes, we can send you a larger image/print of the Maclver leg of the project (sent on Wednesday, November 22, 2017).

5. Where in the planning stage is this project?

Response: It is currently in preliminary design. We will review the input and comments that we receive at the open house and determine what, if any, changes to make to the proposed design before transitioning into final design plan preparation.

6. And when will all the “incidentals” of the project, some addressed in our questions/concerns sent to you and some raised last night, be provided to us in written format?

Response: We hope that our response to the comments we’ve received Responses your questions. We would be more than willing to meet and discuss any additional questions that you have.

7. Since the County has their needs and we have our property being greatly affected by those needs, we would appreciate open and honest communication and disclosure from now through completion.

Response: The County, City, and our engineering consultant have been and will continue to be transparent through the process, which includes gathering and considering input. We understand and recognize the impacts to your property and will always be available to discuss any concerns or questions you have.

8. We want to be assured that all utility (have power lines been addressed, possibly put underground), infrastructure, and water runoff, grading, extension of driveways, & road access work is done properly.

Response: This project involves coordination with many stakeholders, as you have mentioned above. We will be coordinating the design and construction with the affected public and private utility companies to ensure that they relocate their facilities in a safe and proper manner. We have already met with the utility companies and discussed the need for relocations in a number of circumstances. We will continue to coordinate with them. Related to the drainage, grading, etc. We will continue to

work through those design issues and correspond with residents where applicable to ensure a quality design.

9. Where do our mailboxes go if a sidewalk is along Maclver?

Response: Mailboxes are typically relocated in the boulevard behind the curb, like on most urban streets.

10. It was indicated that the City has jurisdiction over right-of-way adjustment to our properties on Maclver. Does the County have any input regarding their decision?

Response: The city of Saint Michael will be making these decisions with input from affected landowners.

11. Since the driveways are being extended to reach the new roadway, are those improvements considered to be City assessments in this case?

Response: Per Steve Bot, City Administrator: The City of Saint Michael is not sure on assessments yet and will need to evaluate based on the cost share.

12. Was there any connection to our properties being recently reviewed by the City Assessor and now this road project?

Response: Per Steve Bot, City Administrator: the city assessor was out this year as part of her routine annual assessments.

13. When the STMA high school was built on the other side of Cty 19 on 50th/Jameson, was a roundabout considered at that T-intersection or was a traffic light required?

Response: The signal was installed prior to the consideration of roundabouts as a traffic control device in Wright County. If it were to be evaluated today, it more than likely would be determined to be a safer and more effective option.

14. On Cty 19 at 77, north of the outlet mall, how was it determined that this needed to be a four-way stop and the installation of the stop signs with the flashing lights installed on the north/south lanes? Might a similar four-way stop with added turn lanes be a better option for the 50th/Maclver intersection, especially since it is offset?

Response: The all-way stop was a short-term solution to the increase in traffic at this intersection due to the City of Otsego's extension of 70th Street east of CSAH 19. Wright County was awarded federal funding that will be available in 2019 to address the intersection deficiencies. We will begin the

preliminary design of a long-term solution at this intersection and also on CSAH 19 from the outlet mall extending North through this intersection and on 70th street to the east in 2018.

15. What about the semis and trailers that come through, will there be concerns for their use of the roundabout or will they be restricted from using 50th/Maclver/Barthel Industrial?

Response: If the roundabout is constructed, it will be designed to allow semis, busses and cars to safely navigate the intersection.

16. What is the cost difference of a four-way stop with signs compared to what is being proposed by constructing a roundabout?

Response: If we were to proceed with an all-way stop, it would need left-thru-right lanes constructed on all legs as part of the project to handle existing and future traffic. The cost of the extra width needed for turn lanes at an all-way stop is very similar to that of a roundabout, which only has one lane of approach at each leg of the intersection.

17. Where in the County are roundabouts? How many are located in a similar setting that is residential/industrial/farmstead?

Response: Two roundabouts were constructed in Buffalo that are similar settings. CSAH 12 and CR 138 located north of State Highway 55 has residential and agricultural land. The better example is the intersection of CSAH 35 and CR134 located west of Buffalo High School. It has residential, agricultural and school traffic. We have received nothing but positive feedback for the operation of the roundabout.

18. How are utilities moved or worked into this plan? There is a large gas meter (?) at the northeast corner of 50th/Maclver.

Response: Utility companies are required to relocate, at their cost, if located within public right of way. We held a utility coordination meeting in November to notify them of the project so they can plan to relocate if there are project impacts.

19. Will a holding pond need to be included in this project?

Response: Yes, a stormwater pond is planned to filter and reduce the peak stormwater runoff from the roadway corridor.

