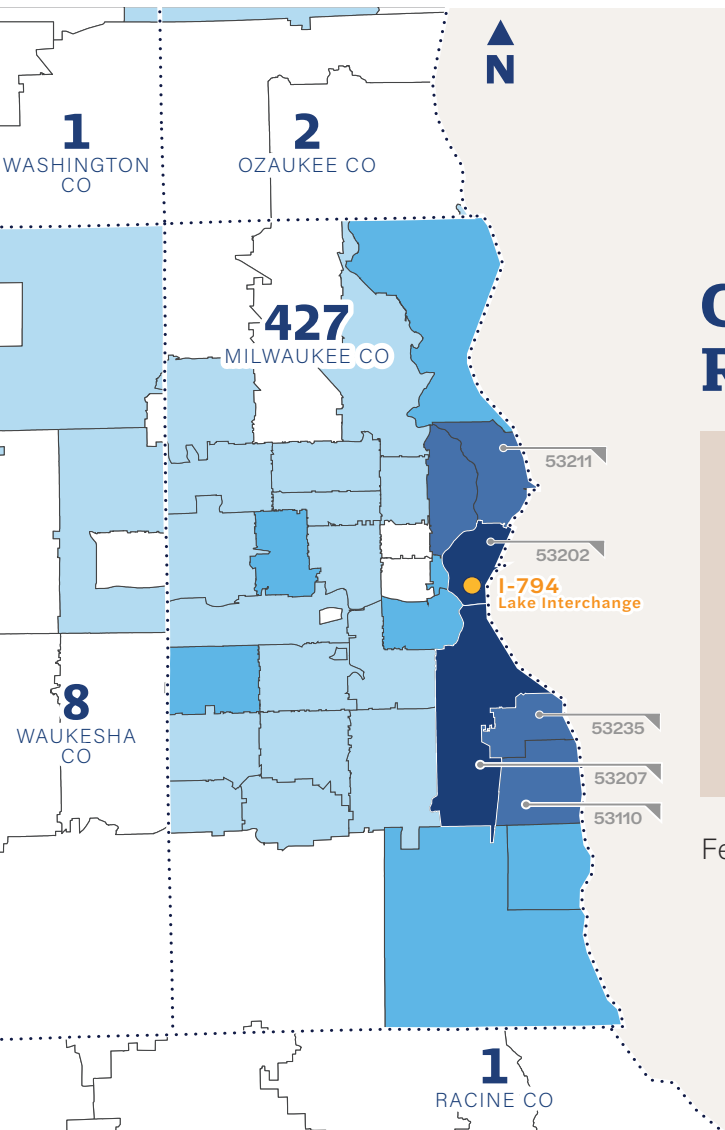




The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) held two open house public meetings in spring 2026 to share the latest findings on the Replace in Kind, Freeway Removal and Freeway Improvement alternatives. New information included safety analysis, traffic sensitivity analysis, freight analysis, land use market analysis, preliminary resource impacts and probable costs by alternative. The meetings gave attendees an opportunity to review study materials, engage with project staff and provide feedback. In case you missed the meeting, you can view all meeting materials online at: 794lakeinterchange.wisconsindot.gov/public-meetings/spring-2026

WHO PARTICIPATED

WisDOT heard from many engaged stakeholders and residents during the comment period. More than 550 people joined the two meetings and 556 comment forms were submitted between April 30 and June 5, 2026.



COMMENT FORM RESPONSES BY ZIP CODE

427 responses were within Milwaukee County
most responses came from ZIP codes:
53202, 53207, 53211, 53235 and 53110

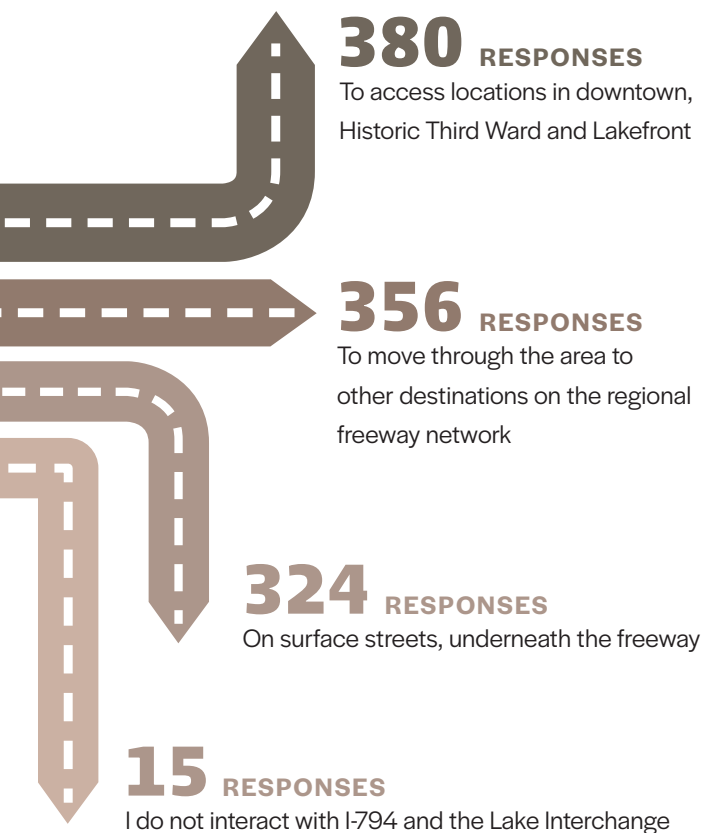
24 responses were outside of Milwaukee County

