



# I94 In Western Waukesha County

Waukesha County Business Alliance

September 2, 2025

Allison Bussler, Director of Public Works

Brett Wallace, Engineering Manager



# Waukesha County Executive Action

- Worked with Senator Bradley to include Major Highway Project Study and \$8Min budget for I94 (Jefferson County Line to CTH SS/ Prospect Ave.)
- Approved as part of Senate Amendment and approved by Assembly
- Vetoed by Governor Evers



# Budget Veto Explanation

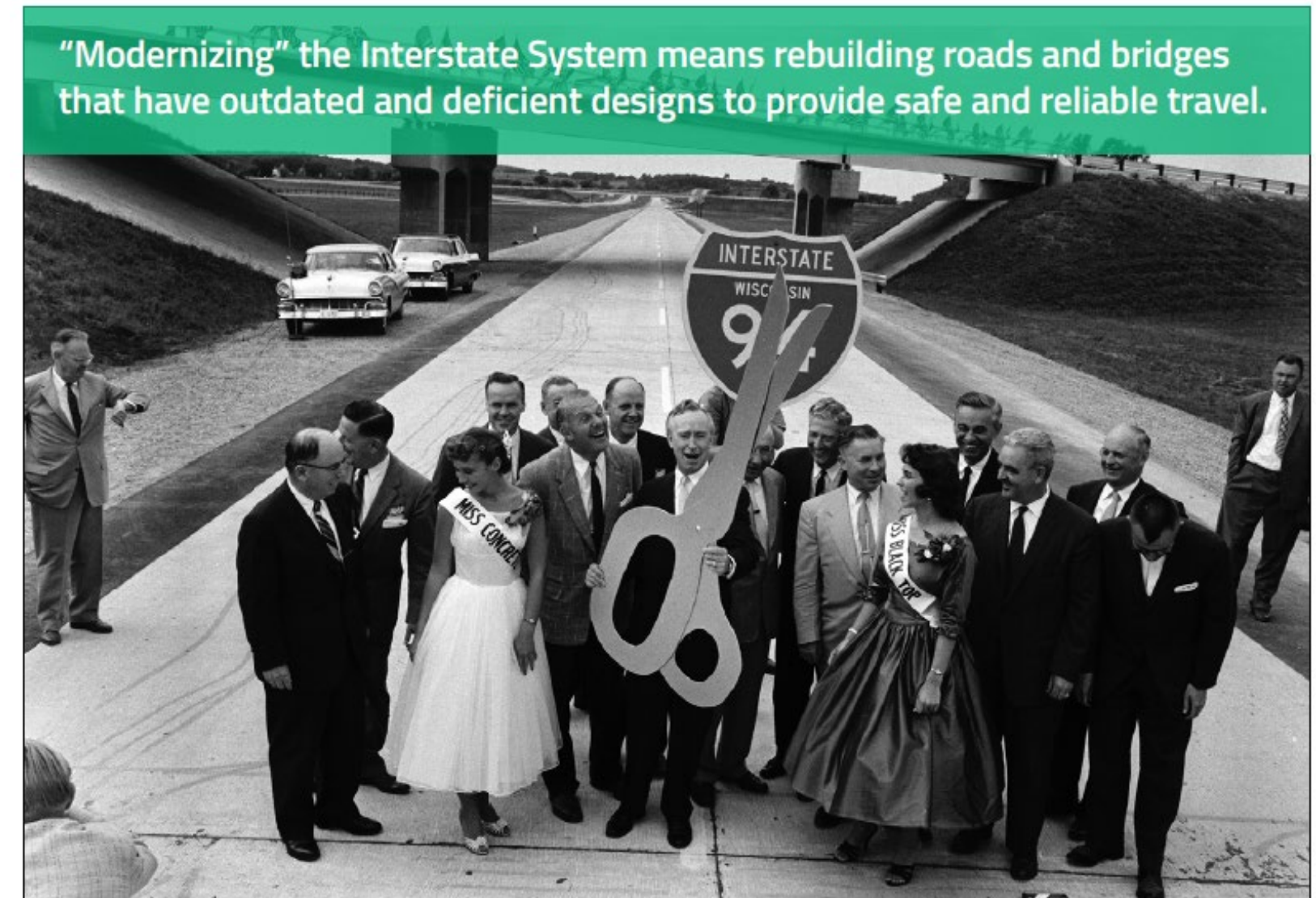
- Governor Evers veto language:
  - “I am vetoing these provisions because I object to circumventing the Department of Transportation's process for developing corridor studies through the ordinary Transportation Project Commission process. This veto ensures that the Department of Transportation will be able to use traffic counts and other relevant measures to prioritize future corridor study locations and direct its efforts to projects that best address the transportation needs of Wisconsin.”
- I41, Budget Enumeration in 2019-2021 Biennial Budget
- Next step is requesting Major Highway Project Study
  - Transportation Projects Commission, December 2025



