

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE

Inter-office Communication

DATE: 12/30/2025

TO: Marcelia Nicholson-Bovell, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Joe Lamers, Acting Director, Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: From the Acting Director, Department of Transportation, providing an Informational Report Regarding the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) I-794 Lake Interchange Study.

FILE TYPE: Informational Report

BACKGROUND

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) I-794 Lake Interchange Study began in 2022. The Lake Interchange Study is evaluating alternatives for the I-794 freeway corridor. The study is focused on aging infrastructure along a section of I-794 known as the Lake Interchange. The study corridor extends beyond the Lake Interchange, generally from the Marquette Interchange to the Hoan Bridge, due to the interconnectedness of the freeway and its ramps in this area. The study is exploring ideas to improve the freeway corridor while also considering how the project could improve surface street connectivity and safety so all modes of transportation can thrive in this urban environment. The study is not considering changes to the main span of the Hoan Bridge or the core design of the Marquette Interchange.

The purpose of the project is to address deteriorating infrastructure in a manner that improves safety and operations within the study corridor, while also striving to enhance community connectivity and compatibility with local plans and development. The study evaluated existing conditions, developed a purpose and need, developed and evaluated initial design concepts, and conducted a preliminary analysis for each alternative under evaluation in the Study. As depicted in the attached presentation slides, the alternative groups under consideration include:

- 1) No-Build
- 2) Replace-In-Kind
- 3) Freeway Removal
- 4) Freeway Improvement

Public outreach has been conducted through two series of public involvement meetings and one public update meeting to provide information on the project progress, gather information, evaluate and narrow down alternatives. WisDOT has been coordinating

with project stakeholders, including Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee throughout the study process.

WisDOT is in the process of beginning the Environmental Review process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Final design and construction are dependent on necessary approvals and funding availability. More information can be found on the study website <https://www.794lakeinterchange.wisconsindot.gov>.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

- 2A: Determine what, where, and how we deliver services to advance health equity.
- 2C: Apply a racial equity lens to all decisions.

FISCAL EFFECT

This report is informational only.

TERMS (If applicable)

N/A

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Joe Lamers, Acting Director, Department of Transportation, MCDOT Director's Office
John Rodgers, Deputy Director, Department of Transportation, MCDOT Director's Office
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PREPARED BY:

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APPROVED BY:



Joe Lamers, Acting Director, Department of Transportation

ATTACHMENTS:

PowerPoint

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors
Janelle M. Jensen, Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk