

[SE WI freeway system](#)[Zoo Interchange](#)[Conceptual timeline](#)[Traffic](#)[Maps](#)[Public involvement](#)[Contacts](#)[Plans & Projects](#) > [Find by location](#) > [SE Region](#) > [SE freeway system](#) >

Introduction to the Zoo Interchange

[En Espanol](#)

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is currently undertaking an environmental and engineering analysis of the Zoo Interchange. The Zoo Interchange is the connection between I-94, I-894 and US 45 in western Milwaukee County near the Milwaukee County Zoo.

The Zoo Interchange fully opened to traffic in 1963. It is one of Wisconsin's oldest interstate interchanges and is currently the busiest interchange in the state. It plays a key role in moving commuters, retail customers, health care patients, freight and other movements to major commercial and institutional sites. WisDOT has maintained and rehabilitated the ramps, bridges, pavements and other structures, but the interchange is nearing the end of its useful life. Now is the time to take the next steps to determine how the interchange should be rebuilt to ensure that it serves the economy for decades to come.

The Zoo Interchange Team is conducting environmental and engineering work now through the end of 2009. This study phase includes developing alternatives to improve the corridor, evaluating impacts of those alternatives, preparing a document that addresses environmental concerns, and selecting a preferred alternative.

The study team is now defining the purpose and need for the study and improvement alternatives. These activities included ongoing data gathering and assessment of potential impacts.

Results of alternative analysis

Nearly 500 people attended the May public information meetings (PIM) and provided valuable input and ideas on the alternatives. The seven initial alternatives were further evaluated for traffic operations and impacts to local and environmental features.

The results of traffic analysis concluded that spot improvements alone would not adequately address congestion and safety issues in the Zoo Interchange corridor. The spot improvement alternatives also did not address the outdated design issues including left hand exit and entrance ramps. The Zoo Interchange study team determined that the "spot improvement alternatives" would be screened out from further study and the "modernization alternatives" should be analyzed further. The "modernization alternatives" feature a multi-level system interchange with right side exits and



Aerial photo of the Zoo Interchange.

entrances. This design reduces weaving maneuvers and provides safer operations.

The study team presented refined modernization alternatives for each leg (north, south, east, west) and the core of the interchange at the second PIMs on October 27 and 30. Approximately 380 people attended the two meetings to review the alternatives and ask the project team questions about the alternatives, potential impacts and the project schedule. The refined modernization alternatives include options both with and without capacity expansion (lanes).



[Return to top](#)

Questions about the content of this page:
Contact Emlynn Grisar, dotdtsdzoo@dot.state.wi.us
Last modified: November 7, 2008

[Drivers & Vehicles](#) | [Safety](#) | [Travel](#) | [Plans & Projects](#) | [State Patrol](#) | [Doing Business](#) | [Programs for Local Gov't](#)

[Air](#) | [Bicycles](#) | [Bus/transit](#) | [Cars](#) | [Motorcycles](#) | [Pedestrian](#) | [Rail](#) | [Trucks](#) | [Waterways](#)

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [About Us](#) | [Research & Library](#) | [A-Z Index](#)