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**Partnership Meets: 14 in '14 is Rally Cry**  
*Beussman, Gray elected as President and VP*

Members representing cities, counties, businesses, chambers, and non-profits along the Highway 14 corridor gathered in Owatonna for the U.S. Highway 14 Partnership's annual meeting, where "14 in 14" was the message of the day.

The U.S. Highway 14 Partnership had a very successful year in 2013, advocating for the creation and funding of the Corridors of Commerce program. From this new transportation funding program, which is aimed at building capacity and removing bottlenecks from the state's highway corridors, three Highway 14 projects were selected: the four lane expansion from North Mankato to Nicollet, the Nicollet bypass, and "Phase One" of the Owatonna to Dodge Center expansion (U.S. 218 to 56<sup>th</sup> Ave) .

The Partnership's top priority of the 2014 Legislative Session will be advocating for additional funding for the Corridors of Commerce program. The \$300 million in Trunk Highway bonds authorized in 2013 has been expended, so without another appropriation, additional projects will not be funded.

"It's been demonstrated that Highway 14 is a strong candidate for Corridors of Commerce program funds. If we want to continue our progress in completing a four lane Highway 14 from Rochester to New Ulm, we need the Legislature to invest in the Corridors of Commerce program," said outgoing Partnership President/Owatonna City Councilor Les Abraham.

The Partnership also elected its new officers at the meeting. New Ulm Mayor Bob Beussman was chosen as President.

"I'm very excited to serve as President of the U.S. Highway 14 Partnership, and will give all I've got to get four lanes from Rochester to New Ulm," said Mayor Beussman. "Highway 14 is critical not only to the economic development of my city, but the entire region."

Dodge County Commissioner Steve Gray was elected Vice President.

“The Partnership has successfully demonstrated to lawmakers, the Governor, and MnDOT that Highway 14 is a true corridor of commerce and we need the infrastructure in place to support Southern Minnesota’s growing and vibrant economy,” said Commissioner Gray. “We need to build off our momentum and progress in 2013 and make 2014 the year of Highway 14! I’m very excited to be part of that effort.”

The U.S. Highway 14 Partnership has joined the Move MN campaign, a coalition of over 140 diverse organizations working to pass a statewide transportation investment in 2014.

“By standing united in our efforts to improve Highway 14, local government officials, business leaders, state and federal elected officials, we were able to make significant strides forward,” explained Beussman. “Similarly, by partnering with other groups that care about Minnesota’s safety, mobility, job creation, and economic opportunities, we can make transportation a priority in 2014.”

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