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## **Governor Doyle Announces Cost Savings for the Marquette Interchange**

Governor Jim Doyle today announced a new plan for the design of the Marquette Interchange that saves \$80 million for the state.

"After listening to the needs and concerns of the community, I am pleased to announce design plans to construct a cost-effective and efficient interchange to serve Wisconsin well into the future," Governor Doyle said.

"The Marquette Interchange is vital to our economy and transportation system. It is not only the hub for southeast Wisconsin; it is a gateway for the rest of the state. After 35 years of service, it's time to rebuild the Marquette Interchange, and to build it better, and to build it for a lower cost."

Earlier this year, Governor Doyle directed State Transportation Secretary Frank Busalacchi to re-examine plans to rebuild the interchange to ensure that the project design was safe and would meet the needs of the community, with a total cost that was responsible to taxpayers.

"I have given the green light on a newly design project with a cost savings of \$80 million, lowering our total project cost to \$810 million. The \$80 million of cost savings over the 4-year construction period will be re-directed to other critical southeast Wisconsin highway rehabilitation," stated Governor Doyle.

The new interchange will place entrance and exit ramps on the right and improve ramp spacing to improve traffic flow and safety. It also maintains traffic flow by providing six lanes in and out of the interchange. The design also provides enhancements important to the community, such as freeing up land for development and aesthetic improvements. Other design features include:

- Modify westbound I-794 to northbound I-43 connector ramp from two lanes to one.
- Modify northbound I-43 to I-794 eastbound exit ramp from two lanes to one.
- Modify the high-rise bridge shoulders to match existing widths.
- Change the western construction limits from 26<sup>th</sup> Street to 16<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Change the southern construction limits from National Avenue to Burnham Canal.

"This project is truly a community effort. We have enlisted the help of community groups and have held over 300 public meetings to better understand how this interchange should serve the region," said Doyle.

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Governor Doyle also emphasized the importance of employing state and local contractors to build the project. "I have instructed WisDOT to aggressively recruit minority firms and workers to help fill the hundreds of good-paying construction jobs for this project," Doyle said.

Representative Spencer Coggs agreed. "The reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange is vitally important to the economic well-being of Milwaukee, and indeed, the entire State of Wisconsin," Coggs said. "At the same time, this project presents the unique opportunity to create a direct economic impact through minority hiring goals. During construction of Miller Park, a \$420 million project, minority hiring goals resulted in over \$100 million going to minority owned contractors and their employees. I know we can use those goals as a base for the Marquette Interchange."

Representative Leon Young urged the minority community to take advantage of the opportunities this project will provide. "I will continue working with the DOT to identify opportunities to build and maintain a skilled labor force and provide opportunities for people to get the training they need to work on this and possibly future projects. Now, we will be able to implement those efforts and hard work," stated Representative Young.

Governor Doyle stressed the need to build the project on time to serve the 125,000 residents and 4,300 businesses in downtown Milwaukee that rely on the interchange. "Milwaukee will remain open for business during this project," stated the Governor.

The project will be constructed in four years from 2004 to 2008, and two lanes of through traffic will be open in all directions during construction. A public information effort will highlight transportation choices and inform motorists of available routes during construction.