



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

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I-794 Highway-to-Boulevard Option is Best for City of Milwaukee

**Statement from Alderman Alex Brower, Alderman Robert J. Bauman, and
Alderwoman Sharlen P. Moore**

July 13, 2026

On Wednesday (July 8), Mayor Johnson stated his preference in the ongoing discussion on what to do about the I-794 stretch between the Marquette Interchange and Lake Interchange. Mayor Johnson noted he would like to see the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) make changes to this segment, rather than tear it down to street level.

The Mayor is only one part of local government, and importantly, his position does not reflect that of the entire city.

As members of the Common Council, we believe that WisDOT's preferred path forward should be to remove the freeway and replace it with an at-grade surface street network.

Removal of the freeway would bring numerous long-term benefits to Milwaukee. Namely, it would create 16 acres of developable land that could support additional housing, attract new residents, grow the city's tax base, and support local businesses. It also eliminates a physical barrier that will allow parts of our city to become more interconnected, and prioritizes people over cars.

2026 has been dubbed the year of housing, and as such, we want to see the freeway land redeveloped to include affordable and accessible housing for all of Milwaukee.

We know that an option like this is viable and that people can adapt to such a change. Critics of freeway removal need only look back to the early 2000s, when the Park East Freeway was removed, and to the countless benefits that followed despite the uncertainty at the time.

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This is a generational opportunity for our city, and we should not bristle at the idea of freeway removal simply because it represents the greatest departure from the current status quo. We should embrace the change that will yield the greatest long-term benefit for Milwaukee, rather than settling for less because of established traffic patterns.

The Highway-to-Boulevard vision is clearly the best option to provide jobs, housing options, and increase the tax-base to support city services. Again, we do not support reconstructing an elevated highway through downtown Milwaukee.

We support the community vision created by residents for residents - rethink794.com. The options and more information can be seen at [Lake Interchange Study](#).