



**Innovative Solutions:  
Expedited Environmental  
Assessment & Alternative  
Intersection Design**

*Presented by*  
**Angie Bersaw, AICP**  
**Zach Parsons, PE**

**2022 Iowa DOT  
Transportation  
Conference**

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**Presentation Overview**

Partnerships/Acknowledgements



- 1.** Project Overview
- 2.** Hybrid EA
- 3.** Corridor Evaluation
- 4.** Successes

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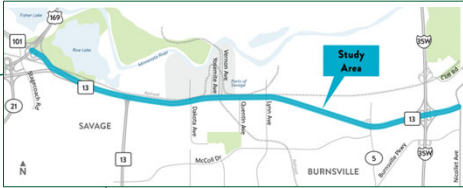
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**Project  
Overview &  
Goals**



-  Understand corridor needs and opportunities
-  Consensus on long-term vision
-  Improve freight access

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### Corridor Needs

-  Hwy 13 exceeds traffic capacity, causing delays
-  Several intersections with above average crash rate
-  Pedestrians/bicyclists cannot safely move
-  Not efficient or safe for trucks



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### Safety Concerns



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### Savage Fen Scientific and Natural Area



640 acres: Largest calcareous fen in MN



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## Hwy 13 Challenges



1. Challenging corridor required different approach
2. Physical constraints, interacting influences
3. Funding driving specific project; influence how the corridor evolves
4. Needed tool to address corridor vision & funded project in one process

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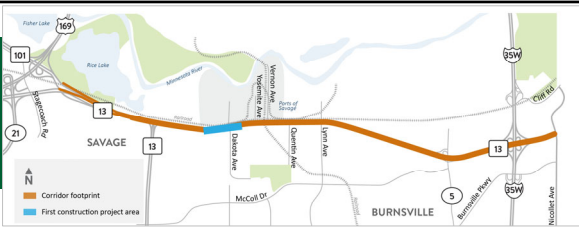
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## Hybrid Environmental Assessment (EA)

Combines concepts and steps of Tier I EIS + traditional EA  
 Structured approach to achieve corridor vision and first construction project  
 Two different levels of environmental clearance from one process

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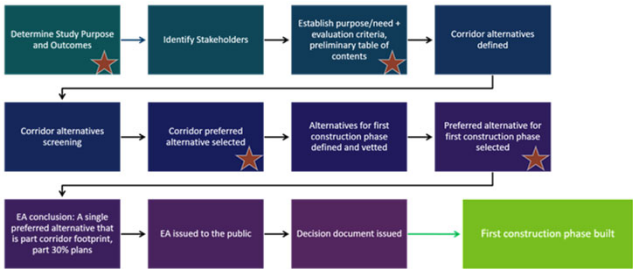
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## Hybrid EA - Overview



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## Hybrid EA

What is the intended end product?

1. Approved Hybrid EA of corridor vision—two levels of design detail and environmental clearance
2. Stakeholders on same page with vision; first construction phase ready for delivery
3. Benefits of Tier 1 EIS for future construction phase within corridor footprint

