

= Interstate 235 (Iowa) =

Interstate 235 (I @-@ 235) in Iowa is an auxiliary Interstate Highway that runs just north of downtown Des Moines through the heart of the Des Moines metropolitan area . I @-@ 235 runs from the junction of Interstate 35 and Interstate 80 in West Des Moines to the separation of the same two interstates in Ankeny . The highway is approximately 14 miles (23 km) long .

I @-@ 235 , which had seen little improvement since its construction in the 1960s , was completely rebuilt and widened in a project that spanned most of the 2000s . Prior to the reconstruction , I @-@ 235 had two lanes in each direction with a third lane near downtown ; the entire route now has at least three lanes of traffic in each direction , with an additional one or two lanes closer to the heart of the city . The modernized freeway now handles on average between 75 @,@ 000 ? 125 @,@ 000 vehicles per day , making it the busiest highway in the state of Iowa .

= = Route description = =

Interstate 235 begins at the western intersection of Interstate 35 and Interstate 80 , known locally as the West Mixmaster . Here , eastbound I @-@ 80 exits the highway , which becomes I @-@ 235 and joins northbound I @-@ 35 . From the West Mixmaster , I @-@ 235 heads east . Almost immediately is a half @-@ diamond interchange with 50th Street in West Des Moines . One mile (1 @.@ 6 km) later is a partial @-@ cloverleaf interchange with Valley West Drive , which was renamed from 35th Street in 1988 due to its proximity to Valley West Mall and Valley High School .

At Windsor Heights at a tight partial @-@ cloverleaf interchange I @-@ 235 meets 73rd Street / 8th Street . The interchange is particularly tight because of an Iowa Interstate Railroad line just to the east . 73rd Street / 8th Street is actually a single road : north of I @-@ 235 , 73rd Street follows the Des Moines street numbering plan , while south of I @-@ 235 , 8th Street follows the older street numbering plan of West Des Moines .

At the 63rd Street interchange , I @-@ 235 picks up a fourth lane of eastbound travel and drops a lane westbound . Now within the city limits of Des Moines , it passes through the heavily wooded Waterbury neighborhood . Near the 42nd Street interchange , I @-@ 235 curves to the south around Theodore Roosevelt High School . One half @-@ mile (0 @.@ 80 km) later is an interchange with 31st Street , which provides access to Drake University to the north , and to Terrace Hill , the governor 's mansion , to the south .

East of 31st Street , I @-@ 235 briefly picks up a fifth lane and drops a lane westbound , creating a 10 @-@ lane freeway just west of downtown . This stretch of freeway receives , on average , over 125 @,@ 000 vehicles per day , making it the busiest stretch of road in the state .

There are three eastbound interchanges connecting I @-@ 235 to downtown Des Moines . Martin Luther King Jr . Parkway and 19th Street , a pair of one @-@ way streets , lead traffic to the west of downtown . Keosauqua Way , known locally as Keo Way , enters downtown from the northwest . These interchanges are combined westbound . Closer to the Des Moines River , a combined interchange in each direction filters off the rest of downtown traffic to two destinations : Seventh Street and Sixth Avenue , and Third Street and Second Avenue , each of which are pairs of one @-@ way streets . The fourth lane of traffic drops off at this combined interchange .

At the Des Moines River , I @-@ 235 passes Wells Fargo Arena , the main Iowa Events Center destination , on the western shore and the Des Moines Botanical Center on the eastern shore . On the eastern side of Des Moines , it passes the East Village , the Iowa State Capitol , and East High School before the interchange with U.S. Route 69 . One mile (1 @.@ 6 km) east is an interchange with East University Avenue , which , up to now had been relatively parallel to I @-@ 235 . East University provides access to the Iowa State Fairgrounds for northbound I @-@ 35 and eastbound I @-@ 80 traffic .

At University Avenue , I @-@ 235 begins curving to the north , dividing an industrial district to the west and residential areas to the east . 1 1 ? 2 miles (2 @.@ 4 km) to the north , it intersects East Euclid Avenue at a partial @-@ cloverleaf interchange . It continues north for another 1 1 ? 2 miles (2 @.@ 4 km) until it meets Interstate 35 and Interstate 80 again at the East Mixmaster .

= = History = =

The first section of Interstate 235 to open , from Cottage Grove Avenue to Keo Way , opened on December 14 , 1961 . Over the next seven years , sections of I @-@ 235 opened , spreading east and west toward the mixmasters until it was completed on October 30 , 1968 .

In October 1963 , the Des Moines city council designated I @-@ 235 the John MacVicar Freeway in honor of two former mayors of Des Moines : John MacVicar , Sr. , (1896 ? 1900 , 1916 ? 1918 , 1928) and John MacVicar , Jr . , (1942 ? 1948) . However , this name is seldom used ; most people simply refer to it as I @-@ 235 .

In March 2002 , a six @-@ year @-@ long project to completely rebuild I @-@ 235 and the bridges which cross it began . The first two years consisted of rebuilding most of the bridges which cross it , starting with 42nd Street in West Des Moines . The final four years of the project entailed finishing the remaining bridges , widening , regrading , and repaving the entire length of the highway .

= = = Pedestrian bridges = = =

An additional part of the highway improvement plan were three pedestrian bridges , located at 6th , 40th and 44th Streets . The three bridges were replacements for bridges which were too narrow to accommodate the newly widened highway . These highly visible bridges act as icons , locating the neighborhoods for travelers along the freeway . The design of the I @-@ 235 pedestrian bridges was completed by Boston @-@ based bridge designer Miguel Rosales in collaboration with HNTB Engineering . The three bridges , the Edna M. Griffin Memorial Bridge (6th Street) , the 40th Street Pedestrian Bridge , and the Rider Way Pedestrian Bridge (44th Street) were each completed by 2005 .

The new design utilizes basket @-@ handle steel arches with clear spans of approximately 230 feet (70 m) . Inclined cables connect the steel blue arches to the pre @-@ stressed concrete deck . By selecting a tied arch form , the Iowa Department of Transportation was able to keep disruption of traffic to a minimum during construction . An innovative curved screen system is used to enhance security and the appearance of the structure creating a visually appealing experience for pedestrians and bicyclists using the bridge . The resulting series of bridges has created a distinctive form that is unique to the city and the state . The city of Des Moines recently relit the bridges with LED lighting .

= = Exit list = =

The entire route is in Polk County .