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Highway 73 to Remain 4-Lane in Falls City
(KLZA)-- U.S. Highway 73 will remain four-lanes in Falls City.

Nebraska Department of Roads District 1 Engineer Thomas Goodbarn appeared before the Falls City Council Monday night to give them the final decision on the project.

Goodbarn said that the comments came in about 50-1 against reconfiguring Highway 73 from a four-lane to a three-lane road from 7th Street to 19th Street in Falls City. He said during the public meeting no one really came up in support of making the change. He said Monday night he wanted to make sure the Council was o.k. with the change in the decision.

Goodbarn explained what had been projected to be a \$2.9-million project will be scaled back dramatically with the decision. From 7th Street to 19th Street will likely be patched, smoothed and then re-striped. He said although an overlay had been discussed, that is not likely to happen now.

From 19th Street north the highway project will be done as planned with an asphalt overlay and the shoulders being repaired and guardrail either fixed or removed.

All of the corners will meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. By staying with the four-lane design the City will be responsible for upkeep of the outside two lanes of the highway with the State responsible for the inside lanes. Under the three-lane design the State would have been responsible for all of the upkeep.

Somewhat surprisingly only one person in the audience was there to hear the decision on the project. A large crowd attended a public information open house meeting July 14th in Falls City, nearly all of them in opposition to the three-lane design.

Goodbarn expressed his thanks to those who attended the meeting and to the ones who sent in their comments on the project. He said the Highway District does not want to force anything on the community that it is not comfortable with.

During the July meeting Goodbarn told MSC News he expected the project to come in at \$1.9-million if the overlay of the four-lane configuration was done. Since an overlay is unlikely from 7th Street to 19th Street it's likely costs will be lower. Goodbarn said the project is likely to begin in the Spring of 2017.

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