20. The Guide for Property Owners addresses when property is to be purchased/condemned in order for a project to be done/completed. If the proposed changes occur, the opposite would be the case for those residents on the west side of Maclver since the street would be relocated away from the current

property lines so would the property be “sold” to the property owners affected or title transferred as part of the project?

Response: It would be the city decision to revoke any unnecessary easement. Our understanding is that a final decision has not been made, but at this time the property lines would not be changed.

21. Since the two proposed roundabout options move the street and reconfigure and move the current driveways, who is responsible for upkeep and maintenance of this open area?

Response: The property owner is responsible for maintenance of public right of way adjacent to city streets.

22. What will happen to the placement of mailboxes? Our mailbox has been hit by vehicles being driven erratically making the turn off 50th to go south on Maclver a numerous times over the 27 years of living on Maclver and this summer, when it happened again, we paid for (and installed ourselves) one of the steel mailbox posts that the County is now installing on its roads. How does the proposed road improvements provide for mail delivery?

Response: Proposed road improvements would not change mail delivery. The curb and gutter being proposed should reduce the potential for vehicles to strike your mailbox.

23. If one of the proposed options are chosen, how are school buses to pick up children on Maclver, how are emergency vehicles – fire, medical, police – to access our homes, how do garbage/recycling trucks do their pickups, how does mail get delivered, and how would delivery trucks get to our homes.

Response: The proposed design will not restrict movement of any vehicle types mentioned above that they can currently make today.

24. And, how do snowplows do their job and will there still be times after a heavy snow that the plow after rounding the corner will leave a large (sometimes wet and frozen) snow pile at the end of our driveways?

Response: Whether a roundabout or all-way stop were constructed, there will be a slight increase in the width of the pavement being plowed. This may mean an increase in the amount of snow, compared to today that would be in front of your driveway.

25. Any statistics available for the affect roundabouts have on the sale of residential homes or commercial properties when adjacent to a roundabout?

Response: To our knowledge, no studies have been done to show a positive or negative impact.

Sheila Zachman:

1. Please email a copy of the layout to Sheila.zachman@yahoo.com

Response: Sent on Wednesday, November 22, 2017.

Ray Lindenfelser:

1. Street lights added at 18 and Mayelin and 18 and McAllister.

Response: L.E.D. street lighting will be included at all of the intersections along the project, for safety.

Larry Barthel:

1. Good design.

Response: Thank you for your input.

Darlene Haus:

1. Will there be a public hearing?

Response: Wright County does not typically hold public hearings for highway construction projects, and a public hearing is not planned for this project. We look forward to you providing input at the open house and are always willing to discuss any questions or concerns that you have at any time.

2. Would you be willing to work together with the affected property owners via some better community outreach?

Response: We will take public input and comments at the public open house and then work together with affected property owners on a one-on-one basis with our project team (Right-of-Way Agent, Engineering staff, city staff, and consultant staff).

3. What does the minimum state standard cost and look like? What does the \$2 million plan look like?

Response: The proposed design will be in accordance with state aid standards for an urban corridor based on the traffic volumes, safety and anticipated growth for the design period. A detailed cost estimate has not been prepared yet, as sufficient detailed design has not been accomplished yet to accurately estimate costs.

4. When did you last work on 50th Street? At what cost? When did the trail go in? At what cost?

Response: A pavement preservation project was completed in 2013 to address pavement distress and deterioration on this segment of 50th Street (from Maciver Ave NE to Naber Ave NE) at a cost of \$253,140 (for the approximate 1 mile segment). All of the bituminous placed in 2013 will be recycled and reused in the 2018 project. The trail along highway 18 was constructed in 2004 under a city of St. Michael contract at a cost of approximately \$339,332.00.

5. What is the cost of the current plan? Where is the cost breakdown? Cost of the OVERBUILD? Land acquisition, cost of extra lane, cost of trail, roundabouts, tearing out all existing roads, etc.

Response: A detailed construction cost breakdown (for highway, trail, etc.) will be completed when the design details are to the point that costs can accurately be estimated (so likely in a couple months or so). Land acquisition costs will be based upon independent appraisals that will be completed in the upcoming months. The three lane design is appropriate for the current traffic levels, safety, and capacity for growth.

6. What is the cost of a 4-way stop? And why was it removed after the last improvement project?

Response: The four – way stop control at the intersection of Maciver and highway 18 was a temporary measure during the reconstruction of MnDOT highway 241 several years ago.

7. How will this improve my field drainage that's been saturated with roadway runoff? Where are my field accesses? Where's the alternative route?

