

<b>HIGHWAY 371 ANALYSIS Brainerd Lakes Chamber November 2, 2007</b>	<b>Through Town Route</b>	<b>Bypass Route</b>
<b>Safety and Traffic</b>		
Can both roads be built to meet the needs of the public?	Yes, per Mn/DOT	Yes, per Mn/DOT
Pedestrian Safety	Center medians, pedestrian underpass or overpass, pedestrian crossing lights. Possible grants for pedestrian crossing; est. \$500,000 for City portion of cost.	Less traffic on through town route for short term. By 2030, projections are for traffic to increase to current levels. Pedestrian crossing at stoplight on County Road 11; pedestrian crossing at stoplight at County Road 11 and Hwy 371.
Interchanges	Not applicable; see access in following section for details.	Three at grade crossings, one traffic signal at 371/11. Southern interchange not a free flowing connection to the city as northbound traveler enters left turn lane and waits for traffic to cross to county road. This route severs business visibility and the businesses in the southern area change to county road access.
Maintenance	Mn/DOT continues to maintain Hwy 371; backage roads maintained by the city.	Crow Wing County responsible for maintaining current 371; winter maintenance decreases significantly per County Engineer; City accepts maintenance of Cty Road 112.
Traffic levels	Average daily traffic count in 2005 10,900 through town on two lane road. Projection for 2030 20,100 on four lane road. July weekend currently at about 22,000 vehicles/day; projected at 32,500 in 2030.	Estimating 2/3 of current traffic on bypass (7300 ADT) and 3600 ADT through town. Estimate by 2030 that traffic levels in Pequot Lakes will be at current traffic levels. Mn DOT is further evaluating traffic split projections.
Road construction	Through town route builds new service roads paid by Mn/DOT and city at a shared cost to replace highway access. Percentage paid based on cost participation policy (takes into consideration benefit to Mn/DOT and the City and final negotiations).	No additional roads included in the current plan, although if development is to occur along the bypass roads will need to be built at either the city or developer's cost.
Turn back of existing roads	Potential for one small section of roadway in the city to be turned back to the city (lost leg of Front Street).	Highway 371 turned back to county; other roads turned back to city, pending turn back agreement.
Traffic on County Road 11 and Parking	No changes immediately to the roadway other than loss of parking along County Road 11. Future growth may require improvement to the roadway to accommodate increased traffic. The segment of the road requiring improvement from Hwy 371 through four-way stop sign. (Note: both routes will probably require improvement to County Road 11 to handle increased traffic; improvements to be determined).	This road is now the main entrance into Pequot Lakes; traffic estimates not available. Potential need to improve roadway to accommodate increased traffic and create pedestrian linkages. The segment of the road may be more extensive with improvements from Hwy 371 to Breezy Point. Elimination of parking on County Road 11 in downtown also possible with bypass. (Note: both routes will require improvement to County Road 11 to handle increased traffic; improvements to be determined).

<b>Economic Development</b>		
Surrounding communities	Immediate communities all maintain through town route.	Other communities served by highway through town; Pequot Lakes is the only community that the highway bypasses. Note that the Donjek study referenced communities bypassed in Iowa, MN, and Wisconsin. The Chamber contacted all the communities and 25 of the 27 respondents disclosed that all competitive communities within a 15 mile radius were also bypassed.
Commercial growth	Immediately translate into construction, improvement to existing businesses, and development.	Commercial development stagnates within current business district as investment is unlikely due to future decrease in visibility. If commercial development is allowed along the bypass, development could occur by 2020. The amount of commercial growth will be dependent on zoning.
Commercial Tax Base	Maintained or increasing with immediate development.	Property values decrease in current downtown/highway route area per Donjek report (already occurring). Commercial tax base increases beginning in 2020 (or three years after bypass is built) and the amount is dependent on the amount of development along the bypass.
Property Taxes paid to City	Maintained or increasing.	Decreasing amount from business made up by increase to other property classifications. A 20% decrease in commercial property values equals a 7.5% increase in property taxes to residents (figured as a snapshot in time assuming everything stays the same).
Sewer and Water Infrastructure	Some relocation of utilities is required with the highway expansion. Infrastructure included in some of the new service road construction at city expense.	Limited infrastructure improvements included in proposal that are comparable to through town route as they are not needed. Future infrastructure costs along the bypass to be paid by the city or developer along with roads. It is likely that the city will need to donate 17 acres of land in its spray irrigation field for the new bypass.
<b>Visibility</b>		
	Limited changes.	Downtown area is no longer visible from the highway.
<b>Access</b>		
Driveway access/Roadway intersections	Closure of over 30 public and private access points to Highway 371 are proposed by MNDOT between CR168/107 and CR 17, replaced with six access points. Two are full-access at County Road 11, CR 107, CR 168, CR 17 and Morehouse Drive. At the Treehouse, West Lake Drive (immediately north of Oasis), and a new road across from the north line of UBC all have limited access with left access out from east to northbound restricted. Jokela Street is restricted west to southbound restricted. Only signal light is at County	Access to the city from three county roads (north, south, and County Road 11). County Engineer will assess the safety features of the current highway route and may close access to the highway from some businesses.

	Road 11.	
<b>Aesthetics</b>		
First impression of Pequot Lakes	Aesthetic improvements discussed but not finalized for a through town route including trees, lights, banners, green space in the medians to create a sense of place along the four lane highway.	Three entrances into Pequot Lakes. Discussion has not occurred regarding aesthetic improvements. The spray irrigation field and industrial park will be seen from the new highway.
City Park along trail	Buffered from the highway with vegetation.	No changes planned.
<b>Vision for future and promotion as destination</b>		
Downtown master plan	Infrastructure improvements of \$6.6 million proposed to fully implement the plan include street improvements that are desired regardless of the City's approach to downtown. The majority of service and retail businesses are located in the downtown.	The master plan notes that investment in the downtown will be greater with a bypass to recruit businesses due to the loss of highway visibility.
Creating a destination	Implementation of the downtown master plan would support developing the downtown into a destination.	Efforts to establish downtown as a destination will be more difficult due to lack of visibility, as noted in the downtown master plan.
Comprehensive Plan	Numerous parts of the comp plan identify protection and enhancement of local businesses as important, along with the community's dependence on the highway visibility.	Public land and uninterrupted forests were identified as a priority in the comp plan. The new highway has the potential to disrupt that perspective of Pequot Lakes, depending on zoning adjacent to the highway. Will there be green space or development – that is the question to the City.
<b>Costs</b>		
	Initial costs to the city are higher on a through town route; long term maintenance is a wash. Final costs dependent on final plans. Costs to the County are yet to be determined.	Initial costs are less than the through town route. Additional expenses may be incurred to extend infrastructure, service roads, etc. in the long term, as well as increased maintenance with road turn backs or additional service roads.
<b>Disruption to businesses</b>		
	Building the thru town option will most likely take the better part of two construction seasons. Maintaining traffic on highway 371 during construction will be a challenge. Trade offs exist. Moving traffic completely off of 371 will shorten construction time, but will have larger impact on adjacent businesses. Allowing traffic to use 371 while it is built half at a time will be more expensive, require more coordination and will lengthen the total time of construction/disruption.	Limited to interchange areas at south and north end of highway.