

= Interstate 94 in Michigan =

Interstate 94 (I @-@ 94) is a part of the Interstate Highway System that runs from Billings , Montana , to the Lower Peninsula of the US state of Michigan . In Michigan , it is a state trunkline highway that enters the state south of New Buffalo and runs eastward through several metropolitan areas in the southern section of the state . The highway serves Benton Harbor , Kalamazoo , Battle Creek on the west side of the peninsula . From there it also runs through Jackson and Ann Arbor , and portions of Metro Detroit , before angling northeasterly to Port Huron , where it terminates on the Blue Water Bridge at the Canadian border .

The first segment of what later became I @-@ 94 within the state , the Willow Run Expressway , was built near Ypsilanti and Belleville in 1941 , with an easterly extension to Detroit in 1945 . This expressway was initially numbered M @-@ 112 . By 1960 , the length of I @-@ 94 was completed from Detroit to New Buffalo . Subsequent extensions in the 1960s completed most of the rest of the route . The last segment opened to the public in 1972 when Indiana completed their connection across the state line . The routing of I @-@ 94 is notable for containing the first full freeway @-@ to @-@ freeway interchange in the United States , connecting to the Lodge Freeway (M @-@ 10) , and for comprising the first complete border @-@ to @-@ border toll @-@ free freeway in a state in the United States . The highway has one auxiliary route , Interstate 194 , which serves downtown Battle Creek , and eight business routes .

= = Route description = =

The entire length of I @-@ 94 is listed on the National Highway System , a network of roadways important to the country 's economy , defense , and mobility . The freeway carries 154 @,@ 800 vehicles on average between I @-@ 75 and Chene Street in Detroit and 15 @,@ 370 vehicles immediately east of the Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron ; the highest and lowest traffic counts in 2013 , respectively . As the state trunkline highway closest to the lake shore in these areas , I @-@ 94 carries the Lake Michigan Circle Tour south of Benton Harbor ? St. Joseph and the Lake Huron Circle Tour in the Port Huron area . Sections through the Detroit area are named the Detroit Industrial and Edsel Ford freeways . I @-@ 94 in the state is either a four- or six @-@ lane freeway for most of its length ; one segment in the Detroit area has up to ten lanes total near the airport .

= = = Southwestern Michigan = = =

I @-@ 94 crosses into Michigan south of New Buffalo and parallels the Lake Michigan shoreline about three miles (4 @.@ 8 km) inland . The freeway runs northeasterly through rural Michiana farmland in the southwestern corner of the Lower Peninsula . I @-@ 94 traverses an area just east of the Warren Dunes State Park as the freeway runs parallel to the Red Arrow Highway . I @-@ 94 crosses its companion highway south of St. Joseph ; Red Arrow turns northward carrying the business loop for Benton Harbor and St. Joseph . The freeway curves further inland to cross the St. Joseph River near Riverview Park . East of Benton Harbor , I @-@ 94 meets the Napier Avenue where US 31 merges onto the freeway . East of the Southwest Michigan Regional Airport , I @-@ 94 / US 31 meets the southern end of I @-@ 196 ; US 31 departs the I @-@ 94 freeway to follow I @-@ 196 , and I @-@ 94 continues its course away from Lake Michigan .

South of Coloma , I @-@ 94 turns eastward and roughly follows the Paw Paw River on a course that takes it south of Watervliet and Hartford . Between the latter two cities , the freeway crosses from northeastern Berrien County into western Van Buren County . It curves around and between Lake Cora and Threemile Lake near the junction with the northern end of M @-@ 51 . About four miles (6 @.@ 4 km) further east , I @-@ 94 crosses M @-@ 40 south of Paw Paw . Continuing eastward , I @-@ 94 runs south of Mattawan before crossing into western Kalamazoo County .

In Texas Township , the freeway enters the western edges of the Kalamazoo suburbs . South of the campus for Western Michigan University 's College of Engineering & Applied Sciences in Portage , I @-@ 94 intersects US 131 . That freeway also carries Kalamazoo 's business loop northward . Near

the Kalamazoo / Battle Creek International Airport , I @-@ 94 crosses into the southeastern corner of Kalamazoo before entering Comstock Township . The freeway intersects the eastern end of the business loop at a partial interchange near Morrow Lake in the township . I @-@ 94 continues eastward out of the eastern Kalamazoo suburbs . It parallels the Kalamazoo River through the Galesburg area . Before crossing into Calhoun County on the east side of Battle Creek , I @-@ 94 has the only driveway on any of Michigan 's Interstate Highways for a gate providing access for military vehicles into the Fort Custer Training Center .

I @-@ 94 crosses into Calhoun County southwest of the W. K. Kellogg Airport and enters the city of Battle Creek . Immediately east of the county line , the freeway has an interchange with the western end of Battle Creek 's business loop . Next to the Lakeview Square Mall , I @-@ 94 meets its own auxiliary Interstate in Michigan : I @-@ 194 . I @-@ 94 turns to the northwest to round Beadle Lake , intersecting M @-@ 294 before crossing the Kalamazoo River . East of the river crossing , the freeway meets an interchange for M @-@ 96 , M @-@ 311 and the eastern end of the Battle Creek business loop near the FireKeepers Casino in Emmett Township . Turning back eastward , I @-@ 94 exits the eastern Battle Creek suburbs and continues to an interchange with I @-@ 69 near Marshall ; the business loop for Marshall follows I @-@ 69 southward .