Response: The urban design will reduce roadway drainage, in general, to all adjacent properties. The existing road ditches along Maciver and 18, within the right-of-way, will be conveyed into the new roadway drainage storm sewer system.

Field accesses are discussed during the right-of-way acquisition meetings with Highway Department staff.

This corridor is linear, between two existing intersections on each end of the project, so there is no alternative alignment to consider.

8. Where is the RJR and/or SJR?

Response: An RJR (Roundabout Justification Report) and/or SJR (Signal Justification Report) are no longer the reports completed for intersections. An ICE (intersection control evaluation) report will determine the appropriate intersection control at highway 18 & Maciver and highway 18 & Naber. The ICE report has not been completed yet, as this is done during the final design plan process (within the next few weeks). We typically include some of the information gathered during the open house into the report.

9. How can you mitigate light pollution? What are the growth projections for that area to the north?

Response: L.E.D. street lighting will be installed at the intersections along the project. The L.E.D. street lights will be “full-cutoff” which will direct the light spread in a more focused area downward. The 2004 Northeast Wright County Sub-Area Transportation Study projected growth, based on city zoning, to generate between 16,000 to 30,000 vehicles per day along highway 18 (long term – by 2040). We have based the current design on current traffic volumes of 5100 ADT and projected volumes of about 8,000 ADT for the 20 year design period which makes the three lane design appropriate at this time.

10. Where are the developers of this future growth? What do you think they’ll need? Why are we spending tax dollars that they should pay for, if and when they ever do?

Response: It is unknown at this time who or when the land to the north of highway 18 will develop. The current design is for a three lane highway which is appropriate for the current traffic volumes and background growth of the area. Future developments will have their traffic generation evaluated and they will be required to mitigate impacts to highway 18 at their cost (future turn lanes, intersections, five-lane section, etc.).

11. The Haus farm was homesteaded in 1881 and enrolled in Ag. Preserve in 1988. As such it is protected under Mn Statutes 473H and 17.80. The proposed roundabout takes prime farmland, cuts off my farm accesses and fails to show a reasonable and prudent alternative as required by law. This is an arbitrary and capricious taking that shows utter disregard to state law. All involved county and city planning officials have been fully aware of this factor for months, even years.

Response: Land acquisition for this project will be accomplished in compliance with state laws.

12. The proposed design has strong negative impacts on all nearby properties. The sheer magnitude of the size will dramatically lower the quality of life for all nearby residents, needing to be brightly lit all night, adding greater difficulty for snowplows, large truck traffic, school buses and emergency vehicles.

Response: Roundabouts provide the safest intersection control and are designed to accommodate large trucks, school buses and emergency vehicles.

13. The public was misled by the vague and incorrect project description and kept in the dark as long as possible to avoid negative push back. Many affected residents are not even aware that there’s a roundabout proposed and haven’t even had time or the option to review the preliminary plan and prepare an adequate response. The failure by county commissioners and city officials to communicate honestly with all concerned residents in a timely and accurate manner creates a complete erosion of trust and respect for this process and the people behind it.

Response: The County, City and engineering consultant staff have been and will continue to be transparent through the process, which includes gathering information and considering input.

14. Where is the RJR Roundabout Justification Report that's required to identify any complicating factors? The Haus farm would most certainly be a big one and needs to be included.

Response: An RJR (Roundabout Justification Report) is no longer the report completed for intersections. An ICE (intersection control evaluation) report will determine the appropriate intersection control at highway 18 & Maciver and highway 18 & Naber. The ICE report has not been completed yet, as this is done during the final design plan process (within the next few months). The surrounding land usage will be included in this report.

15. There are two roundabouts shown within one mile, neither of which is a necessity and adding enormously to the project cost. Is this within state guidelines?

Response: Yes, roundabouts provide the safest traffic control at intersections and will be designed in accordance with state aid standards.

16. This project is grossly overbuilt, the scope far exceeds any State standards. It was not mandated by the state, it is simply a wish list and not a need. The county's own ADT and accident data clearly shows that this is not an unsafe road.

Response: The design is appropriate for an urban corridor with the level of existing and future traffic volumes, in accordance with state aid standards. The intersection of highway 18 and Maciver has a crash severity rate that exceeds the state-wide average for intersections of this type.

17. The two-way center left "suicide lane" serves no one. There are only 4 left turns to the south and 2 to the north along the entire mile. This hardly justifies the cost.

Response: The three (3) lane design section is appropriate for this type of corridor with the design traffic levels for safety and capacity.

