

Public Involvement Meeting

I-39/Portage County B interchange

Plover
Project ID: 1166-12-00



May 24, 2016
5 to 6:30 p.m.
Plover Village Hall

Presentation scheduled to begin at 5 p.m.

Purpose of the meeting

Welcome to the third public involvement meeting regarding the I-39/Portage County B interchange, located in Plover.

The I-39/Portage County B interchange requires reconstruction to address various safety and operational concerns.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to update you on the proposed improvements to the interchange, and to receive your input on the preferred alternative.

A presentation is scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. and the remainder of the meeting will follow an open house format.

Project purpose and need

The objective is to reconstruct the interchange so it will safely handle current and future traffic volumes. Specific needs identified include:

- Addressing geometric and structural deficiencies on the bridges and roadways within the interchange
 - The height between the bridge structures on I-39 and the travel lanes below on County B does not meet current design and safety standards. The current clearance is 14 feet 11 inches; the desirable clearance is 16 feet 9 inches. The I-39 southbound bridge has been struck by vehicles many times.
 - The concrete bridge support columns for the I-39 bridges are too close to the traffic lanes, which does not meet current design and safety standards. The current clearance is less than the minimum standard of 10 feet.
- Improving safety on northbound I-39 at the County B on-ramp merge point
 - The steep grade and short acceleration lane on the northbound entrance ramp from County B to I-39 do not provide adequate distance for motorists to accelerate to reach I-39 travel speeds before merging.
- Improving traffic operations at the I-39/County B ramp terminal intersections
 - Increasing traffic demand results in poor levels of service at the County B ramp terminal intersections. "Level Of Service" (LOS) is a term to describe the quality of traffic flow on a roadway system. Congestion and motorist-delay are two primary conditions that indicate whether a roadway has a good or poor level of service.
 - The I-39 southbound exit-ramp to County B currently experiences significant delays and backups from the signalized intersection at County B. Traffic on the ramp backs up during peak travel hours. These backups on the ramp near I-39 create a significant safety concern.
 - The southbound exit-ramp from I-39 to County B has a very short freeway deceleration length and substandard ramp sight distance. This condition requires drivers to decelerate quickly when using the ramp.
- Other conditions contributing to the need for the project include:
 - A lack of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along County B.
 - The Tomorrow River State Trail under I-39, north of the County B interchange, is too close to the railroad.

Preferred interchange alternative

At a public meeting in October 2015, we presented four alternatives for the County B interchange design. Since that meeting, we completed additional analysis, considered public comments from the meeting, and identified the Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) as the preferred alternative.

This alternative proposes reconstruction of the existing diamond interchange with a DDI configuration. Traffic “crosses over” from one side of County B to the other, while traveling through the interchange. This allows left-turning motorists to move in a “free-flow” manner, without conflicting with through traffic. The I-39 bridges over County B and the railroad would also be reconstructed.

The DDI alternative will:

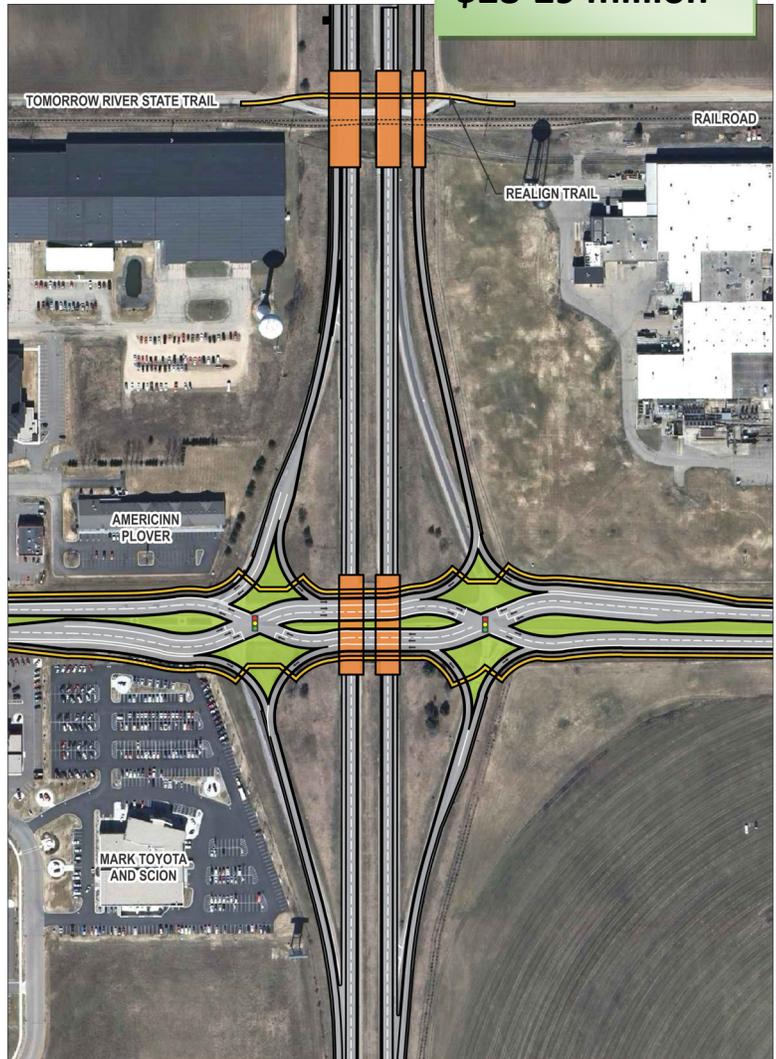
1. Meet vertical clearance requirements over County B and the railroad with new and reconstructed bridges.
2. Address safety considerations by providing a longer northbound entrance-ramp that allows vehicles to reach safe merging speed prior to merging onto I-39.
3. Provide acceptable LOS and minimize traffic queues.
4. Include pedestrian and bicycle accommodations along County B.
5. Address the Tomorrow River State Trail proximity to the railroad by reconstructing the I-39 bridges over the railroad and realigning the trail.

