

## The new I-41 is



The I-41/I-43 interchange, spring 2016.

# almost ready

Construction for motorists on I-41 in Brown County has become familiar. There are plenty of orange barrels, construction equipment, some closed ramps, narrow shoulders and extra time in the vehicle to navigate the construction zone. The difference in 2016 is that this is IT - the final year of traffic impacts on the I-41 project! "It should be ready to go by mid-November," said Tom Buchholz, I-41/WIS 441/WIS 15 Program Manager for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT).

Buchholz said the I-41 Project will be completed on time and on budget. Not an easy feat for one of the largest highway construction projects in Wisconsin's history. Design work for the project began in 2005, and active construction began in 2009. But work on this project dates much further back. WisDOT has been coordinating efforts with local municipalities since 1999. Public involvement meetings in

Winnebago and Brown Counties date back to 2000, during the development of alternatives for the project.

While it has posed challenges for commuters, residents and businesses located in or near the construction zone, the benefits of a greatly improved I-41 are not lost on local officials. As Laurie Radke, president of the Greater Green Bay Chamber put it, "It will have a dramatic positive impact on our economic vitality." (See pages 3-4 for more comments.)

Features of the newly-improved 14 miles of I-41 in Brown County are becoming visible to anyone driving through the construction zone. To recap, the Project will reconstruct the existing freeway, adding more lanes to safely and efficiently accommodate existing and future traffic volume.

Nine interchanges along I-41 in Brown  
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**"It should be ready to go by mid-November."**

-Tom Buchholz,  
I-41/WIS 441/WIS 15  
Program Manager

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Tom Buchholz**  
I-41/WIS 441/WIS 15  
Program Manager  
WisDOT Northeast Region  
**ADDRESS**  
1940 W. Mason St.  
Green Bay, WI 54303  
**PHONE**  
920.360.6042  
**EMAIL**  
tom.buchholz@dot.wi.gov

**Melissa Kok**  
I-41/WIS 441  
Projects Communications Manager  
**ADDRESS**  
944 Vanderperren Way  
Green Bay, WI 54304  
**PHONE**  
920.492.5743  
**EMAIL**  
melissa2.kok@dot.wi.gov



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# Construction outlook for 2016

The I-41 Project wraps up with a busy construction season for 2016 in Brown County. According to Mike King, WisDOT's I-41 construction supervisor, major construction activities will be completed by mid-November, although some finish work will continue into 2017.

"We'll be doing lots of paving this season," King said, "and motorists will experience some lane shifts and closures throughout the summer and early fall." He noted that a particular focus of construction activity will be around the Velp Avenue and I-43 interchanges.

The southbound I-41 exit ramp to Velp Avenue will remain closed until sometime in October, and the Velp Avenue interchange and Velp Avenue will close for about two months beginning



The final girders of the I-41 Project were set in place on the bridge over Duck Creek in April 2016.

in mid-August.

At the I-41/I-43 systems interchange, reconstruction and improvements are being completed this year, King said.

The southbound I-41 to southbound

I-43 and the northbound I-43 to southbound I-41 ramp - one of the new flyover ramps that have become a new feature of the north Green Bay skyline - will be completed sometime in September.

Construction activity also continues on the new mainline lanes of I-41 from Glory Road to 9th Street and Memorial Drive to Lakeview Road, with ongoing interchange construction at WIS 172 and at Waube Lane/Oneida Street. Crews will also continue local street work below the newly reconstructed I-41 bridges over Lombardi Avenue, Morris Avenue, Cormier Road, Parkview Road and Glory Road, King said.

King noted that all schedules are dependent on weather and other factors and are subject to change. Current information is available at [www.us41wisconsin.gov](http://www.us41wisconsin.gov).

