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Winter 2024

Welcome to the I-94 e-Update! Here are the latest happenings on the project.

Proposed Drainage Tunnel Will Help Address I-94 Flooding

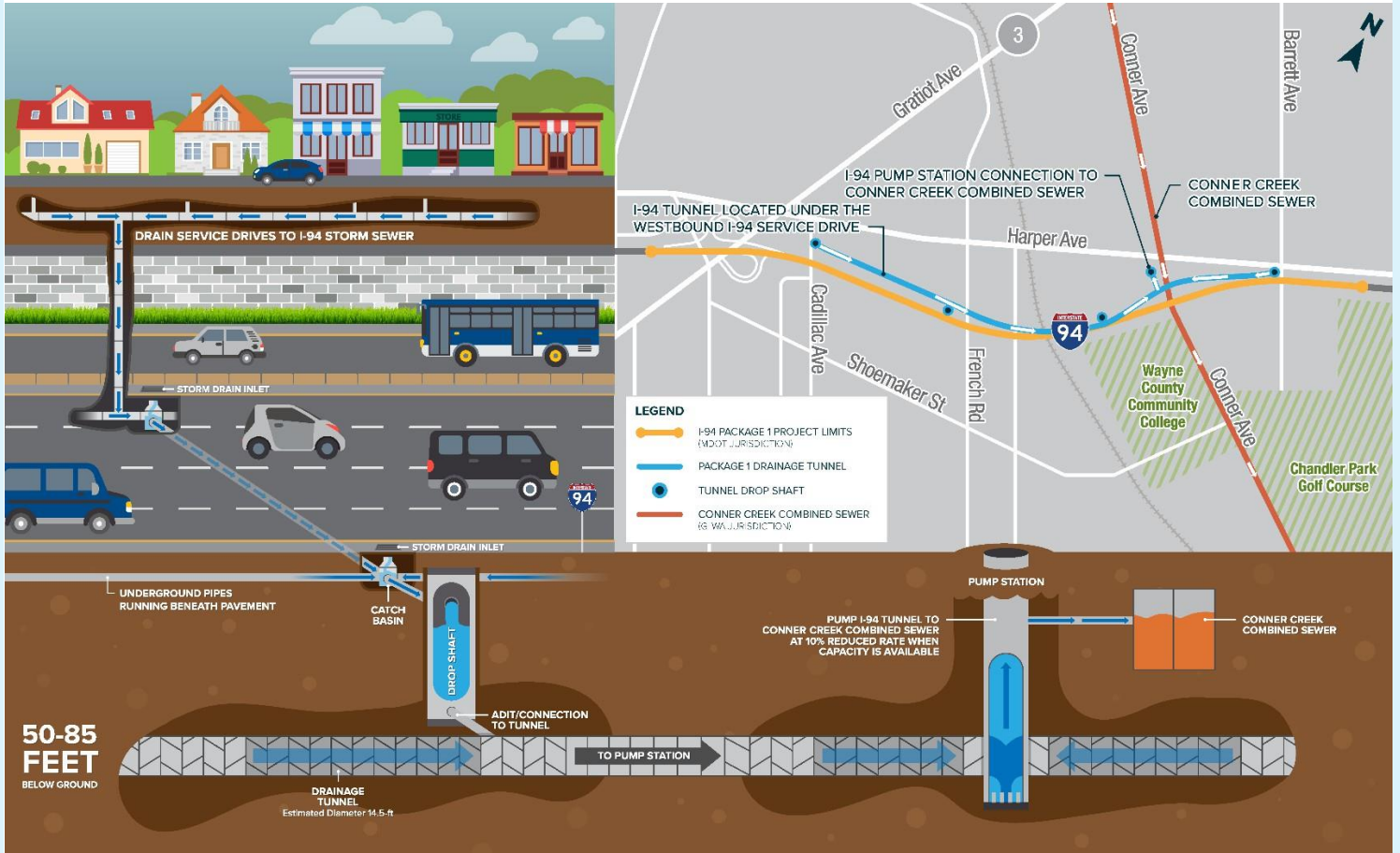


Summer 2021: Historic events caused widespread flooding on I-94 and in surrounding neighborhoods.

This October, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) introduced a new drainage tunnel plan to address flooding on the east side of Detroit on the I-94 freeway and in some surrounding neighborhoods. The concept was introduced at six meetings held in October and November with districts 3, 4 and 5, the Canfield Consortium, the 5th Precinct, and a community meeting held at Wayne County Community College, Eastern Campus. The tunnel is set to be built under Package 1 of the project (Burns to Barrett avenues) from 2026 to 2028 and will be bored primarily under the service drive 50-85 feet underground from west (Burns Avenue) to east (Barrett Avenue). Under the guidance of the City of Detroit's Stormwater Ordinance, the tunnel would capture, detain and then discharge stormwater from service drives and freeways to the Conner Creek Combined Sewer system.

