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# Keep the focus on Highway 14

January 8, 2013  
The Journal

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The Minnesota Legislature has just started its work this year. We know the lawmakers have a lot on their agenda, with a budget to balance, a tax system that is excessively complicated and in need of reform, and no end of special projects looking for funding.

With all that, it is important that lawmakers not lose sight of the Highway 14 expansion project. Widening Highway 14 to four lanes between Mankato and New Ulm is not something that is going to get done today, but if it is ever going to be done, the state has to be reminded of the problems with the highway, reminded today and tomorrow and every day until the state commits to doing the project.

An important date is coming up this spring. The Minnesota Department of Transportation is updating its 20-year State Highway Improvement Plan. A draft of the revised plan is being released in March, with the final plan due out in May.

MnDOT officials made it clear last year that they are moving away from funding expansion projects like Highway 14 in favor of smaller, less expensive projects to address safety concerns on rural roads. If left out of the plan, Highway 14 may be out of funding for the next 20 years.

That is not tolerable. It is up to residents who have to travel this dangerous road to let legislators know they have to put the pressure on MnDOT to keep Highway 14 on the front burner.

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