I-94 EAST-WEST Corridor Study Update
Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Project Corridor

- I-94 from 70th Street to 16th Street; WIS 175 from Wisconsin Avenue to just south of stadium

- Located entirely in the City of Milwaukee, with close proximity to Wauwatosa, West Allis and West Milwaukee
Project background

• Late 1990s – Major Investment Study

• 2012-16 – Freeway corridor study, recommended alternative, Record of Decision, approval rescinded in 2017 when project de-funded

• July 2020 – project restarted with a Re-evaluation which led to a decision to complete a Supplemental EIS
Project needs to address

• Deteriorated pavement and bridges
• Safety – average crash rate two to three times higher than statewide average
• A freeway that works hand-in-hand with a crowded local street network
• Improve freeway between Zoo and Marquette Interchanges
• Congestion
Significant challenges

• Anti-highway sentiment – “line in the sand” project
• Legacy of families adversely impacted by 1950s/60s era construction
• Historic properties - Wood National Cemetery commissioned by Abraham Lincoln
• Sacred sites, major traffic and tourism generators, front door to downtown Milwaukee
• Geography – east leg Valley/bluff
• River, railroads, major power corridor with multiple substations
• Statewide and national interest groups involved
• Transit system with inadequate funding options
Important facts:

- Not pursuing Double-Decker option at cemetery
- Not moving graves
- Investigating additional construction mitigation transit opportunities
- Investigating Disadvantaged Business and workforce development opportunities
Often misunderstood facts

- A significant portion of the corridor adjacent to non-residential land use
- East leg already has 4-lanes in westbound direction
- Very few property takes under any build alternative
Alternatives under consideration

- SIX-LANE AND EIGHT-LANE MODERNIZATION

- Sub-options:
  - Full Hawley Interchange (with 6-lane alternative)
  - Half Hawley Interchange, with Washington Street
  - Reduced property impacts at 35th Street
  - Reduced property impacts adjacent to 68th Street eastbound entrance ramp

- Common to all 6-lane and 8-lane:
  - Redesigned Stadium Interchange to eliminate left side movements
  - 68th/70th, 35th, 25th-28th Street interchanges similar to today
  - Studying modifications to improve bike and pedestrian connectivity on various local roads
Changes to Traffic During Pandemic

I-94 W of 35th St
EB+WB

Average Hourly Volume I-94 EB & WB West of 35th Street
Average Weekday Second Week in June 2019/2020/2021

- 6/10/19 - 6/13/19
- 6/7/21 - 6/10/21
- 6/8/20 - 6/11/20

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<th>June 2019 to June 2020</th>
<th>June 2019 to June 2021</th>
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<tr>
<td>AM Peak Hour</td>
<td>↓ 17%</td>
<td>↓ 2%</td>
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<td>PM Peak Hour</td>
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approx. LOS D/E threshold for existing geometry (3 lanes in each direction)
Changes to Traffic During Pandemic

Average Hourly Volume I-94 EB & WB West of 35th Street
Average Weekday Second Full Week in September 2019/2020/2021

Approx. LOS D/E threshold for existing geometry (3 lanes in each direction)

I-94 W of 35th St EB+WB

9/9/19 - 9/12/19
9/14/20 - 9/17/20
9/13/21 - 9/16/21

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<tr>
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<th>Sept 2019 to Sept 2020</th>
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<td>AM Peak Hour</td>
<td>↑ 6%</td>
<td>↑ 7%</td>
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<td>PM Peak Hour</td>
<td>↑ 8%</td>
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Reverse commute – I-94

• 2019 data between the Stadium Interchange and 35th Street

• AM peak hour volumes are:
  • Westbound 6,310 (50.5%)
  • Eastbound 6,170 (49.5%)

• PM peak hour volumes:
  • Westbound 6,070 (51.1%)
  • Eastbound 5,800 (48.9%)
Traffic forecasts

- Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) develops forecasts
- WisDOT and FHWA verify
- Current traffic data analyzed
- Traffic models are run to determine future scenarios:
  - Safety
  - Volumes
  - Level of service
  - Impacts to local roads
Crash Data Overview

- In the five years between 2015 and 2019:
  - ~2,300 crashes occurred within the study area on I-94 and ramps
  - 21% included an injury of some kind:
    - Four fatalities
    - 646 injuries in 491 crashes
  - 19% of all crashes occurred in wet conditions
  - 51% of all crashes occurred in the weekday AM & PM peak periods
    - 37% occurred in congested conditions
  - 63% were rear-end, strong indication of significant congestion
    - 84% of all rear-ends in weekday peak periods
High Crash Locations