# Why I94 Major Highway Project Study?

- Traffic Volume and Travel Delay
- Old, Outdated and Substandard Design
- Crashes and Safety Issues
  - Statewide, Regional and Local Importance
- Waukesha County Growth and Development
- Without Action to Approve Major Study:
  - *Traffic Crashes, Injuries & Fatalities*

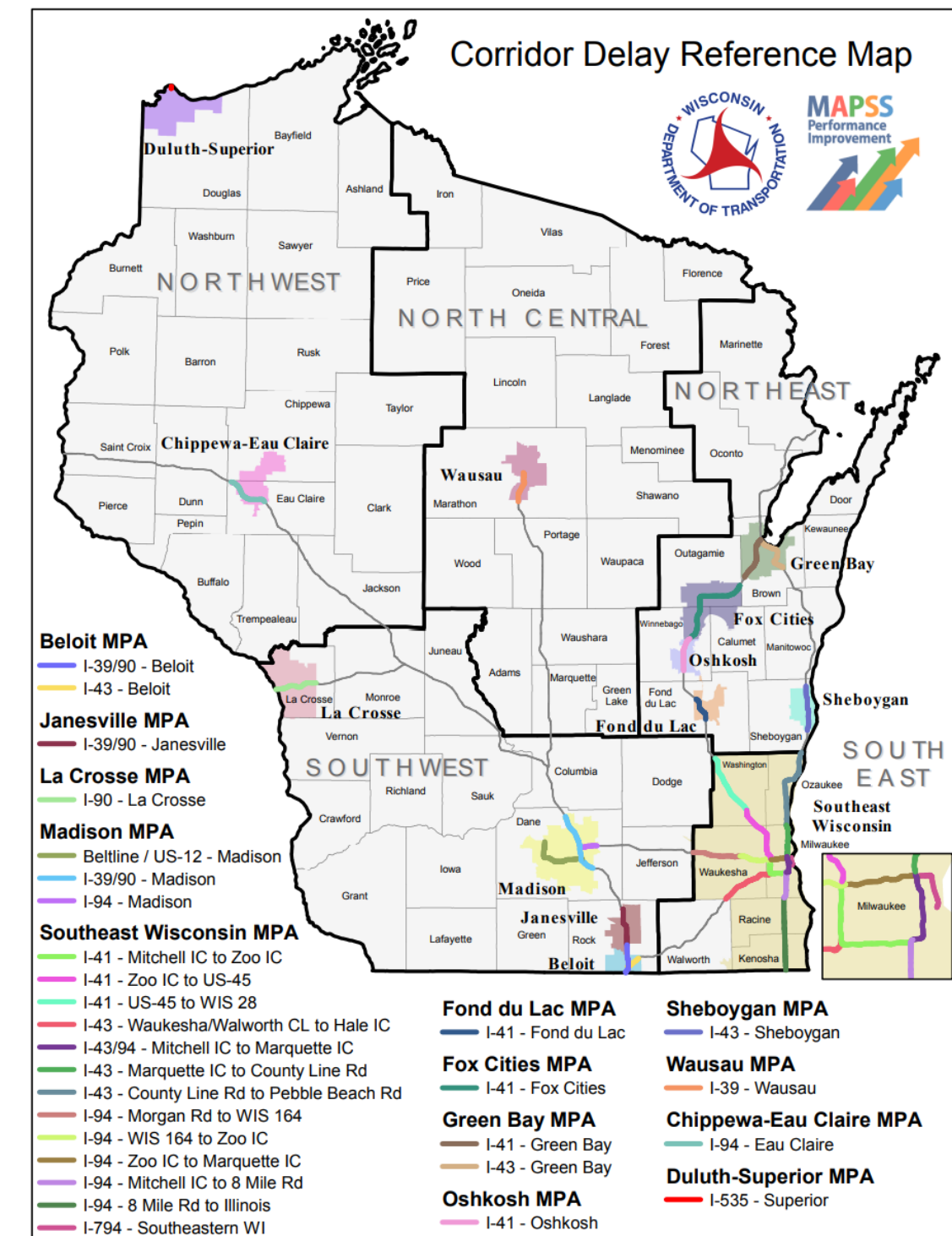
*Continue, Community Wellbeing Suffers*



Sept. 4, 1958, dedication ceremony for Wisconsin's first Interstate segment, a 7-mile stretch of I-94 in Waukesha County. Transportation safety and roadway design standards were vastly different then. Photo: Wisconsin Historical Society WHS-01873.

