

## News Release

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### MnDOT to close Hwy 14 medians at two intersections between Byron and Rochester

**ROCHESTER, Minn.** – Motorists west of Rochester will no longer be able to cross Hwy 14 at Olmsted Co. Rd. 44 and 7<sup>th</sup> St. NW by mid-August, according to the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

MnDOT maintenance crews will begin removing the medians in late July. This change comes as part of a larger effort to improve safety on Hwy 14 west of Rochester.

MnDOT, Olmsted County, and local townships are working together to make Hwy 14 safer. MnDOT's goal was to find options that could be installed quickly and reduce the most severe and fatal crashes on the highway between Byron and Rochester, while [long-term projects](#) are developed and funding eventually secured.

With input from the community, the project management team and MnDOT leadership have evaluated each intersection between Byron and Rochester and have determined that, MnDOT will:

- Permanently close the median at 7<sup>th</sup> St. NW
  - Not allowing vehicles to cross the roadway helps prevent T-bone crashes. These types of crashes often result in serious injuries or death.
  - Vehicles on 7<sup>th</sup> St. NW will not be able to cross Hwy 14, but will be able to make a right turns onto Hwy 14.
  - Vehicles traveling eastbound Hwy 14 will be able to make right-turn exits off the highway onto 7<sup>th</sup> St. NW.
  - Vehicles traveling westbound Hwy 14 will not be able to make left-turn exits onto 7<sup>th</sup> St. NW.
- Permanently close the median at Hwy 14 and Olmsted Co. Rd. 44
  - Not allowing vehicles to cross the roadway helps prevent T-bone crashes. These types of crashes often result in serious injuries or death.
  - Vehicles on Co. Rd. 44 will not be able to cross Hwy 14, but vehicles will be able to make right turns onto Hwy 14.
  - Vehicles traveling on Hwy 14 will be able to take right-turn exits onto Co. Rd. 44. but left-turns will not be allowed.
- Construct a [reduced conflict intersection](#) (RCI) at Hwy 14 and Olmsted Co. Rd. 3 in 2023
  - Interim safety changes will be installed this summer, such as the installation of [flashing warning signs](#) to alert drivers at the intersection, to help draw a driver's attention to the cross traffic at the intersection.

- Once the RCI is constructed, vehicles will exit and enter Hwy 14 and will only be able to cross the roadway at designated U-turn sections.
- This change stops vehicles from going directly across Hwy 14 and significantly reduces T-bone crashes. It also allows for vehicles to cross the roadway.
- Delay the closure of Country Club Rd. until the RCI at Olmsted Co. Rd. 3 is constructed in 2023.
- Continue with the installation of the [high-tension cable median barriers](#) along the Hwy 14 ditch in 2023
  - This change will not affect safety at intersections, but can significantly reduce head-on cross-over crashes, which often result in serious injuries or death.

Construction to remove the medians at Olmsted Co. Rd. 44 and 7<sup>th</sup> St. NW will begin in late July. Notices will be sent via the [project email/text updates](#) before the work begins, as well as a news release to ensure as many people are aware of the plan and remind motorists to be safe traveling through the work zone.

### **Stay connected, informed**

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