

I-94 East-West Freeway Corridor Study

Wisconsin Department of Transportation

November 2014

PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 3 AND 4, 2014

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) will hold public hearings on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) for the section of I-94 between 70th Street and 16th Street in Milwaukee.

The hearings will be held:

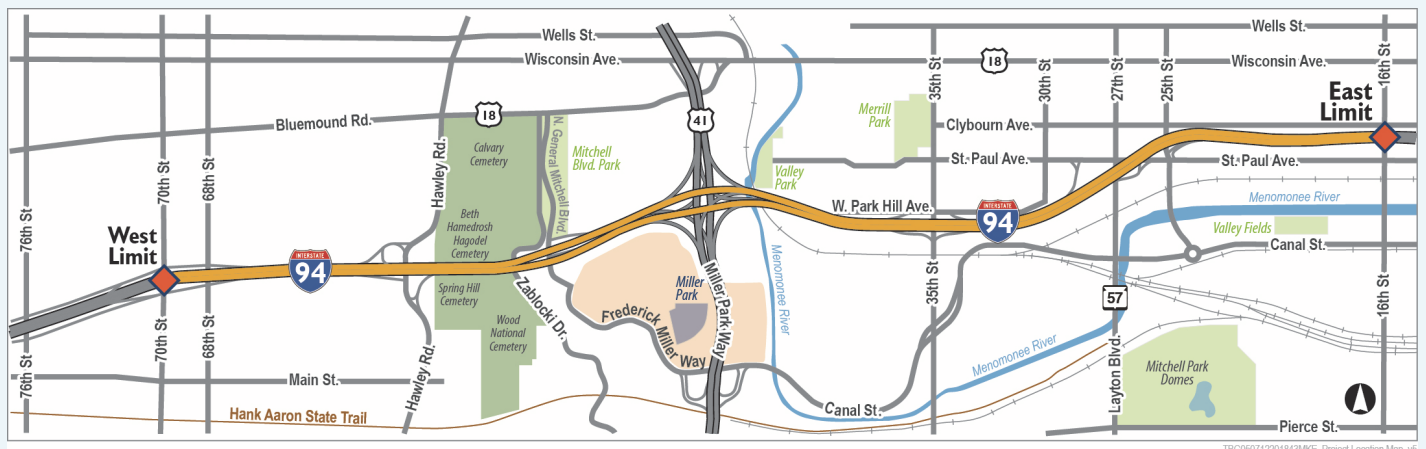
- Wednesday, December 3, 2014 from 3 - 7 p.m. at the Wisconsin State Fair Park, Tommy Thompson Youth Center, Gate #5, 640 S. 84th Street, Milwaukee, WI
- Thursday, December 4, 2014 from 5 - 8 p.m. at Marquette University High School, 3401 W. Wisconsin Avenue (enter from Michigan Street parking lot), Milwaukee, WI

Formal testimony to a panel begins after a presentation at 3:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3 and 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 4. Information on how to present oral and written testimony will be provided at the public hearings.

The public hearings offer citizens the opportunity to provide testimony on the Draft EIS of proposed transportation improvements for the nearly 3.5-mile long corridor.

The purpose of the hearings are to record comprehensive public opinion. The I-94 East-West corridor study public hearings will have both an open house and a public testimony portion. This type of hearing enables citizens to view exhibits, testify privately to a court reporter at any time during the hearing timeframe, or testify publicly during the formal traditional-style portion of the hearing. A presentation will be given by the project team prior to the public testimony opportunity. Written testimony can be submitted at any time during the hearings or may be mailed after the hearings. To be included as part of the record of the hearings, comments must be submitted or postmarked no later than January 13, 2015.

STUDY AREA



See the project website for more information: www.seffreeways.org

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this project is to develop a long-range improvement plan for I-94 that addresses the following items:

- Deteriorated condition of the freeway pavement
- Obsolete design of the roadway and bridges
- Current and future freeway congestion
- Unacceptably high crash rate

SAFETY

The fundamental mission of WisDOT is to provide a safe and efficient transportation system. Moving toward **“Zero in Wisconsin”** deaths, injuries and crashes on state roadways is the goal of all plans and projects.