- **I-94 Eastbound corridor**
  - Between General Mitchell Blvd entrance and SB WIS 175/Miller Park Way exit
  - Between NB WIS 175 exit and NB WIS 175 entrance
  - Near 35th Street interchange
  - Between 27th Street overpass and 25th Street overpass
  - Near 25th Street/St Paul Ave entrance

- **I-94 Westbound corridor**
  - Near WIS 175/Miller Park Way exit ramps
  - Between 76th Street overpass and 79th Street
  - Near WIS 181/84th Street exit ramp
Current Geometric Issues

- Short ramp merges
- Short weave areas
- Left entrances and exits
- Multiple access points in less than a mile
Outcomes from outreach

- Dropped double deck alternative
- Kept split diamond 68th/70th
- Designed Washington Street extension
- Kept 35th Street interchange
- Kept 25th-28th interchange – dropped off-alignment alternative

- Moved Stadium Interchange slightly south – away from neighborhoods
- Determined a Supplemental EIS is needed
- Working to include additional transit as project mitigation
- Department partnerships with Milwaukee County; seek federal transit funding
Supplemental EIS - topics

• Engineering/design topics:
  • Updated traffic analysis
  • Design alternatives (including 6-lane modernization) and related impacts analysis
• Land use, Transportation, Utilities
• Residential development, Commercial and industrial development, Institutional/public services
• Socioeconomic, Environmental justice
• Surface water and fishery, Wetlands, Environmental corridors & natural areas, Floodplains, Upland habitat, Wildlife, Threatened and endangered species
• Visual character, Noise, Air quality

• Hazardous materials, Soil resources
• Cemeteries, Historic sites, Archaeological, Recreational resources/public use land
• Construction, Mitigation
• Indirect Effects, Cumulative Effects
• Continued public involvement and consideration/documentation of input (including public hearing)
Bike/ped connectivity

- East Leg and Stadium Interchange
  - Connect Hank Aaron State Trail (HAST) and Oak Leaf Trail
  - Connect north side neighborhoods to jobs in Valley
  - Safer, more inviting access points
  - Design elements to encourage vibrant neighborhood, discourage undesirable activity

- West Leg
  - Considering options for improved/additional HAST access
  - Hawley Road – removing conflicts on east side with half-interchange alternative
What happens next?

Data gathered and analyzed

Alternative designs developed and studied

Input from stakeholders

Recommended Plan

Federal Highway review and approve

Final design and construction
Anticipated schedule

- **2021**
  - Data collected and analyzed
  - Designs developed
  - Community input
  - Public meeting – late in year

- **2022**
  - Continued study and analysis
  - Preferred alternative identified
  - Community input
  - Public hearing - summer

- **2023-2025**
  - Federal Highway review
  - Preliminary and final design

- **2024-2028 (dependent on funding, fed/state approvals, much to be determined)**
  - Construction of related utilities and prep work – year one
  - Freeway construction – likely four years
8-lane Alternative

- Add fourth lane in each direction - Cemetery area east of Hawley Rd – most sensitive, pinch point, narrow segment with 11 ft lanes and 2 ft shoulders for a very short 30 ft in distance along the freeway
- Reconstruct 68th /70th – configuration similar to today
- Hawley Road – maintain to/from west access only
- Stadium Interchange - move all the movement to right-hand to improve safety, extending local roads to accommodate Brewer traffic
- 35th Street and 27th Street interchanges – similar to today
6-lane Alternative

- Maintain existing number of lanes, 3-lanes in each direction except for WB from Marquette to Stadium where there are 4-lanes currently
- Reconstruct 68th /70th – configuration similar to today
- Hawley Road – both half and full interchange still under evaluation
- Stadium Interchange - move all the movement to right-hand to improve safety, extending local roads to accommodate Brewer traffic
- 35th Street and 27th Street interchanges – similar to today
8-lane alternative

- Cemetery area east of Hawley Road – most sensitive, pinch point
- Most narrow segment, with 11 ft lanes and 2 ft shoulders = 30 feet in distance along the freeway; transition sections to narrow
UNDER RECONSIDERATION

EB I-94 to WIS 175
UNDER RECONSIDERATION

WIS 175 to EB I-94
WIS 175 to WB I-94

UNDER RECONSIDERATION
Access to I-94

UNDER RECONSIDERATION
UNDER RECONSIDERATION

Access from I-94
Accommodate traffic impacted by Hawley Road changes