Primary reasons for selecting the DDI alternative:

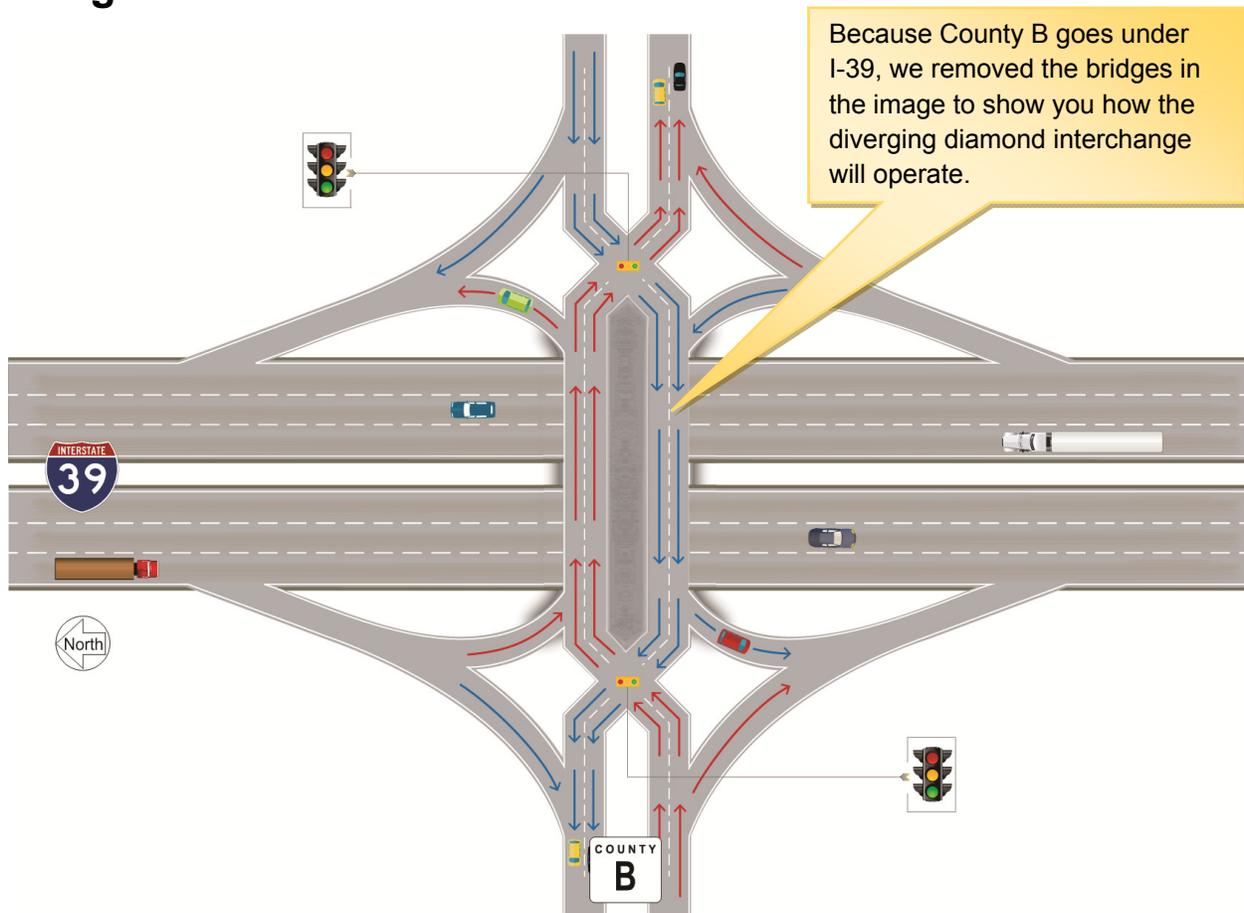
1. Provides least vehicle delay for the high-volume movements at the interchange (southbound right turn and eastbound left turn).
2. Received highest number of favorable comments during the fall 2015 public outreach.
3. Requires least additional right of way.
4. Provides extra vehicle capacity for occasional high-traffic conditions.

