



City Manager's Office

**TO:** Honorable Mayor Albrecht and City Council  
**FROM:** Nate Mathews, City Manager *Nate*  
**DATE:** May 23, 2019  
**RE:** MnDOT Highway 197 Corridor Study

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MnDOT is currently conducting a study regarding reconstructing the Paul Bunyan Drive (HWY 197) roadway from Bemidji Avenue to Gillet Drive. At this time a construction project is not currently scheduled but it is anticipated to take place in the next five to eight years. Over the past many months MnDOT has been conducting a "corridor study" which has been facilitated by KLJ engineering.

MnDOT has identified this stretch of 197 as an important reconstruction project to consider because it will improve traffic safety, provide access for multi-modal use, improve traffic flow, and upgrade ageing infrastructure on this heavily traveled roadway. Right now Paul Bunyan Drive serves an average of 10,000 to 16,000 vehicles/day and has a higher than expected crash rate. Projects of this size and scope require extensive study and planning, and the exact timing of these large projects depend upon State funding availability and other factors.

Monday's work session with the Council is to discuss the corridor study and the project with the City Council.

PLEASE NOTE: Prior to the 5:30 Worksession, MnDOT will be holding a public open house in the Council chambers from 4:00- 5:30 to answer questions and talk in depth with any visitors that would wish to attend. After this open house we will transition into the Council Worksession.

Attached is the executive summary from the January 2019 HWY 197 Corridor Study report. I also would refer you to the Hwy 197 Corridor Study website for further information, as MnDOT has a great website here with lots of helpful material on it.

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/d2/projects/2019/hwy197-bemidji-study/public.html#docs>

**From:** [Joe Devore](#)  
**To:** [Bobbi Karpinski](#)  
**Cc:** [Craig Gray; "Laesch, Darren \(DOT\)"](#)  
**Subject:** FW: May 28th Work Session  
**Date:** Thursday, May 23, 2019 12:00:21 PM  
**Attachments:** [Hwy 197 Executive Summary 05232019.pdf](#)

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Hi Bobbi,

Could you please make sure the attached and below email are forwarded onto the City Council for our work session on next Tuesday?

Thanks,

**Joe DeVore, PE, PTOE**  
651-726-5013 (Direct)  
370 Wabasha Street North, Suite 300  
St Paul, MN 55102



**From:** Joe Devore  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 23, 2019 11:56 AM  
**To:** Michelle Miller <michelle.miller@ci.bemidji.mn.us>  
**Cc:** 'Laesch, Darren (DOT)' <darren.laesch@state.mn.us>; Craig Gray <craig.gray@ci.bemidji.mn.us>  
**Subject:** May 28th Work Session

Michelle,

Attached is an executive summary of the Hwy 197 Corridor Study that the city council can review before next Tuesday's meeting. We have also provided the Existing Conditions Report, Alternative Analysis Report, and the 2 alternative concept videos on KLJ's FTP Site below. If the council wishes to dive into the details of the study before the work session the following link can be used to download those files.

<https://files.kljeng.com/?ShareToken=EE3AF5AD6C7C1BC34F32537D1AFFB6F0A0E7629E>

We look forward to presenting and working with the city council to identify a recommended alternative by the end of the summer. Feel free to contact Darren or myself if the council have any additional questions before or after the council meeting.

See you next week!

**Joe DeVore, PE, PTOE**  
Registered: MN, ND, SD, FL, CO, MT  
651-726-5013 (Direct)  
370 Wabasha Street North, Suite 300  
St Paul, MN 55102