## PROGRAM TIMELINE

The Council Bluffs Interstate System was originally constructed in the 1960s and was developed to the design standards of that time.

Although routine maintenance projects were completed in the 1980s and 1990s, significant changes had not been made to the Council Bluffs Interstate System since its original construction.





Needs assessment

In 1997, the City of Council Bluffs and Metropolitan Area Planning Agency conducted a study of the interstate system in Council Bluffs. The Council Bluffs Interstate System Needs Study, completed in 1999, indicated that many interstate features were outdated and did not meet today's design standards, guidelines, or operational criteria. Additionally, the system did not provide adequate travel capacity for future traffic.

Environmental studies and preliminary design

In 2002, the Iowa DOT initiated the Council Bluffs Interstate System Improvement Program to address the issues raised by the 1997 Council Bluffs Interstate System Needs Study and developed solutions for improving the interstate system in the Council Bluffs metro area.

Initial construction project

In 2006, the Iowa DOT constructed an interim project on the overlapping section of I-80/I-29 to add a third lane in the eastbound direction to ease congestion that occurs when eastbound I-80 and southbound I-29 merge onto one roadway. The interim project was a short-term solution to congestion problems.

In 2008, the 24th Street Bridge replacement was the first completed project in a series of projects to improve the capacity of the Council Bluffs Interstate System. A project of this magnitude is typically constructed over two consecutive construction seasons, but due to the critical location of this interchange, traffic restrictions on 24th Street needed to be limited to a single season. The interchange serves major attractions, hotels and shopping outlets in Council Bluffs. To serve the heavy daily traffic created by these nearby businesses, 24th Street and I-80/I-29 remained open during construction of the new bridge.

**Program funding and acceleration** 

In late 2013, the Iowa DOT Transportation Commission committed to funding the Program for the full build out of all improvements. Since then, 70 projects were consolidated into 13 contract packages for efficiency and to encourage more competitive bidding. The overall project schedule was accelerated, reducing the design and construction schedule from over 20 years to 16 years. Additionally, the Iowa DOT was able to incorporate I-29/I-480/West Broadway improvements without significant impacts to other project schedules.

After more than a decade of construction along the overlapping segments of Interstates 80 and 29 through Council Bluffs, motorists were finally able to use the dual, divided freeway in 2019. The concept was designed to improve traffic flow and motorist safety along a three-mile corridor through Council Bluffs.

The Railroad relocation project consolidated the CBEC Railway and BNSF Railway railroad operations into a new common corridor west of Mosquito Creek under I-29 and Iowa 92. Construction occurred between 2015 and 2016. Rail consolidation will improve operations at the South Expressway Interchange and greatly reduce roadway/railway conflicts. This effort has eliminated numerous atgrade rail crossings and the CBEC Railway corridor that previously bisected Lewis Central High School.

The Madison Avenue Interchange Reconstruction Project, the final major interchange of the larger interstate reconstruction program, began in 2022 and is expected to be complete in 2025. This project will rebuild the interchange and bridges over Mosquito Creek to meet current design standards and traffic capacity needs.

Construction in the I-29/I-480/West Broadway System Interchange area will address capacity needs, improve safety, and correct functional design issues at this location and at adjacent interchanges. The project will provide direct access to West Broadway from I-29 via one-way frontage roads to offer better access to destinations in Council Bluffs from I-29.