

**Daniel P. Vrakas**  
County Executive



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Contact: Ellen Nowak – County Executive’s Office, (262) 548-7902

## **WAUKESHA COUNTY PRESENTS TESTIMONY ON ZOO-INTERCHANGE PROJECT**

WAUKESHA, Wis. – Waukesha County’s Engineering Services Manager, Gary Evans, will present spoken testimony today to Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) at a public hearing regarding the rehabilitation and redesign of the Zoo-Interchange Project. In the Governor’s 2011-2013 Proposed Budget, released earlier this month, the Zoo-Interchange project, originally slated to begin in 2018, will now begin in 2015.

“I am glad that the importance of this project is being recognized by policymakers in Madison,” said Waukesha County Executive Dan Vrakas. “The existing interchange is nearly 50 years old and is far beyond its useful life. Delaying its reconstruction is not only costly, but dangerous.”

By moving the project up to 2015, the State can take advantage of reduced real estate costs and save taxpayers an estimated 26%. Last spring, when the emergency bridge repairs were made, it cost taxpayers \$20 million. Additionally, maintenance costs for the interchange exceeds \$10 million annually.

“The Zoo-Interchange is the busiest interchange in the State, in fact it carries more traffic than the Marquette Interchange,” Evans said. “In the evening rush hour, the Zoo-Interchange causes delays on Interstate-94 as far west as Moorland Road and on Highway-45 as far north as Capitol Drive. Improving the interchange will reduce congestion on I-94 and Highway-45, and will improve travel times for Waukesha County residents who work in Milwaukee County and vice versa. It will also reduce delays for goods and services entering and leaving our County, reducing costs to our businesses and by extension to all of us.”

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**“Waukesha County Presents Testimony on Zoo-Interchange Project,” continued ...**

The Interchange, used by approximately 350,000 people a day, connects people to jobs and is key to the transportation of goods in Waukesha County and is a major contributor to economic growth in Southeastern Wisconsin.

“It is clear by our local commute patterns and the demands of our workforce that the Zoo Interchange needs to be upgraded. This transportation hub is vital to our local and state economy,” Vrakas said. “Moving this project up to 2015 is an outstanding initiative for growth and addresses workforce transportation in Waukesha County.”

The Public Hearings on the Zoo-Interchange will continue tomorrow at State Fair Park and the WisDOT is expected to finalize the Environmental Impact Statement this year.

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