105 responses did not include a ZIP code

Fewest responses by ZIP code | Light blue | Medium blue | Dark blue | Most responses by ZIP code

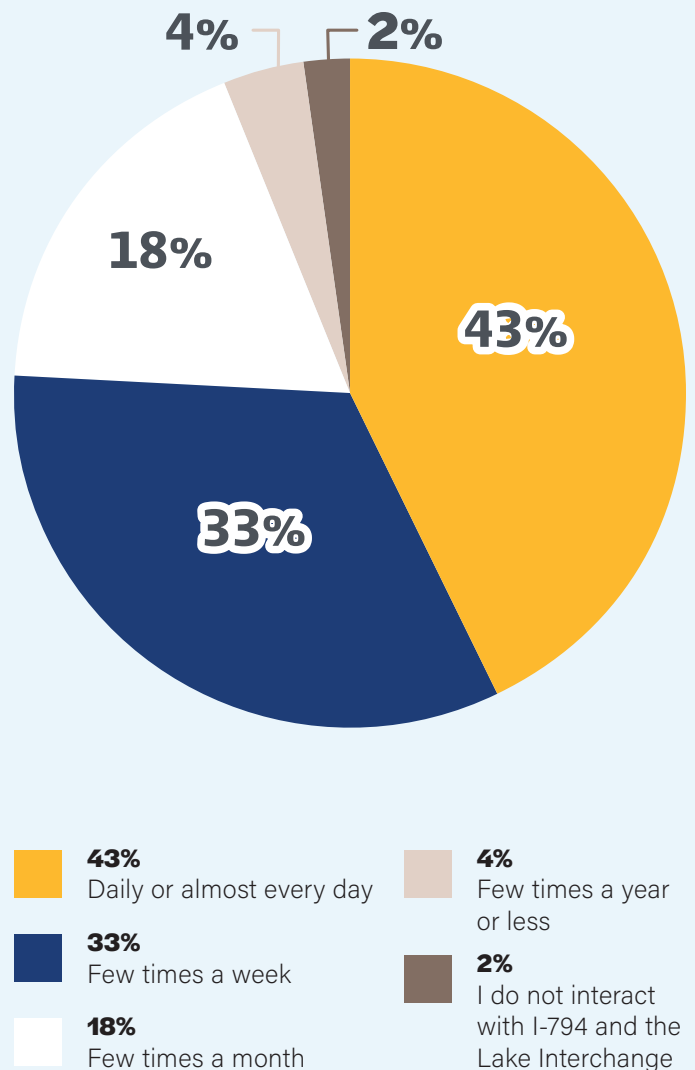
HOW DO YOU USE THE LAKE INTERCHANGE?

There are many ways people interact with the Lake Interchange—whether commuting, exploring downtown or simply passing through.



HOW OFTEN DO YOU TYPICALLY INTERACT WITH I-794 AND THE LAKE INTERCHANGE?

Respondents shared the frequency with which they interact with the Lake Interchange—whether it's part of a daily commute, a weekly routine or an occasional trip.



ABOUT THE ALTERNATIVES

To view the design alternatives, visit 794lakeinterchange.wisconsin.gov/#AlternativeGroups.

Participants were asked to provide feedback on how each alternative could affect walking and biking conditions, freight movement, development opportunities, public space, tourism and entertainment. The comment form was intended to gather public input and was not designed as a scientific survey.

RATING SCALE:

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

The alternative provides safe and comfortable crossings for people walking at intersections along Clybourn Street within the study corridor.

REPLACE IN KIND	42%	13%	16%	15%	13%
FREEWAY REMOVAL	32%	7%	7%	18%	36%
FREEWAY IMPROVEMENT	23%	18%	20%	25%	14%

The alternative improves bicycle connectivity within the study corridor and to adjacent bicycle corridors and trails within downtown and the lakefront.