# I94 Crashes and Travel Delay

- Crash rates are between 2.5x and 4x the statewide average and injury crash rates are between 2x and 7.5x the statewide average for similar 4-lane interstate freeways
- High Traffic Volumes (AADT) create congestion and delay
- Identified on WisDOT MAPSS Performance Measure Report
  - 363,000 vehicle-hours of daytime (6am-8pm) delay
  - Most delay of any 4-lane interstate freeway in Wisconsin
  - Other Prioritized Major Projects not tracked





# Statutory Funding for Major Highway Investments

- Wisconsin State Statute 84.013 defines a 'Major Highway Project'
  - Adding a lane for 5-miles or more
  - A Major Highway Project requires enumeration (legislative approval) for design and construction in the state budget
- Wisconsin State Statute 84.0145 defines a 'Southeast Wisconsin freeway megaproject'.
  - Any project on a southeast Wisconsin freeway
  - Project cost greater than \$862,700,000
- Funding I94, 'Caught Between Programs'

# Should be funded from Majors Program

- WisDOT has combined I94 Western Waukesha County with I94 Eastern Waukesha County
- Increasing cost over the \$862,700,000 project threshold
- However, Western Waukesha is rural freeway vs. Eastern urban
- I94, Cost Estimate is \$635,000,000\*

“Major Highway Development Subprogram”

*NOT*

“Southeast Wisconsin Freeway Megaproject Appropriation”

\*Based on I41 Major Highway Project cost per mile.

# 2025 TPC Process, I94 Major Study

- Formal request to WisDOT and members of the TPC
- WisDOT include on list of potential major highway projects
  - Sent to TPC by October 15th
- Advocacy by I94 Western Waukesha Coalition
- Outreach to legislators, TPC members
- Study would take 2-3 years to complete
  - Potential 'earliest' Budget Enumeration, 2029-2031
  - Potential 'earliest' Construction Start, 2035

