

Input sought on future of Hwy. 60

Written by SARAH McCRAW
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Wisconsin DOT is considering expanding road to four lanes in village

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is studying whether Highway 60 in the Village of Grafton should be expanded from two to four lanes due to heavy traffic.

"It could potentially affect every resident that lives along Highway 60," said Darrell Hofland, the Village of Grafton administrator.

Motorists can tell DOT officials of their roadway concerns during at 5 to 8 p.m. meeting Wednesday, June 27, at John Long Middle School in Grafton.

A 6 p.m. presentation by the DOT will highlight concerns about limited passing opportunities, insufficient turn lanes, poor intersection sight distances, unusual intersection configurations and other unsafe conditions.

"People, as a result, take risks that could lead to crashes," Hofland said.

The increased traffic concerns are a combination of growing residential and business areas along the highway, Hofland said.

The DOT is leading the study of Highway 60 from 11th Avenue in the Village of Grafton to Old U.S. Highway 45 in the Village of Jackson.

"As a homeowner or a business we need to hear from them and get their input so we can make the best decisions," said Michael Pyritz of the Department of Transportation. "The more information, the more feedback we get, the better the situation will be."

DOT and village officials will look at several factors to determine the need for improvements, including traffic demand and traffic operations. However, safety issues will be the main focus, he said.

The fatal crash rate along that portion of roadway is three times higher than on other similar highways across the state, according to the DOT.

Maps and displays will be provided to help residents point out problem areas.

"That information is hugely valuable to us. We want to be conscientious and understand what people are seeing," Pyritz said.

The DOT anticipates traffic volumes along the corridor to increase by up to 80% by 2040.

Hofland said he is not aware of any residents notifying the village of specific traffic issues, but

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officials are eager to brainstorm improvements with the public during Wednesday's meeting.

The DOT encourages not just residents, but anyone who frequents that portion of Highway 60 on their daily commute to speak out, Pyritz said.

"They have the most direct link to that project. They have the most amount of information because they see it 24 hours a day. They can best share information with us. In particular, what are the problems they see? What are the hazards?" Pyritz said. "We want community involvement. We want input. We want people to show up and tell us what's going on."