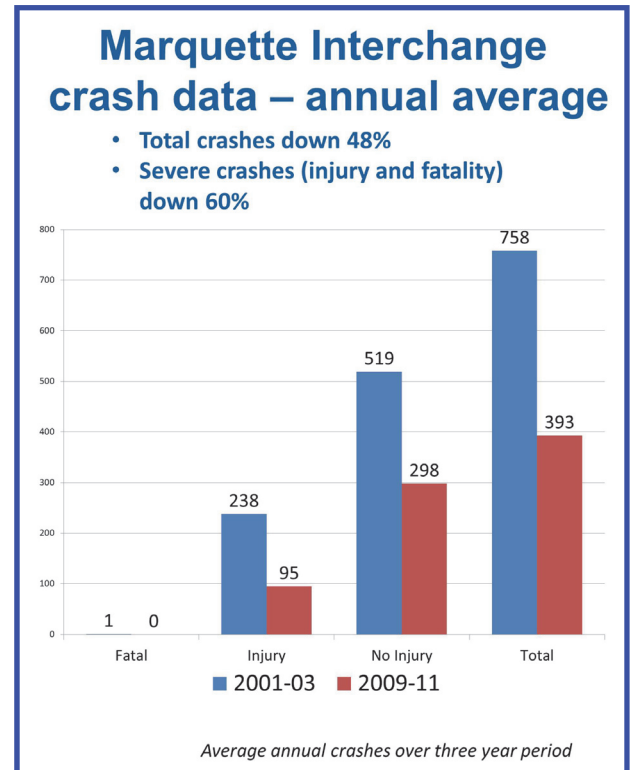
Redesigning freeways to modern design standards creates a safer interstate system. **Modernization** accounts for the largest part of the project’s overall cost.

There is a direct link between modernizing the freeway and improving safety. The chart on the right illustrates the safety improvements since the modernization/reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange. There has been a significant decrease in all types of crashes.

The outdated left-hand entrance and exit ramps on I-94 contribute to the unacceptably high number of crashes and cause gridlock in the corridor contributing to distracted and aggressive driving.

CRUMBLING INFRASTRUCTURE

A consistent message heard from local stakeholders is to address crumbling infrastructure. Like the shingles on a roof, which can only be covered up two or three times before they need to be torn off and the underlying structure is repaired, I-94 cannot be repaired again without replacing the pavement underneath. Fiscally responsible replacement of the underlying pavement must address the long-term purpose and need elements of the corridor. Safety and congestion need to be addressed.



I-94 EAST-WEST STUDY ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

Impact	West Segment	West Segment	West Segment	East Segment	East Segment	Corridor total
	At-grade (No Hawley Interchange)	At-grade (half Hawley Interchange)	Double Deck	On-alignment	Off-Alignment	
Total Cost (2014 dollars in millions)	\$115	\$125	\$295 to \$345	\$710	\$810	\$825 to \$1,155
New Right-of-Way (acres) *	7	8	13	42 to 47	44 to 49	49 to 62
Residential Displacements (housing units)	4	5	10	3	3	7 to 13
Commercial Displacements	1	2	2	8	6	7 to 10
Historic Properties Affected	0	0	3	0	0	0 to 3