## NEWS

**Fox Valley road projects take a step forward in budget including I-41 expansion**



**Mica Soellner**  
Appleton Post-Crescent

Published 5:43 a.m. CT June 11, 2019 | Updated 4:00 p.m. CT June 11, 2019

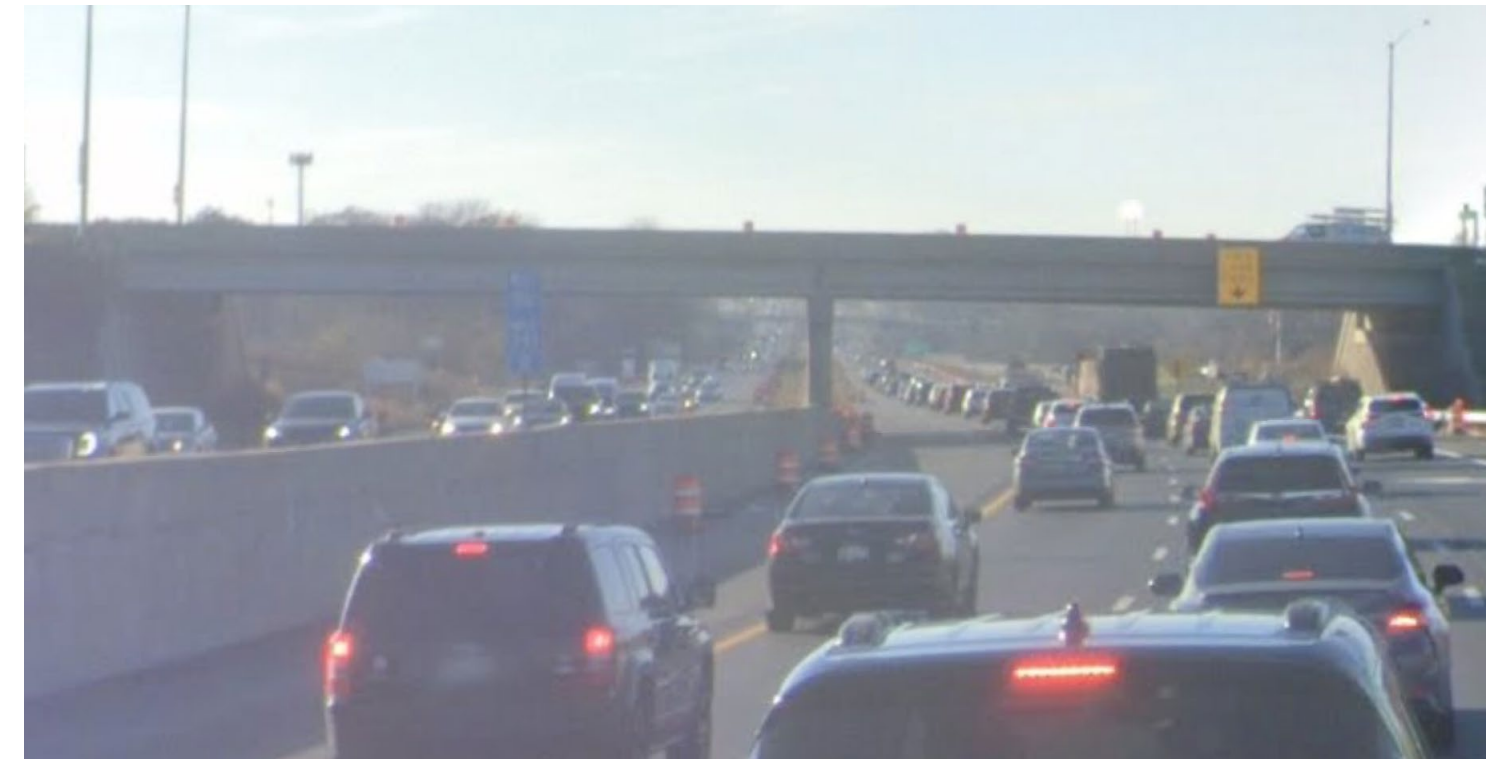


Traffic moves along Interstate 41 near Richmond Street in Appleton. Chris Kohley/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin



# Comparing I94 with other Major Projects

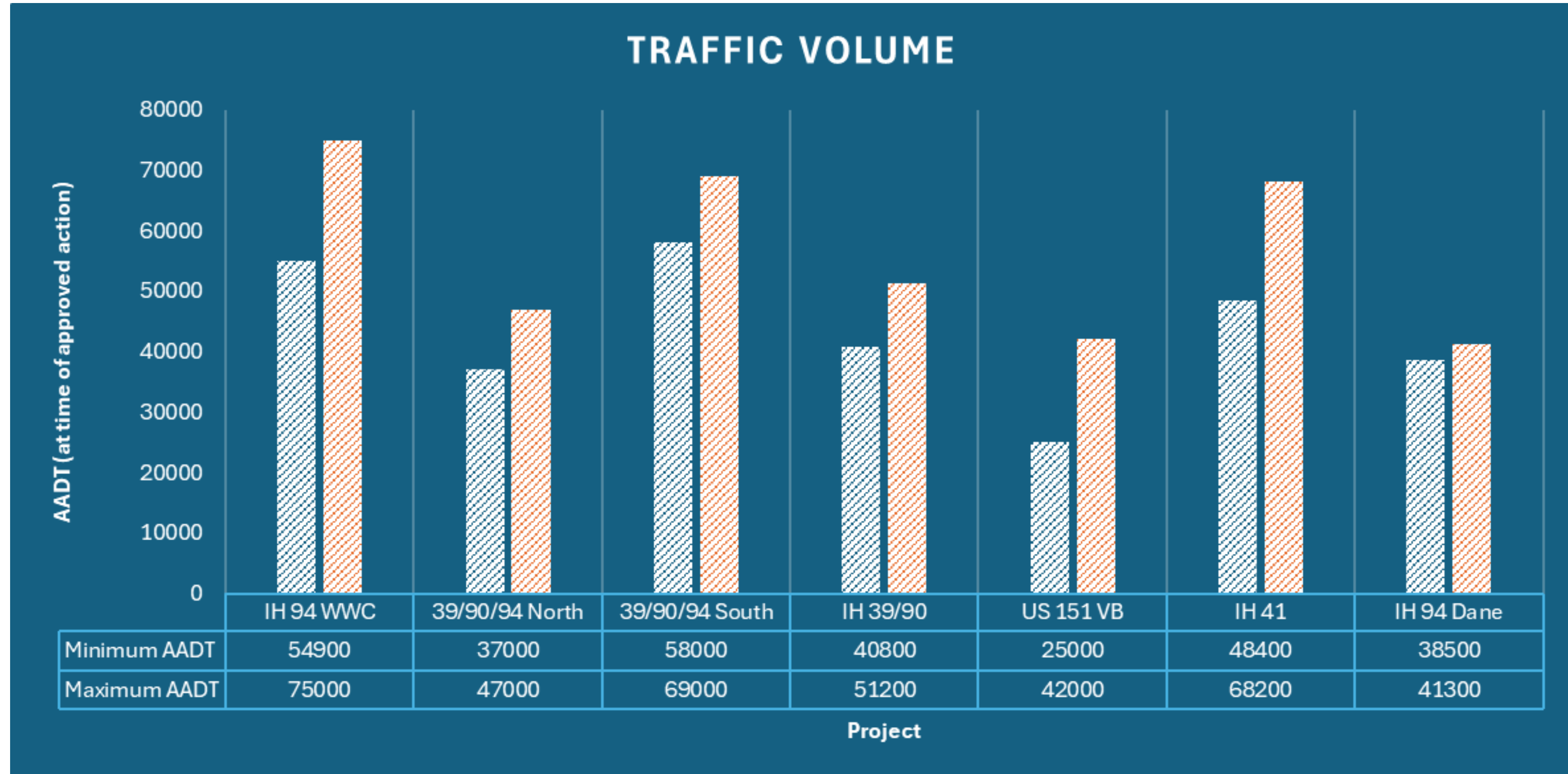
- I39/ 90/ 94 Project, Major Highway Project Enumerated in 2025-2027 State Budget
- US 151 Verona Bypass, Approved Major Highway Study
- I39/ 90 Project, Previous Major Highway Project
- I41 Project, Current Major Highway Project
- I94 Dane County, Previous SHR Project