## Fun Facts 41

### The I-41 Project:

- Spans 14 miles in Brown County
- Spans 17 miles in Winnebago County
- Reconstructed 13 interchanges
- Improved 3 additional interchanges
- Constructed 40 roundabouts
- Installed 1,186 concrete girders, 244 steel tub girders and 182 steel I-girders
- Is expected to carry 121,700 vehicles per day in Brown and Winnebago Counties by the year 2035



3,243,300 sq. yds.  
of concrete pavement

=  
enough to pave Vatican City  
more than six times



793,000  
tons of  
asphalt



=  
the weight of  
over a million  
dairy cows



24,000  
linear feet  
of  
noise walls

=  
the length  
of 390  
bowling lanes



# Q: What does the improved I-41 mean to



**R. Perry Kidder, President  
Green Bay Packer Hall of Fame**

"The new I-41 will be a great asset to the Green Bay Packer Hall of Fame as part of a growing and vital tourism industry here. What occurs to me is that I-41 remains the main artery for tourism, as well as goods and services coming in and out of this region. When businesses look to invest in a region, one of the top things they are looking for is an interstate highway connection. Green Bay has an international shipping port and airport, an excellent rail system, and now the I-41 connection to the Valley, Milwaukee and beyond. We have what is needed to be a main transportation hub. We can compete with anyone."



**Cristina Danforth, Chairwoman  
Oneida Nation**

"The improvements to the I-41 Corridor help open the door to expanded business and tourism opportunities in northeast Wisconsin, and will help raise the quality of life in general for our communities. We are very pleased with the design elements that were woven into the project, reflecting the Tribal influence on the area as well as other cultural influences. We're excited to see safer and more accessible routes to Oneida so visitors may enjoy our cultural and business components while touring our area."

**Jim Schmitt, Mayor  
City of Green Bay**



"The completion of Interstate 41 may be one of the most significant economic developments for Greater Green Bay. This interstate showcases the quality of our infrastructure and how seriously we value a growing economy."

## Disadvantaged Business Enterprises find opportunities on I-41 Project

In addition to the benefits to motorists and businesses in the region, the I-41 Project also created many opportunities for highway construction work. In order to make sure small and disadvantaged businesses have opportunities on highway projects, WisDOT created the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. According to Mark Higley of WisDOT's NE Region, on the I-41 Project, the DBE Program was a success.

"The I-41 Project is the largest road construction project in the history of Northeast Wisconsin, and through the DBE Program, we made a concerted effort to ensure that smaller, disadvantaged companies had a chance to do some of

the work," Higley said. "We set goals, using input from community stakeholders as well as experts from the Department, and those goals were met or exceeded."

He said the overall goal was to have 7.2 percent of the construction work and 15 percent of the design work done by DBE firms. While the final numbers will not be available until later this year, Higley said those goals will be achieved. As of the end of April 2016, 8 percent of construc-

tion contracts and 21 percent of design contracts had been let to DBE firms, he said.

Higley said that over 100 firms certified as Disadvantaged Business Enterprises have been contracted to work on the Project.

A DBE Advisory Committee was formed, consisting of stakeholders with regular input from WisDOT staff, and met frequently as individual contracts were being prepared to be let out for bids. "The community engagement was very good—lots of back and forth on upcoming projects, and in the end, it helped more DBE firms participate on the Project," Higley said.



# Brown County and Northeast Wisconsin?

**Mark Murphy, President  
Green Bay Packers**



"We're excited about how the improved I-41 will transform our area as a whole, welcoming travelers, visitors and football fans to the Lambeau Field area and all its attractions. The interchange at Lombardi Avenue, particularly with the Packers-themed images, is a fine introduction to what awaits. With construction of the Titledown District underway, we're looking forward to an improved I-41 enhancing the experience of residents and guests alike for years to come."

**Laurie Radke, President  
Greater Green Bay Chamber**



"We are extremely excited and feel fortunate about the new I-41. It was very enlightening when we brought in economic and workforce site selectors last fall, and we were able to give them a bird's-eye view of the area by helicopter. They were in awe of the connectivity that this new highway brings. It became clear that the new I-41 will be transformational for this region. Not only does it improve connectivity for business and industry, but the overall quality of life will be impacted by this astonishing improvement to our infrastructure."

**Troy Streckenbach  
Brown County Executive**



"The recent and continued improvements to I-41 will mean greater economic growth opportunities for Northeast Wisconsin which will no doubt lead to a stronger, safer and more vibrant Brown County. Thriving communities rely on well-maintained infrastructure, and adequate investment in our infrastructure will ensure Brown County has safe roadways and continues to grow and prosper."