***80% of the proposed new right of way is currently off the property tax roll.**

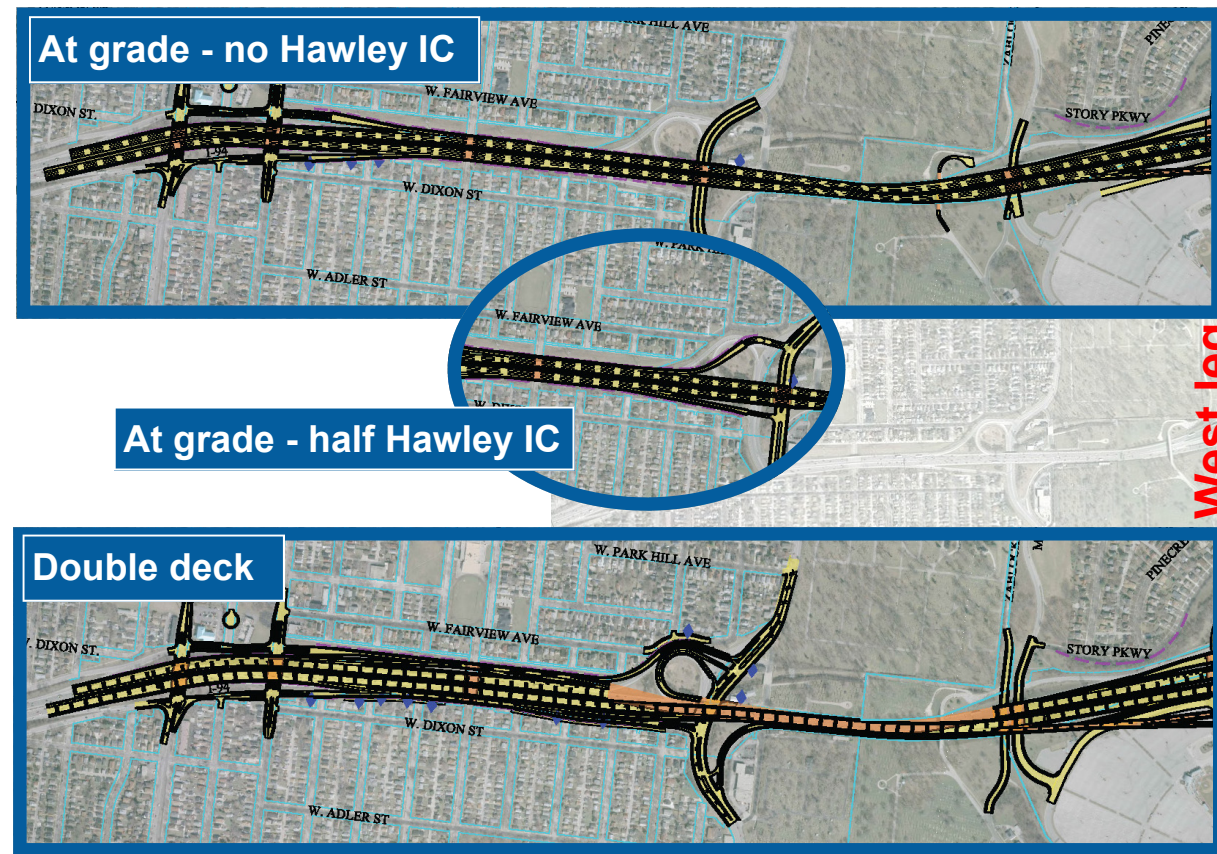
Notes: The Double Deck all up option is estimated to cost \$295 million and the partially down option \$320 to \$345 million. There are two (On-alignment) to three (Off-alignment) additional vacant commercial buildings/parcels that would be acquired. The Stadium Interchange represents approximately \$400 million of the east segment costs.

WEST LEG

The 68th Street and 70th Street exit and entrance ramps will remain generally the same. WisDOT is considering *three alternatives in the cemetery area* all of which avoid relocating any graves:

At-grade alternative - adding a lane in each direction by converting the outside shoulder to a 4th lane

- Lane width on the west segment will taper down to a pinch point of approximately 400 feet through the cemetery section, each lane will be 11 feet wide, rather than the standard 12-foot width. The shoulders will narrow and not have usable refuge space for slightly less than 1/4 mile between Hawley Road and the Zablocki Bridge.
- The current Hawley Road Interchange will have to be removed under one scenario; under an alternate scenario a half interchange at Hawley Road may or may not be feasible under FHWA standards. The Mitchell Boulevard Interchange will be relocated to the east with all remaining alternatives. There will be more congestion and safety concerns on the interstate and local roads under this alternative.
- This alternative is less expensive than the double deck alternative, potentially less disruptive to the Soldier's Home National Historic Landmark, and less complicated to construct.