REPLACE IN KIND	44%	15%	21%	11%	9%
FREEWAY REMOVAL	27%	6%	7%	16%	44%
FREEWAY IMPROVEMENT	22%	15%	22%	28%	13%

The alternative creates space within the I-794 transportation right of way for potential new public activation that will support the character and connectivity of the adjacent downtown neighborhoods.

REPLACE IN KIND	46%	15%	17%	12%	11%
FREEWAY REMOVAL	26%	6%	9%	11%	48%
FREEWAY IMPROVEMENT	27%	17%	19%	23%	14%

The alternative provides surplus property that could result in opportunities for future development that would benefit the adjacent downtown community.

REPLACE IN KIND	47%	16%	20%	9%	8%
FREEWAY REMOVAL	25%	6%	8%	11%	50%
FREEWAY IMPROVEMENT	26%	16%	22%	24%	12%

The alternative supports tourism, recreation and entertainment in and around the downtown and the lakefront.

REPLACE IN KIND	45%	12%	13%	14%	17%
FREEWAY REMOVAL	31%	8%	7%	8%	47%
FREEWAY IMPROVEMENT	29%	19%	18%	18%	17%

The alternative supports safe, efficient and reliable mobility for freight.

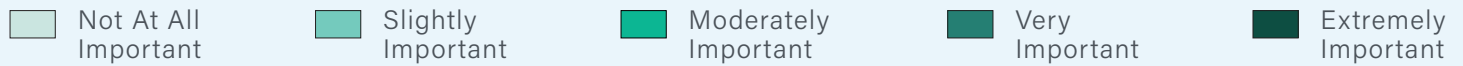
REPLACE IN KIND	25%	8%	24%	21%	21%
FREEWAY REMOVAL	41%	7%	18%	13%	21%
FREEWAY IMPROVEMENT	20%	10%	26%	25%	19%

NOTE: PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD UP TO EXACTLY 100% DUE TO ROUNDING.

ABOUT THE AESTHETIC FEATURES

Participants were invited to reflect on the corridor’s existing visual character and aesthetic features. WisDOT has cataloged a variety of features and amenities located within the transportation right of way. Respondents were asked to consider what existing visual character and aesthetic elements mean to the community, and which features should be maintained or incorporated into the project.

RATING SCALE:



EXISTING LANDSCAPE	12%	14%	26%	22%	26%
EXISTING LIGHTING	13%	13%	26%	29%	20%
EXISTING DECORATIVE FINISHES ON I-794 INFRASTRUCTURE	33%	21%	25%	11%	9%
EXISTING SIGNAGE	14%	16%	27%	26%	18%
EXISTING ACTIVATED PUBLIC SPACES WITHIN THE I-794 RIGHT OF WAY	12%	15%	24%	23%	26%
EXISTING ART AND MURALS	19%	18%	26%	20%	17%

NOTE: PERCENTAGES MAY NOT ADD UP TO EXACTLY 100% DUE TO ROUNDING.

WHAT WE HEARD

Through open-ended answers on our comment form and in-person conversations at the public meetings, our team gathered feedback across a variety of topics. While opinions and feedback varied greatly, below is a summary of what we heard.

- Visual materials helped people understand the alternatives including maps, side-by-side renderings, roll plots and the overview video.
- Respondents valued traffic forecast sensitivity modeling, predictive safety analysis including crash data, and freight analysis data.
- Respondents found probable costs and the land use market analysis to be useful information.
- Traffic and access were major concerns, especially impacts to I-794, I-94, I-43 Hoan Bridge, connectivity to Bay View and south shore access, freight movement, lift bridge openings and surface street congestion.
- Safety and bicycle and pedestrian experience were recurring priorities, focusing on safer crossings and improved accommodations.
- Respondents valued the potential surplus land for placemaking and development opportunities, providing economic benefits to the community.
- Open-ended comments regarding alternatives varied greatly across the comments submitted
- Replace in Kind alternative was referenced as maintaining the status quo, preserving confusing ramp configurations and offering limited safety, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, or land use improvements.
- Freeway Removal alternative was noted for reconnecting downtown, the Historic Third Ward and lakefront while creating opportunities for surplus land. Respondents noted concerns regarding increased traffic congestion and longer travel times, bridge lift delays, freight access and regional connectivity impacts to I-94/I-43.
- Freeway Improvement alternative was viewed as a balance of preserving regional interstate access while simplifying ramp configurations, improving safety for all users and creating some potential surplus land. Respondents noted that maintaining elevated infrastructure could perpetuate a perceived barrier.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT OUR WEBSITE: 794lakeinterchange.wisconsindot.gov