# I94, Simple Prioritization-Comparing the Data!

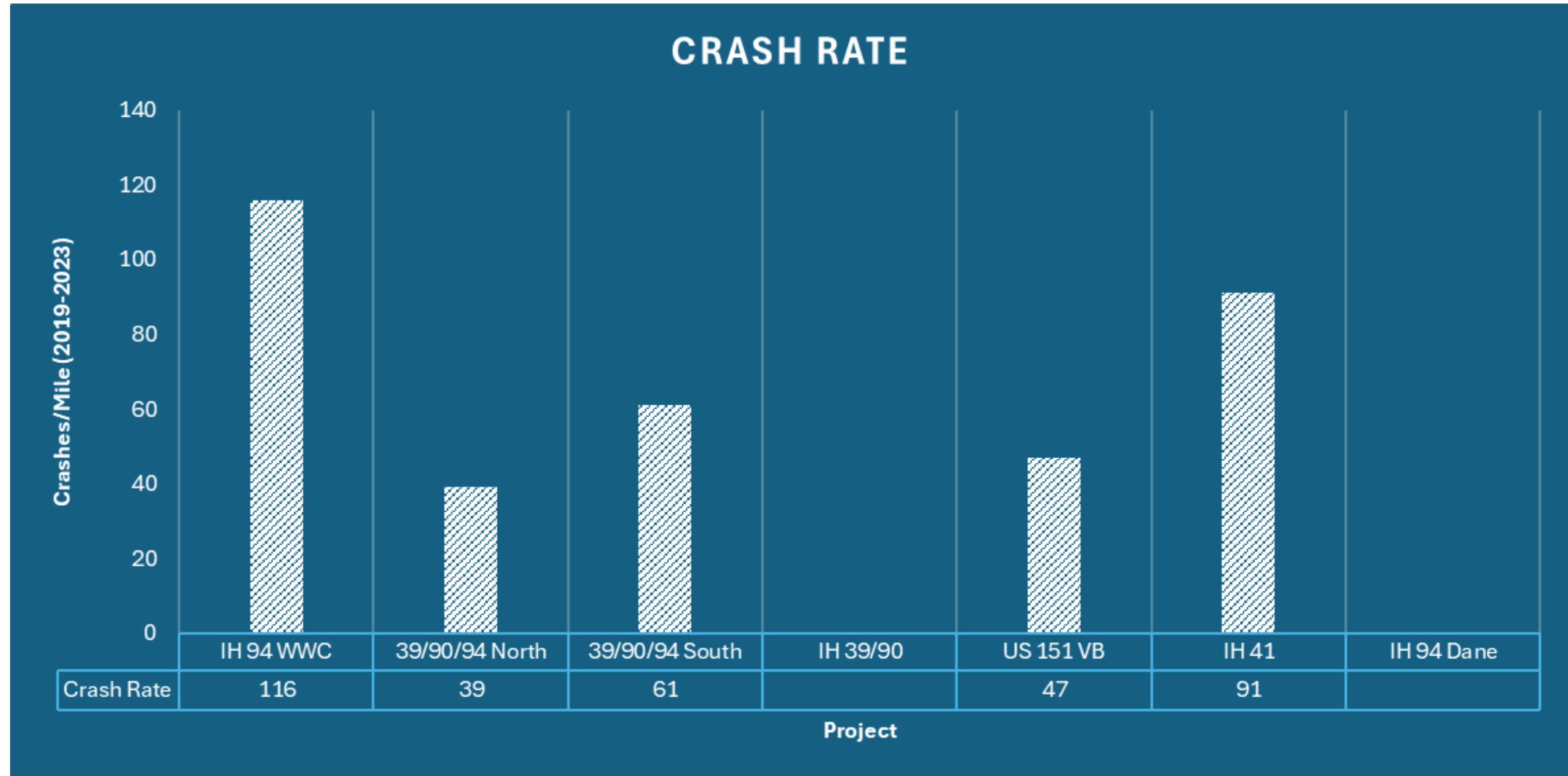
Freeway	Length (miles)	# of Existing Lanes/Planned or Built Lanes	AADT-Low, at time of enumeration	AADT-High, at time of enumeration	% of IH 94 AADT-High	Crashes	Crashes/Mile , % of IH 94, W.W.C.	Serious Injury Crashes	Fatal Crashes	Fatal/Serious Injury Crashes/Mile, % of IH 94 W.W.C.
I94, Western Waukesha County	12.5	4/6	54,900	<b><u>75,000</u></b>	N/A	1,446	<b><u>116</u></b>	148	6	<b><u>12.3</u></b>
<b>I90/94, Split to WIS 16/US 12</b>	25	4/6	37,000	47,000	<b>63%</b>	967	39, <b>33%</b>	121	6	5.1, <b>41%</b>
<b>I39/90/94, US 51 to Split</b>	24	<b>6/8</b>	58,000	69,000	<b>92%</b>	1,467	61, <b>53%</b>	196	6	8.4, <b>68%</b>
I39/90, US 12 to Illinois	45	<b>4/6-12</b>	40,800	51,200	<b>68%</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
US 151, Verona Bypass	7	4/6	25,000	42,000	<b>56%</b>	326	47, <b>41%</b>	40	1	5.9, <b>48%</b>
I41, WIS 96 to Schuering	23	4/6	48,400	68,200	<b>91%</b>	2,092	91, <b>78%</b>	225	9	10.2, <b>83%</b>
I94, Badger Int to CTH N, Dane County	4	4/6	38,500	41,300	<b>55%</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

