

**FINAL REPORT**

**Mahnomen Pedestrian Study**

**Updated September 2025**

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Technical Memorandum #5 Mahnomen Funding and Implementation

## SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mahnomen Highway (Hwy) 59 Pedestrian Study purpose is to examine pedestrian safety and identify connections for active transportation users along and across Hwy 59. The City of Mahnomen is situated on White Earth Nation land and continues to be influenced by the indigenous peoples that have and continue to live in the area. The project corridor stretches from the southern limits of the City of Mahnomen to the intersection of Hwy 59 and TH 200 in the north. Land use along the corridor is primarily a rural crossroad context and the Canadian Pacific and Kansas City Southern Rail Line runs parallel Hwy 59.

### 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

There have been multiple studies conducted in the City of Mahnomen that reviewed safety on a local and regional level. The studies suggest a variety of treatments and improvements along Hwy 59. This project consolidates the suggestions and synthesizes the recommendations into three alternatives. The outcome of this study is an actionable plan for short-, mid-, and long-term solutions, including recommendations for implementation and funding. Alongside this study, the White Earth Long Range Transportation Plan and the City of Mahnomen Grade Separation Study occurred simultaneously.

### 1.2 KEY FINDINGS

Using previous studies, existing conditions and in-person review, the project team identified gaps within the active transportation network especially for crossing Hwy 59. The City of Mahnomen has an established network of sidewalks and trails west of Hwy 59. A funded trail is along College Road, a White Earth Road and along Adams Avenue, a City Street, east of Hwy 59. Hwy 59 and the railroad tracks were identified as major safety and access challenges in connecting the community. All alternatives therefore focus on the intersections of Adams, Washington, and Jefferson Avenues, with goals of traffic calming, pedestrian safety, and guiding crossings to the intersections as well as the designated rail crossings at Washington and Jefferson Avenues.

Multiple alternatives were developed, ultimately landing on short-, mid-, and long-term alternatives. All alternatives passed a two-level screening and evaluation process and were adjusted based on feedback from public engagement, the project management team and study review committee. Alternative 1, the short-term alternative, focuses on pedestrian refuge islands. Short trail connections were included to the existing sidewalk at Washington Avenue, planned trail at Adams Avenue, and to the Boys and Girls Club at Jefferson Avenue. Alternative 2, the mid-term alternative, focuses on Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons and includes a continuous trail on the east side of Hwy 59 from Jefferson to Washington Avenue and on the west side of Hwy 59 from Washington Avenue to TH 200. Alternative 3, the long-term alternative, focuses on roundabouts at Washington, Adams and Jefferson Avenues. Alternative 3 also includes a roundabout at TH 200 and Hwy 59, to calm traffic prior to intersections with pedestrian crossings. Trail recommendations were the same as Alternative 2. See Figure 1, 2 and 3 for a high level graphic of each alternative.



Figure 1. Alternative 1: Pedestrian Refuge Islands



Figure 2. Alternative 2: Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon



Figure 3. Alternative 3: Roundabouts

More details on all alternatives can be found in Appendix 4: Alternative Development and Assessment, Appendix A Alternatives.

### 1.3 RECOMMENDED APPROACH

All three alternatives were recommended for implementation using a phased and progressive approach. It is recommended to evaluate the safety repercussions or realized benefits after the implementation of each alternative and use the results to inform future phased improvements. The approach allows for implementation based on the availability of funding and new legislative funding opportunities. For implementation, short-term refers to 0-2 years in the future, mid-term to 3-15 years in the future, and long-term as 15 or more years in the future.

Coordination among local partners, stakeholders, and MnDOT will be key to ensure timely implementation of the various alternatives. Successful implementation of these alternatives requires active partnerships and project championing by state, regional, local and tribal governments, including MnDOT, Mahnomen County, City of Mahnomen and White Earth Band of Ojibwe.

### 1.4 ALTERNATIVE IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

Alternatives increase in cost relative to their scope and implementation timeline, with Alternative 3 being the most expensive. Alternative 1 uses a 2% inflation adjustment to 2026 dollars, Alternative 2 inflates to 2040 dollars, and Alternative 3 to 2050 dollars. Note that none of the alternatives include the cost for a roundabout at TH 200 and Hwy 59. The TH 200 and Hwy 59 roundabout was determined to be optional or longer term for pedestrian safety. More detail is within Technical Memorandum #4.

**Table 1. Planning Level Cost Estimates**

Location	Subtotal Cost	20% Contingency	Total
Alternative 1: Pedestrian Refuge Islands	\$518,000	\$104,000	\$622,000 (2026 dollars)
Alternative 2: Pedestrian Refuge Islands and Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons	\$2,678,000	\$536,000	\$3,214,000 (2040 dollars)
Alternative 3: Roundabouts	\$9,436,000	\$1,888,000	\$11,324,000 (2050 dollars)
Note: Costs are rounded up to the nearest \$1,000			

For Alternative 1, MnDOT District 4 has received Highway Safety Improvement Project (HSIP) funding for implementation and construction and while the District is continuing to scope the project, the current project will include the pedestrian refuge island at Adams Avenue. For Alternatives 2 and 3, suggested funding opportunities and eligible lead applicants were identified for each of the funding grants reviewed. Suggested key champions to advance each alternative were identified in the Funding and Implementation Technical Memorandum and listed below, as well as other eligible applicants. MnDOT is a willing and active partner for each alternative and will keep an open line of communication between the partner agencies. The study identified the following funding opportunities including but not limited to:

- Safe Route to School (SRTS), City of Mahnomen

- Active Transportation (AT) Infrastructure Solicitation Program, City of Mahnomen
- Greater MN Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), White Earth Tribe
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), MnDOT District 4
- Tribal Transportation Program Safety Fund (TTPSF), White Earth Tribe
- Nationally Significant Federal Lands and Tribal Projects (NSFLTP), White Earth Tribe and
- Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A), White Earth Tribe

As the project moves toward implementation of the alternatives, key next steps to ensure a timely delivery of alternatives include: identifying an agency champion for the grant applications, updating the cost estimates and scope for priority phases as more information becomes available, monitoring grants program timelines for upcoming cycles, early coordination for grants applications, and continuing to communicate updates to stakeholders (businesses, community organizations, etc.) and the public.

## **APPENDIX**