18. As for future growth, the only parcel for sale is on the corner of Barthel Industrial Drive, the others are not on the market, are landlocked and have poor development potential. There are no plat approvals pending and neither the city or county has any way of knowing what those needs will be or if they will ever occur. With the new tax cuts, businesses will have an extra 15% to pay for their needs as they arise.

Response: Future development along the north side of highway 18 will be required to mitigate impacts to highway 18, based on the traffic generation of the proposed development, when they occur in the future.

19. The current road was only recently improved and the trail is virtually brand new. The proposal would tear everything out and start over. This is fiscal irresponsibility at its finest, and demonstrates poor planning. This is a clear violate of the county's own motto.

Response: A pavement preservation project was completed in 2013 to address pavement distress and deterioration on this segment of 50th Street (from Maciver Ave NE to Naber Ave NE) at a cost of \$253,140 (for the approximate 1 mile segment). All of the bituminous placed in 2013 will be recycled and reused in the 2018 project. The trail along highway 18 was constructed in 2004 under a city of St. Michael contract at a cost of approximately \$339,332.00.

20. The proposed plan is in its entirety, grossly over-built, far exceeds any state minimum standards, making the costs greatly exceed the benefits. Since the taxpayers didn't get to vote on the passage of a sales tax, their voices should certainly be the top consideration when the project is funded by them and is literally in their front yards.

Response: The three (3) lane design section is appropriate for this type of corridor with the design traffic levels for safety and capacity.

21. Neither the city or county appears to be realistic in their revenue projections from this tax. The initial figure was just over 4 million, but soon our county commissioners had excitedly inflated it to 5 and even 6 million. This resolution barely passed, "with underwhelming support" according to the minutes of the one public hearing. This hearing was held during the middle of the day, was poorly publicized and many citizens were not even aware of it, or couldn't take the day off work to be there. After the Commissioner of Revenue takes their administrative fees off the top, these rosy projections may prove to be wishful thinking. In the meantime there are roads all over the county that are in much greater need of basic upkeep, and have much higher ADT and accident/fatality rates. The majority of the projects in the immediate St. Michael-Albertville area, leaving the majority of the county residents feeling ignored.

Response: The CSAH 18 improvements are being done to address long term safety and capacity needs of the corridor, and improve the structural strength of the roadway. The 50th Street NE (Highway 18) project is identified as a Mid-Term (2015-2025) improvement in the Northeast Wright County Sub-Area Transportation Study, dated June, 2004. The project is also included in the Wright County Local Option Sales Tax projects list (approved June 13, 2017) as a short-term project (2018-2022). The project will improve safety and capacity by widening the roadway to provide for left-turning traffic, providing right-turn lanes, and intersection improvements to meet current state aid design standards. This route is identified in the NE Wright County Sub-Area Study as an important arterial route that will provide a continuous east-west connection between highway 19 and highway 22 (Naber Ave. NE).

22. A ten foot wide trail is completely frivolous, oversized and should not be funded with this money. The City of St. Michael is in no position to throw money around on anything but immediate needs. Just

because trails are eligible for MSAH funds doesn't justify the need for it. Everyone says, "the state will pay for it" but we are the state. We taxpayers cannot be treated as an inexhaustible resource.

Response: Thank you for your input/comments.

23. I believe this entire project is a grossly over-built wish list, not based on need, but greed. This has every appearance of being a thinly veiled attempt at pressuring all remaining large lot owners to be intimidated and harassed into selling, which the City of St. Michael thinks it could quickly convert into tax revenues to fill their depleted coffers. Why have only one house on a lot when you could have four? The proposed taking on the Haus farm is simply another example of a long string of attempts over the years to secure this family farm for residential development, and I have all the documentation to prove it. It also reeks of sexism, racism and sheer bullying. For my family to simply go along with such foolishness without a challenge, would constitute a dereliction of duty. We enrolled in Ag. Preserve specifically to be protected from predatory land grabs in exchange for upholding good land stewardship practices and are bound by many limiting factors, including the 8 year provision that dictates when our land can be sold or developed. The proposed taking on the Haus farm would have devastating impacts on dozens of new immigrant farm families, who find it increasingly difficult to find anywhere to farm within 40 miles of their homes and communities. I've worked with these families for years and together we grow all types of vegetables for farmer's markets, restaurants, co-ops, and CSA (community supported agriculture) groups. I've built good long term relationships with people from Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Kenya, Cameroon, and Uganda to name a few. I've watched their children grow up here over the seasons and seen firsthand the ways this farm builds community in the entire metropolitan area. We are unique and rare, and deserve more respect in this process. If the county is so concerned about safety, I would ask that they at least mow the grass at the stop sign, paint the crosswalk, keep the fire hydrant visible, clean and blocked culvert under 50th street that floods my fields, and put up more than just one speed limit sign. And in the future build the embankments so I can keep them groomed from within my property, when the county neglects to do so. I would also submit that a strong sustainable network of food producing farms is just as vital to the safety of our community as a well planned transportation system. The two need not be mutually exclusive.