West leg

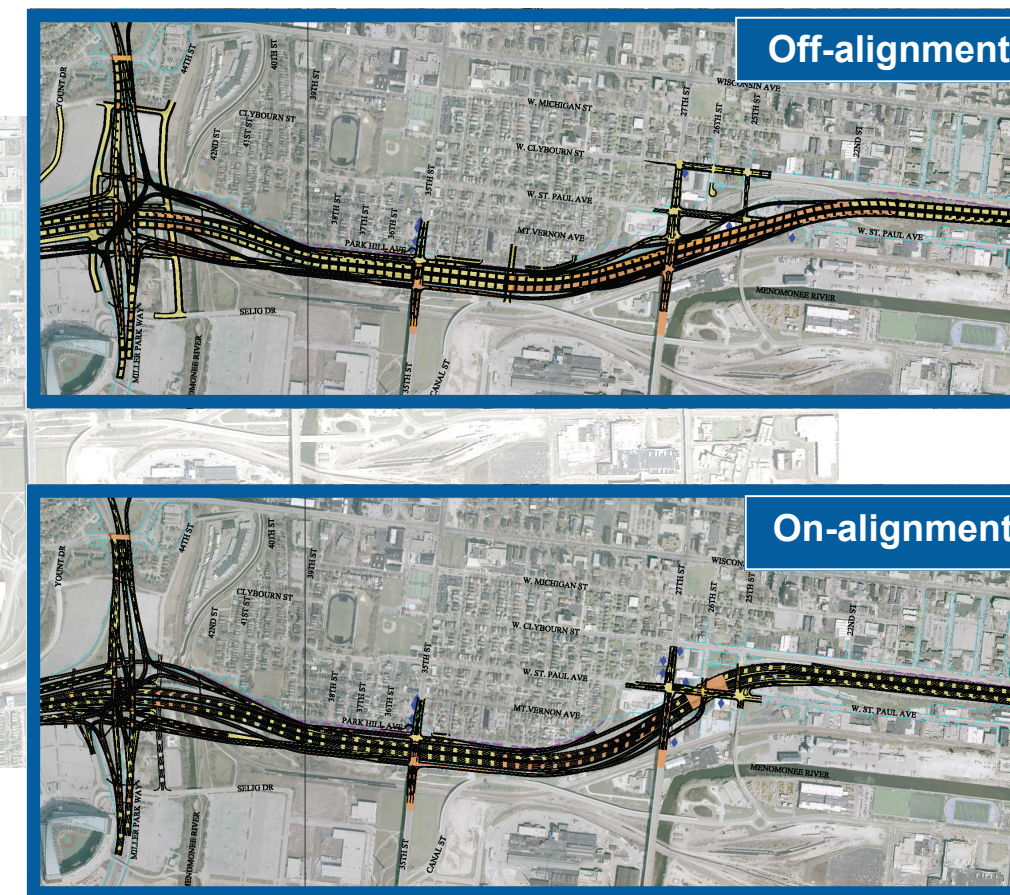
East leg

EAST LEG

The stadium interchange design is consistent across all remaining alternatives.

Stadium Interchange

- Under this alternative, drivers travelling north-south through the Stadium Interchange, as well as those turning left onto I-94 from either the north or south, would pass through a new traffic signal.
- Traffic exiting I-94 would flow freely (no traffic signal) to Miller Park Way and US 41.
- Northbound US 41 traffic will not be able to exit at Wisconsin Avenue.
- WisDOT plans to replace the Mitchell Boulevard Interchange with a new interchange embedded within the Stadium Interchange connecting to a local street near Miller Park Way. This interchange will provide similar access to what is provided by the existing Mitchell Boulevard Interchange, but about one-half mile to the east.
- It will provide access to adjacent neighborhoods, businesses, the VA complex, and Miller Park parking lots.