To view a video about how to drive a DDI, visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pMopeJp1Uk

Estimated cost
including real estate:
\$28-29 million



Driving the DDI



Driving a DDI

- To get onto the freeway, the street approaching the highway diverts to the left, curving slightly.
- Following the signage, signals and pavement markings, motorists cross over to the left side of the roadway after the first set of traffic lights.
- All left turns onto the freeway are free flow.
- Vehicles going straight simply proceed through a second set of traffic lights and cross back to the right side of the road.

Bicyclists on the road

- Use bicycle shoulder space to the right of the travel lanes through the intersection similar to any other roadway.
- If you're not comfortable riding with traffic, utilize the pedestrian walkways and crosswalks.

Crossing as a Pedestrian

- Always stay on the designated walkways and cross only at the crosswalks.
- Share the walkways and crosswalks with bicyclists.

For more information about Diverging Diamond Interchanges:

<http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/safety/safety-eng/inter-design/ddi.aspx>

Other alternatives

The following alternatives were presented at the October 2015 public involvement meeting but were not identified as the preferred alternative:

- Diamond interchange with traffic signals
- Interchange with northbound entrance loop
- Diamond interchange with roundabouts

Pedestrian/bicycle accommodations

The absence of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along County B presents a significant safety concern. Improving the bicycle and pedestrian crossing at this interchange is identified as a priority in the Portage County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The preferred alternative includes a shared-use path for pedestrians and bicycles on the south side of County B and a sidewalk on the north side of County B.

Potential construction impacts

While it is still early in the design process, motorists will likely encounter the following during construction:

- A minimum of one lane of traffic for northbound I-39.
- Two lanes of traffic for southbound I-39 traffic during peak travel times; some single lane closures during weekdays.
- Ramps may be closed and detoured for limited periods of up to one month.
- County B may be limited to one lane in each direction with periodic nighttime closures to allow bridge reconstruction.

We will work closely with local officials, emergency services, law enforcement, and businesses to minimize traffic impacts. We will also work to minimize impacts to the Tomorrow River State Trail during construction.

Potential property impacts

Property will be needed north and south of County B along the roadway between Village Park Drive and County R. The preferred alternative requires 8.4 acres of private property to be converted to highway right of way for construction. This new acreage includes area from all four interchange ramp quadrants.

The project proposes to construct a storm sewer system along a section of County B, west of I-39, that will outlet to Lake Pacawa in Worzella Pines Park. Impacts to the southwest quadrant of the park would be minimal and would not permanently alter or affect the use of any of the existing park features. Temporary construction activities to install the storm sewer pipe and rehabilitate the disturbed area would occur.

Potential access modifications

No access removals or modifications are currently anticipated with the DDI alternative.

Next steps in the project development process

- Complete the environmental document Summer 2016
- Additional public outreach 2017
- Real estate acquisition 2018 to 2019
- Complete design Early 2020
- Construction currently scheduled to begin 2021

After work begins, reconstruction is expected to take approximately two years.

For more information about the I-39/County B interchange project, please visit the project website:

<http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/nc/i39countyb/default.aspx>

Public input/comments

We encourage you to talk to the project representatives and ask questions. Attached to this handout is a sheet for your written comments and input regarding the proposed improvements. Please mail any written comments about the project before **June 10, 2016**, or leave them in the comment box tonight. You can also email your comments to the contacts listed below.

Your input helps us develop a project that will serve the needs of the traveling public as well as the needs of the local community. Your input is welcome and appreciated throughout the design process.

For more information, please contact:

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