In closing, I suggest a realistic, appropriate solution can be easily achieved by engaging the people most impacted, greatly reducing the scope and cost of the project and working within the existing ROW, eliminating unnecessary taking and assessments. I believe both the objectives of the citizens and the governing bodies can be implemented by re-instating a 4 way stop, adding right turn lanes, and eliminating the trail. It is the duty of our policy makers to be fiscally responsible and accountable to the taxpayers. The current proposal is neither. Thank you for your consideration.

Response: We understand that you are upset about the project impacting your property, and we wish that we did not have to acquire any private property for this important transportation improvement. Please understand that it is our responsibility at the Highway Department to make improvements to the County Highway system to provide for current and future safety and capacity. We value your input and comments and will take them into consideration as we continue with the design and construction process. Please reach out to the county staff if you have any questions.

Jack Fulton:

1. I am submitting this to express my strong opposition to the CSAH 18 road project as currently presented by the Wright County Highway Department. In particular:

The roundabout planned for the intersection of Maciver Avenue and 50th Street is an egregious overreaction to what may reasonably be considered an awkward intersection. What is worse that this is that it entails a severe taking of private land, i.e. from the Haus farm, that displays an abject disregard for interest and concerns of property owners. Furthermore, the proposed roundabout would preclude people who have lived in their homes for decades from making a simple left turn from their property. What are the county commissioners and staff thinking?

Response: Roundabouts are proven to be the safest intersection control and this is being proposed for safety and capacity reasons.

2. The double left turn lane that runs the length of the project is a categorical example of a solution in search of a problem. In fact, the left turn at one end of the project is into a dead end. In between it would serve a few driveways. To argue that this lane should be built to serve future potential growth is absurd. There is no way to know if there will indeed be development in the near or distant future in the project area. To commit significant tax dollars to a wish or hunch is irresponsible. Moreover, any road work to serve a future development, can and will be paid for by the developer, thereby saving taxpayer resources.

Response: A three lane section has been determined to be the safest and most appropriate lane configuration for both the present and future traffic. Dedicated Left turn lanes are needed for the south bound movement to both Mayelin Ave and McAllister Ave to serve the residential developments. In addition, the road must be widened at Maciver and Naber for either a median if roundabouts are constructed, or for left and right turn lanes if a traditional 4-way intersection is constructed. With the tapering in and out for the turn lanes, the majority of the roadway would need some widening. For consistency, it makes sense to maintain the uniform width. A continuous center turn lane will also allow for easier expansion in the future, if needed.

In addition, for higher volume undivided roadways a significant safety benefit is realized by providing a buffer strip in the center of the road to provide separation for opposing vehicles. The center left would provide that buffer.

3. There is no urgency to rebuild or work on CSAH 18 in the proposed project area. It in fact received maintenance work within the last five years. And with the total of 511 miles of county roads eligible for sales tax dollars, I would find it incredible that there are not roadways in greater need of attention.

Response: The 50th Street NE (Highway 18) project is identified as a Mid-Term (2015-2025) improvement in the Northeast Wright County Sub-Area Transportation Study, dated June, 2004. On June 13, 2017 the Wright County Board of Commissioners adopted Resolution 17-30 implementing a special ½ percent County-wide sales tax to fund transportation projects. The County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 18 project was identified as a short-term project on the list of projects to be funded with the sales tax revenue.

4. Finally, in the future the county must be far more open with its citizens and in particular the property owners directly affected by road projects. Many who would feel the brunt of this proposal if it is brought to fruition, have felt blindsided by the details as they have been grudgingly trickled out by the county. If the county is truly interested in the input and cooperation of its citizens, it needs to begin sharing project details more openly and with greater alacrity and frequency than it has with the CSAH 18 proposal. Simply meeting legal requirements on notification, is not equivalent fair, honest and decent communication.

Response: A notice dated May 5, 2017, was mailed to landowners adjacent to highway 18 informing them of the proposed highway improvement project and associated surveying work. Our staff has received calls and questions regarding the project since early May, and have been open and forthcoming about all information on the project, and provided the most current maps & layouts that were available at the time we received requests for information. The County, City and engineering consultant have been and will continue to be transparent through the process, which includes information gathering and considering input.