Drainage tunnel collaboration began in 2019 between MDOT, the Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD), the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The goal was to reach a final agreement that was cost-effective, resilient and advanced environmental benefits.

Drainage Tunnel Details



This diagram shows the tunnel's location both on a map and how it might look below ground.

The tunnel will be designed to accommodate heavier storm events and provide additional storage for stormwater. The tunnel will disconnect drains from three service drives from the city's combined sewer system and drain them to the I-94 tunnel. This will cause an 82 percent reduction in I-94 stormwater to the city's system, greatly reducing the risk of flooding on the freeway and in surrounding neighborhoods. There will also be a drainage tunnel on the west side of the project that has been in the works since the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) process.

MDOT is also funding up to \$38 million of work by the GLWA and the DWSD to net and disinfect the stormwater at three sewer overflow points to the Detroit River, improving the river's water quality.

The tunnel launch and mining site will be situated between Harper Avenue to the north, the westbound I-94 service drive to the south, Cadillac Avenue to the west, and Bewick Street to the east.

Potential Tunnel Construction Impacts and Proposed Mitigation Measures

MDOT strives to minimize the impacts of their construction on surrounding communities. Here is a list of **potential** impacts and mitigation measures that MDOT foresees from **proposed** tunnel construction:

Right of Way

Impact: Permanent property is needed for the tunnel's launch shaft and property is temporarily needed to build the tunnel's other shafts.

Mitigation: The I-94 project team selected **vacant land with no buildings** owned by the Detroit Land Bank Authority as the location of the tunnel launch site.

Mobility Impacts

Impact: Temporary roadway and sidewalk closures are necessary.

Mitigation: First, MDOT will **conduct community meetings** at the start of each construction season. Second, MDOT will **address sidewalk and roadway conditions** along detour routes. Third, MDOT will **ensure that pedestrian detours are accessible** and compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Transit Impacts

Impact: There could be reduced access to bus stops and transit routes.

Mitigation: First, to avoid impacting existing bus stops, the **construction site will not have access to Cadillac Avenue**. Second, sidewalks will be kept open to **maintain access to DDOT bus stops for routes 11 and 67**.

Dust Control

Impact: Tunnel construction may cause dust pollution.

Mitigation: MDOT will **place a layer of stone** in the construction site for dust control, **utilize water trucks** to reduce dust at the construction site, and **conduct routine street sweeping** to reduce dust and dirt from the construction site on city streets.

Environmental Concerns

Impact: Tree and shrub removal will be required for construction and there's risk of disturbing contaminated material.

Mitigation: MDOT has a **3-to-1 tree replacement policy**, meaning three trees will be planted for every tree removed. MDOT also has a **4-to-1 shrub replacement policy**, meaning four shrubs will be planted for every shrub removed. MDOT will **perform a project area contamination survey**; any contaminated material disturbed by construction will be disposed of at a licensed landfill.

Light Pollution

Impact: Lighting from tunnel construction may cause light pollution.

Mitigation: MDOT will require the contractor to direct lighting into the construction site and **not point lights toward residential areas**. MDOT will require **fencing with visual shielding** to minimize visual impacts from construction and site lighting.

Safety

Impact: Having a construction site in a residential area raises safety concerns.

Mitigation: MDOT will implement a site **perimeter-shielded fence** for safety and a visual barrier and a **security access gate** to create controlled access to the construction site.



Solutions for construction impacts include maintaining access to transit routes throughout construction.

We hope that was a thorough introduction to the eastside I-94 drainage tunnel. Follow along with us to hear more updates as the project progresses! MDOT held meetings with districts 3, 4 and 5, the Canfield Consortium, and the 5th Precinct, and a public meeting at Wayne County Community College, Eastern Campus.

Eastside I-94 Drainage Tunnel Outreach



Community members participated in an open house and question-and-answer session.

MDOT has been out in the community introducing the eastside I-94 drainage tunnel this fall. The meetings allowed the public an opportunity to weigh in with their thoughts and concerns as MDOT begins to design the tunnel. “We want to hear from the public now and throughout the design and construction of the tunnel project,” said Adam Wayne, MDOT senior project manager for the I-94 modernization project. Stay tuned, there will be more meetings as project design moves forward.



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HAPPY HOLIDAYS AND A HAPPY, HEALTHY NEW YEAR!

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