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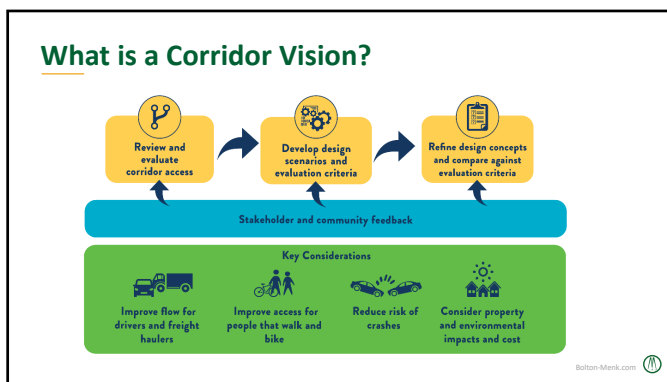
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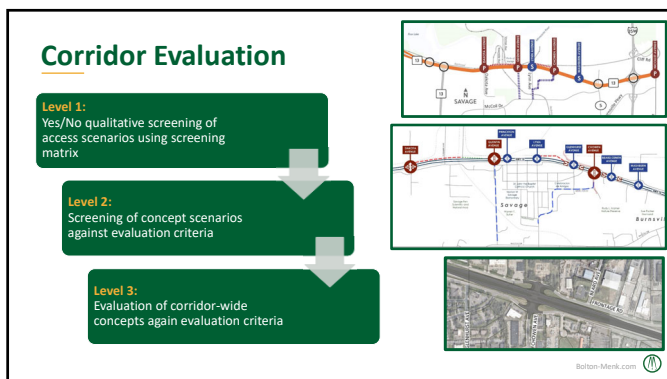
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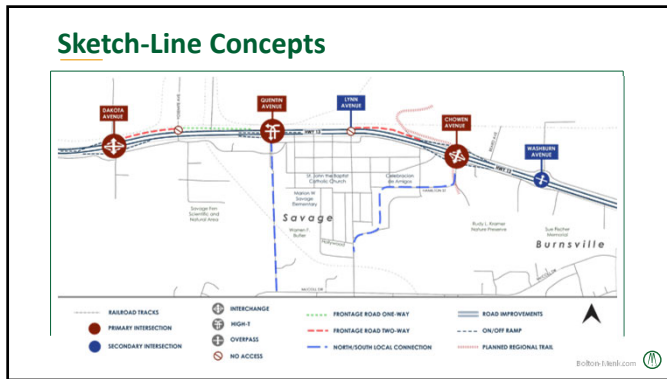
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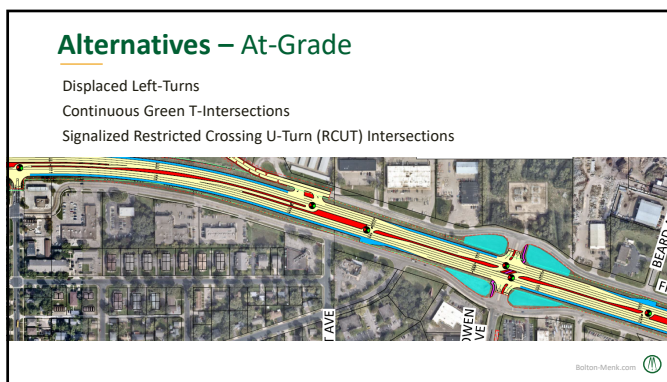
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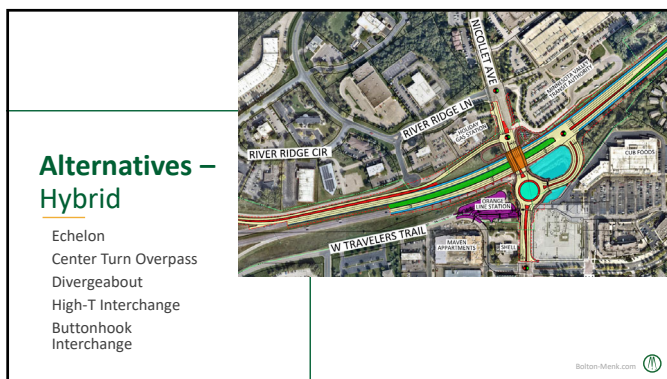
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## Corridor Footprint

Where did we end up? We chose flexibility  
Three corridor visions carried into Hybrid EA

**LAYOUT LEGEND**

- HI-13 CORRIDOR VISION LIMITS
- LOCALITY DEVELOPMENT VISION LIMITS
- 2007 CONSTRUCTION
- FUTURE HIGHWAY 67 RIGHT-OF-WAY DUE TO INCREASED TRAFFIC DEMAND
- NOT PART OF THE PRESENTLY ALTERNATING AND TO BE COMPLETED BY OTHERS IN THE FUTURE EXISTING RIGHT-OF-WAY
- WETLANDS
- PARCELS

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## First Construction Project - Dakota Avenue

The map illustrates the proposed construction project on Dakota Avenue. Key features include:

- Proposed Roadways:** Dakota Avenue (Main Road) and Frontage Road Two Way (Frontage Road).
- Intersections:**
  - Primary Intersection: Dakota Avenue and Frontage Road Two Way.
  - Secondary Intersection: Dakota Avenue and [unlabeled road to the south].
- Proposed Improvements:**
  - Frontage Road One Way (Frontage Road).
  - Frontage Road Two Way (Frontage Road).
  - Local Road Improvements (Frontage Road).
  - One Way Street (Frontage Road).
  - Signal (Frontage Road).
- Legend:**
  - Proposed Roadway
  - Primary Intersection
  - Secondary Intersection
  - Highway Change
  - No Access
  - Frontage Road One Way
  - Frontage Road Two Way
  - Local Road Improvements
  - One Way Street
  - Signal
  - Road Improvements
  - One Way Street