Double deck alternative - building a double deck freeway (roughly between 62nd Street and Mitchell Boulevard)

- The eastbound lanes will be located over the westbound lanes for the cemetery area, about a half a mile.
- This design alternative will meet all project purpose and need objectives.
- This alternative is safer and would have less congestion than the at-grade alternative.
- The Hawley Road Interchange will remain; Mitchell Boulevard Interchange will be relocated to the east.
- This is a more costly alternative, and more complicated to build.
- The double deck would be more visible to the adjacent cemeteries, businesses, and neighborhoods than would the at-grade alternative.

East of the stadium - off-alignment alternative

- Maintain freeway access to 35th Street and 27th Street.
- Use braided ramps to allow I-94 traffic to safely use the closely-spaced Stadium Interchange, the 35th Street Interchange and the reconfigured 27th Street Interchange to consolidate the 25th/26th/28th/St. Paul ramps at 27th Street.
- I-94 will move a few hundred feet south of its current location from approximately 30th Street to 18th Street. This would improve safety and operations on I-94, and will displace two more businesses south of I-94 than would the on-alignment alternative.

East of the stadium - nearly on-alignment alternative

- Maintain freeway access to 35th Street and 27th Street.
- Use braided ramps (as outlined above.)
- Keep the reconstructed freeway as close to the existing freeway lanes as possible.
- Retains the current ramp pattern near 27th Street (25th/26th/28th/St. Paul.)

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE PUBLIC HEARINGS

The December 2014 public hearings will include both an open house for viewing plans and exhibits and an opportunity to present testimony in writing, spoken privately to a court reporter, or publicly to a panel.

Testimony

Your testimony, either written or spoken, will be reviewed by WisDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as part of the decision-making process. Your input is important to ensure that all voices are heard and that the I-94 plans meet the needs and expectations of the community. In the course of study, changes were made to alternatives based on feedback from the public. We continue to seek your input to improve the plans for the corridor.

Mailed comments must be postmarked no later than January 13, 2015 to be included as part of the record of this hearing. You can also email your comments to: Jason.Lynch@dot.wi.gov or fax them to: (262) 548-5662 by January 13, 2015.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Project schedules evolve along with the technical analysis. Below is the latest look at the plans for completing the environmental impact statement and beginning the preliminary engineering process.

A decision regarding a preferred alternative

WisDOT will select a preferred alternative for the I-94 corridor subject to FHWA oversight and concurrence. Elements that will guide WisDOT and FHWA as they identify a preferred alternative, not in order of importance, include:

- Responsiveness to project purpose and need factors (user safety, traffic operations, aging infrastructure)
- Feedback from review agencies, local units of government, landowners, and other stakeholders (received throughout the study period, including but not exclusively during the public hearing/ testimony/Draft EIS comment period)
- Impacts to the natural and built environments
- Cost
- Ability to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts

Early 2015 - Final EIS will be prepared and made available for review. A Record of Decision will be issued in mid-2015.

2015 and beyond (if a build alternative is chosen) - Engineering, real estate and utility issues will be addressed. Construction is not likely until 2019 and is dependent on many factors.

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

The Draft EIS for I-94 from 70th Street to 16th Street was approved by WisDOT and FHWA and is available for review. The Draft EIS can be viewed at the following WisDOT offices and local public libraries. The Draft EIS is also posted online at WisDOT's project website: www.sefreeways.org.

Southeast Region Office*
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
141 Northwest Barstow Street
Waukesha, WI 53187

Milwaukee Public Library
814 W. Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53223

Milwaukee Public Library-Washington Park
2121 N. Sherman Boulevard
Milwaukee, WI 53208

Bureau of Technical Services*
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
4802 Sheboygan Avenue, Room 451
Madison, WI 53707-7965

Wauwatosa Public Library
7635 W. North Avenue
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Milwaukee Public Library-Forest Home
1432 W. Forest Home Avenue
Milwaukee, WI 53204

West Allis Public Library
7421 W. National Avenue
West Allis, WI 53214

**Printed copies of the Draft EIS may be obtained at these locations. There may be a charge for this service.*





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Web site

www.sefreeways.org

PROJECT SCHEDULE

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Conduct environmental and engineering study								
Conduct design; address real estate and utility issues				★				
Reconstruct the corridor								★

★ Based on funding availability and legislative approvals