# I94, Data Comparison

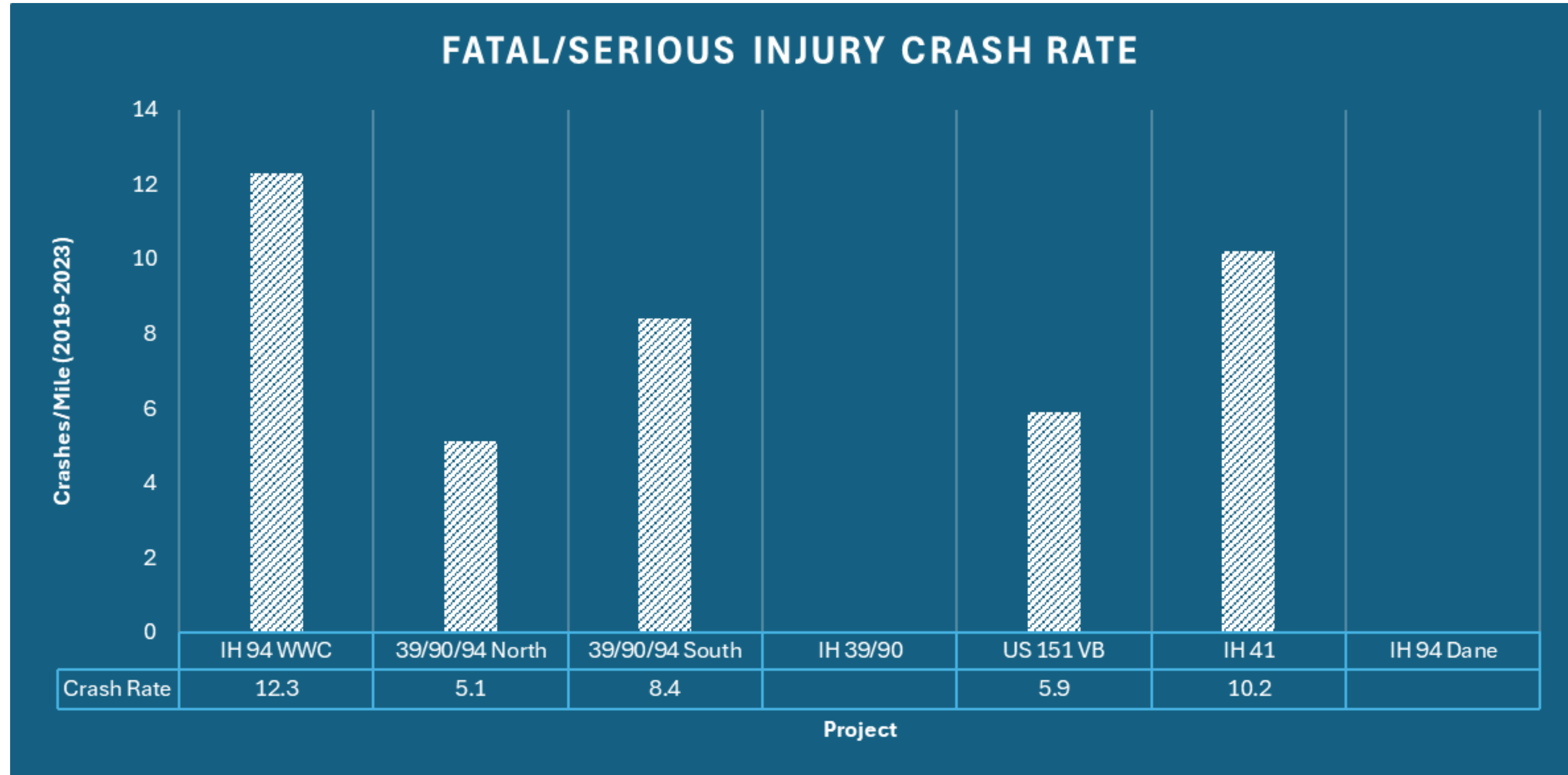




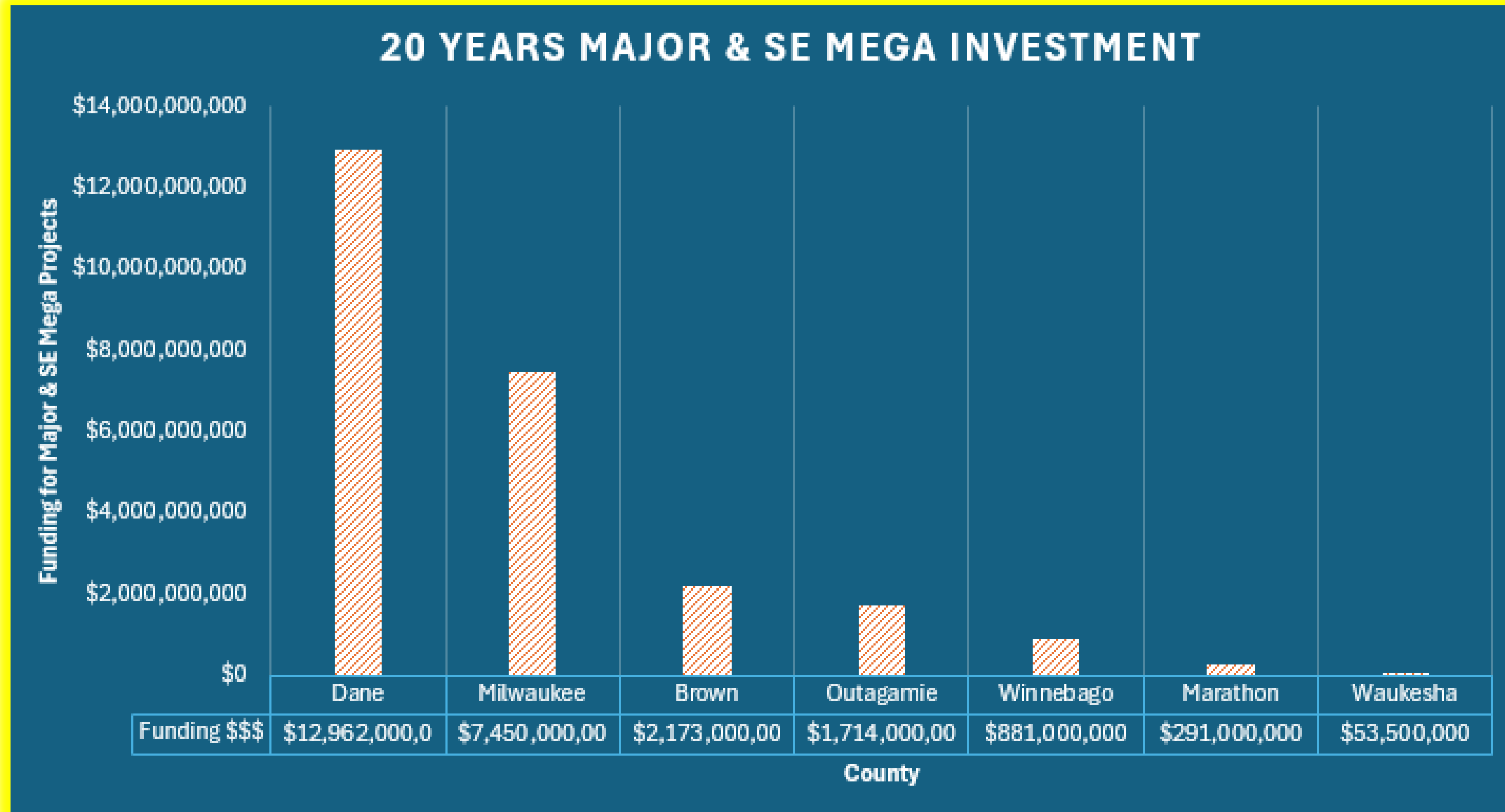
# I94, Data Comparison



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# I94, Data Comparison





# What a Difference a County Makes

- Waukesha County, One Major Project (1995)
  - WIS 16/ 67 Oconomowoc Bypass, \$53 Million
  - 3rd Highest Population County & 3rd Highest VMT
    - (Mil-925k, Dane-588k, Wauk-417k)
    - (Mil-7B, Dane-5.4B, Wauk-4.4B)
- Since 2005:
  - Dane and Milwaukee County
  - 16 Projects, over \$20 BILLION proposed, committed or built

# I94 Major Study is Urgently Needed

- Current Major Highway Program is full through 2051
- Current Major Studies [TPC approval year]:
  - US 12, US 14 to County N (Madison Beltline), [2011]
  - US 18/ 151, County PD (Madison) to US 18 (Dodgeville), “Verona Bypass 2.0”, [2023]
  - US 151, STH 73 (Columbus) to STH 49 (Waupun), [2023]
- Other Potential Major Highway Projects
  - I794, Lake Interchange, Milwaukee County
  - Reimagining STH 175, Milwaukee County
- Major Highway Program
  - First In, First Out funding methodology

# I94, An Obvious Statewide Priority

- Highest Traffic Volume of any four-lane interstate freeway
- Highest Travel Delay and Congestion of any four-lane interstate freeway
- Higher Crash, Injury Crash and Fatality Rates than other Major Highway Projects
- Outdated Infrastructure with Geometric Design Deficiencies, that contribute to High Crash Rates, Congestion and Travel Delay
- Waukesha County Growth and Development
- Public Support for Major Study TPC Approval in 2025
  - Public Support is crucial to project approval and delivery success
  - Please consider being a Project Champion



# I94 Major Study Request

- WisDOT request Major Study, October 2025
- TPC approve Major Study, December 2025
- Complete environmental study for 2029-2031 State Biennial Budget
- Start construction by 2035



Questions?