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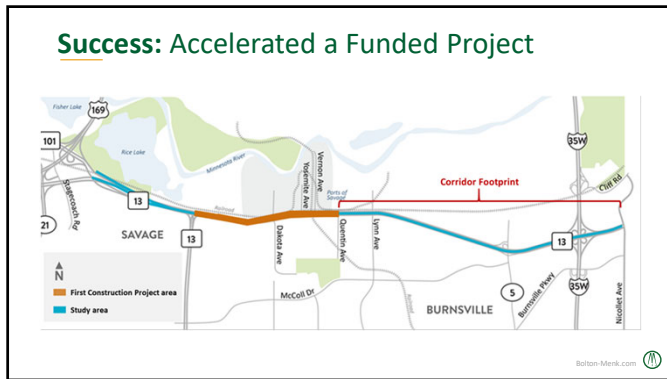
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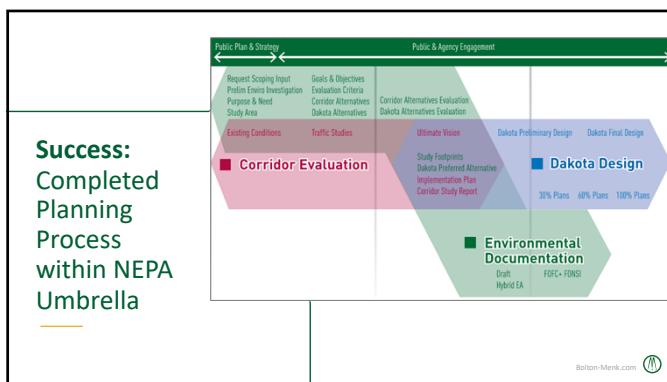
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### Success: FHWA Decision

**FHWA CONCLUSION**

FHWA has determined that the impact of the TH 13 Hybrid Environmental Assessment (EA) which requires FHWA funding, and the environmental impacts caused thereby have been adequately identified and assessed in the July 2021 Hybrid EA as prepared by MnDOT and FHWA. Therefore, pursuant to 23 CFR 771.121(c), FHWA hereby finds the TH 13 Project will not cause significant environmental impacts.

FHWA has determined that the impact of the *First Construction Project* on the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha Railway, St. Paul and Sioux City, Minnesota Valley, Chicago and North Western Railroad Corridor Historic District (Union Pacific Railroad) (HC-SVC-043) will be de minimis under Section 405 of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966.

FHWA has determined the *proposed transportation* described in the Hybrid EA will have no significant impacts to the historic or natural environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based upon the attached Hybrid EA which has been independently evaluated by FHWA and determined to adequately discuss the most, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures.

The Hybrid EA provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Digitally signed by  
WILLIAM R. LOPEZ  
Date: 2021.10.01  
08:47:25 -05'00'

October 1, 2021

William Lopez, P.E.  
Field Operations Team Leader  
Federal Highway Administration - Minnesota Division

1. Two levels of clearance
2. EIS not required

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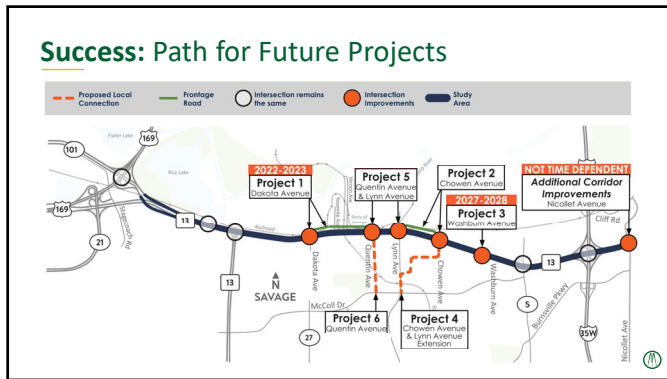
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## Thank you! Questions?




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Principal Planner

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