**Brad Toll, President/CEO  
Greater Green Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau**



"The new I-41 design makes it incredibly easy for visitors to navigate our community. The increased capacity will also make arrivals and departures for major events easy and stress-free. The beautiful structure design represents a prospering, successful community in which anyone would want to live, work and play!"

**Jerry Murphy, Executive Director  
New North, Inc.**



"It's huge. We are only really as good as the level of investment in infrastructure that's represented in the community. You can't fake that. Most of the companies here are fairly dependent on carrier trucking. That's their lifeline, really, to the markets that they serve. So this is a project that will pay dividends to the northeast (Wisconsin) economy for quite some time to come. I would say that we're already seeing benefits."



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# The new I-41 is almost ready



Eric Gwidt, Construction Project Manager speaks at one of the final I-41 Project public information meetings.



An example of Community Sensitive Solutions being installed at the Lombardi Avenue interchange.

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County have been or are being reconstructed to safer design standards. These interchanges include (from north to south):

- Lineville Road (County M)
- I-43
- Velp Avenue (US 141)
- WIS 29
- Mason Street (WIS 54)
- Lombardi Avenue (County VK)
- Waube Lane/Oneida Street (County AAA)
- Main Avenue (County G)
- Scheuring Road (County F)

Including both Winnebago and Brown Counties, the Project added 40 roundabouts, which were relatively new to the area, but

designation of 41, and is now referred to as I-41. Some of the aesthetic enhancements to the project include elements of Community Sensitive Solutions (CSS). CSS is the process of weaving the community's architectural, cultural, historical and environmental fabric into structures such as retaining walls, bridges and sound walls.

According to Jerry Murphy, executive director of the New North, Inc., these aesthetic enhancements will immediately help in recruiting new companies and talent to the area. "One of the things I think is enormously cool about this project is that the aesthetics of the infrastructure were

provide safer, more efficient and more energy-efficient intersection control. "They took some time for motorists to get accustomed to, but the results have been excellent, and roundabouts get a lot of compliments now," Buchholz said.

Other important safety features of the I-41 Project include:

- Message boards and traffic cameras linked to Wisconsin's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)
- Improved interchange ramps
- Higher median barriers
- Wider shoulders
- Smoother riding surfaces
- Rumble strips throughout
- Intersection improvements
- Crash investigation sites
- Collector-distributor roadways
- Pedestrian and bicycle enhancements
- Improved signs and markings

US 41 was upgraded to interstate status and was able to retain the numerical

taken into account and included as a important element. Businesses looking to invest in a community only get a very short view of the culture, caliber and character of a community. I think that does actually have an impact," Murphy said.

With extensive planning in advance of construction, there were not too many unexpected developments, but Mike King, WisDOT's I-41 construction supervisor, was surprised by one thing. "We just didn't get a lot of complaints from people who put up with a large inconvenience," King said. "That's highly unusual, and we appreciate the cooperation we've received from everyone."

Known as the "Main Street" of Northeast Wisconsin, I-41 is used by tens of thousands of people each day. It is a major transportation corridor linking Green Bay, the Fox Valley and northern Wisconsin to the urban centers of Madison and Milwaukee. It was originally constructed between 1952 and 1974 and was built to handle rural traffic volumes. WisDOT expects traffic volumes to double over the next 20 years. The improvements to I-41 are expected to last up to 75 years.



An aerial view of the I-41/I-43 interchange, looking east at I-43.



New I-41 signs have now replaced the US 41 signs.

**INSIDE**

**The final I-41 Project update**

- Construction outlook for 2016



- Area leaders talk I-41 Project Impacts

- Plus...



# I-41 Project

• Annual Update 2016

## Thank you

Our sincere thanks go out to all motorists and residents who have endured road construction for many years, to the business owners who have been understanding and patient, to the contractors who have done great work, and to the WisDOT staff who have coordinated this massive project. We have all done it together.



Will Dorsey  
Director  
WisDOT NE Region

This will be the last newsletter from the I-41 Project. Although there will be some landscaping and finish work stretching into next year, as far as the motoring public is concerned, the Project will be completed in 2016.

For the remainder of the 2016 construction season, please continue to use caution in the construction zones—plan a little extra time for your trip to help keep everyone safe. Then, enjoy the bigger, better, safer I-41!



Colleen Harris  
Deputy Director  
WisDOT NE Region



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