



**JOINT NEWS RELEASE  
FROM STEELE COUNTY & CITY OF OWATONNA**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COUNTY HIGHWAY 48 (BIXBY ROAD) CONSTRUCTION UPDATE**

Owatonna, Minn. – Due to project delays, the intersection and railroad crossing improvements under construction at County Highway 48 (Bixby Road) and 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE will not be open in time, as planned, for the opening of the new Owatonna High School.

Officials from Steele County, the City of Owatonna and the Owatonna School District had hoped to have the intersection reopened before school started. However, unforeseen requirements from the Canadian Pacific Kansas City Railroad and their lengthy permit review process caused significant delays with the project.

Motorists should expect delays in the area around the high school. School bus routes are being adjusted to get around the construction area. Officials recommend the following routes for motorists:

- Traffic from the east and north of the school should travel south on Bixby Road, west on Havana Road, south on Hayes Avenue and then east on 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE.
- Traffic from the south and east of the school should travel west on US Highway 14, north on Austin Road and then east on 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE.
- Traffic from south and west of the school should take Cedar Avenue north and then east on 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE.
- Traffic from north and west of the school should either take Cedar Avenue south or Austin Road and then east on 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE.

City and County officials are implementing temporary changes to provide a safe alternative route to the high school. This includes installing additional temporary stop signs at 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE and Hayes Avenue SE to make the T-intersection an all-way stop. "NO PARKING" signs will be placed on Hayes Avenue SE from Havana Road to 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE to improve visibility for traffic. City and County staff will monitor traffic patterns near the high school and adjust traffic controls if needed.

The intersection of Bixby Road and 18<sup>th</sup> Street is expected to be open to traffic in November, weather permitting. The project involves constructing a roundabout at the Bixby Road and 18<sup>th</sup> Street SE intersection to improve safety. This is especially important for young drivers frequenting the high school and to address anticipated traffic volume increases in the area.

Motorists are asked to be patient and alert on the alternative routes, especially during peak traffic times and to drive slowly and with caution through work zones for their own safety and for the safety of the construction crews. Motorists should watch for pedestrians or bicyclists who may be traveling and crossing along routes to the school.

For updates on this or other Steele County Highway construction projects, visit [https://www.steelecountymn.gov/highway/construction\\_projects.php](https://www.steelecountymn.gov/highway/construction_projects.php). For updates on City streets and utility construction project, please visit [owatonna.gov](http://owatonna.gov).

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