= = = Into Metro Detroit = = =

Continuing eastward I @-@ 94 traverses rural land on the north side of Marshall . The freeway runs north of , and parallel to , the Kalamazoo River through eastern Calhoun County . It angles southeasterly toward Albion before returning to an easterly course on the north side of town . I @-@ 94 crosses into western Jackson County before intersecting M @-@ 99 . From there , it runs generally due east with a jog around Parma on a course to Jackson . West of the Jackson County Airport , the Jackson business loop follows M @-@ 60 southward and I @-@ 94 travels through the north side of Jackson . North of downtown , US 127 merges in from the north and runs concurrently with I @-@ 94 around the city . Southeast of the Michigan State Prison , US 127 departs to the south , and I @-@ 94 continues eastward through eastern Jackson County .

The freeway runs north of a racetrack complex in Chelsea next to the M @-@ 52 interchange . As I @-@ 94 continues easterly , it passes into the western edge of the Ann Arbor area . West of downtown , the M @-@ 14 freeway splits off to the northeast , and I @-@ 94 turns to the south and southeast to curve around the south side of the city . The freeway passes between the Briarwood Mall and the Ann Arbor Municipal Airport . On the southeastern corner of Ann Arbor , I @-@ 94 intersects US 23 and continues around the south side of Ypsilanti . South of that city , the freeway also carries US 12 and crosses the Huron River north of its entry into Ford Lake . I @-@ 94 jogs southeasterly around the south side of the Willow Run Airport complex and crosses into Wayne County .

South of Willow Run , I @-@ 94 parallels Belleville Lake . East of the lake , it intersects I @-@ 275 near the northwest corner of Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport and angles northeasterly through the southwestern Detroit suburbs along the Detroit Industrial Freeway . I @-@ 94 used the Gateway Bridge over the single @-@ point interchange at US 24 (Telegraph Road) in Taylor ; these bridges were inspired by Super Bowl XL and provide a western gateway to the city . Further east , the freeway intersects M @-@ 39 (Southfield Freeway) and passes the Uniroyal Giant Tire in Allen Park . I @-@ 94 then turns to the northeast through the Ford River Rouge Complex in Dearborn before turning back easterly on the Edsel Ford Freeway into Detroit .

I @-@ 94 crosses Detroit in an east ? west direction well inland of , and parallel to , the Detroit River . The freeway intersects I @-@ 96 (Jeffries Freeway) and M @-@ 10 (Lodge Freeway) on the West Side , passing the main campus of Wayne State University before crossing onto the East Side at M @-@ 1 (Woodward Avenue) . Immediately east of the interchange with I @-@ 75 (Chrysler Freeway) , I @-@ 94 forms the southern border of the Milwaukee Junction district . The Edsel Ford Freeway continues through residential neighborhoods of Detroit 's East Side . I @-@ 94 turns more northerly , mimicking the shoreline of Lake St. Clair , and exits Detroit for Harper Woods . Just north of the interchange for M @-@ 102 (Vernier Road) , the freeway crosses 8 Mile Road

and enters Macomb County .

== North to Canada ==

Running northward through Macomb County , I @-@ 94 meets the eastern end of I @-@ 696 (Reuther Freeway) about three miles (4 @. @ 8 km) north of the county line in St. Clair Shores . The freeway continues to parallel the lakeshore , and travels to the west of Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Harrison Township . I @-@ 94 turns back to the northwest at 23 Mile Road at the interchange with M @-@ 3 and M @-@ 29 . North of 26 Mile Road , the freeway exits the northern suburbs and crosses into farmland in The Thumb region .

South of Michigan Meadows Golf Course , I @-@ 94 crosses County Line Road and enters St. Clair County . The freeway continues northeasterly as far as Marysville before turning northward near the St. Clair County International Airport . From there , it runs roughly parallel to the St. Clair River . I @-@ 94 runs along the western edge of residential areas for Marysville and Port Huron as it continues northward . Immediately west of downtown Port Huron , I @-@ 94 intersects with I @-@ 69 ; the two freeways merge and turn first east and then north through an interchange that also features connections to BL I @-@ 69 .

I @-@ 94 / I @-@ 69 turns back to the east about a mile (1 @. @ 6 km) north of their confluence to cross the Black River north of downtown . On the eastern bank of the river , there is one final interchange for M @-@ 25 and BL I @-@ 69 / BL I @-@ 94 before the freeway reaches the toll and customs plazas for the twin @-@ span Blue Water Bridge . Past these plazas , I @-@ 94 / I @-@ 69 ascends the approach to the bridge which cross the St. Clair River to Point Edward (Sarnia) , Ontario . At the international boundary at the center of the river , the I @-@ 94 designation jointly terminates with I @-@ 69 .

== History ==

== Predecessor highways ==

The first major overland transportation corridors in the future state of Michigan were the Indian trails . One of these , the St. Joseph Trail , followed the path of the modern I @-@ 94 . The State Trunkline Highway System was created on May 13 , 1913 , by an act of the Michigan Legislature ; at the time , Division 6 corresponded to the rough path of today 's I @-@ 94 . In 1919 , the Michigan State Highway Department (MSHD) signposted the highway system for the first time , and three different highways followed sections of the modern I @-@ 69 corridor . The original M @-@ 11 ran from the Indiana state line north to Coloma where M @-@ 17 connected easterly to Detroit . The third highway was M @-@ 19 from Detroit northeast to Port Huron .

On November 11 , 1926 , the United States Numbered Highway System was approved by the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) , and the original route of US 12 replaced the highways from the state line northeasterly to Detroit ; US 31 overlapped the highway between St. Joseph and Watervliet . The remainder of the future I @-@ 94 corridor was served by US 25 between Detroit and Port Huron . The first span of the Blue Water Bridge opened between Port Huron and Point Edward , Ontario , in 1938 .

== Early conversions to freeways ==

The first segments of upgraded highways along the future route of I @-@ 94 were added during World War II . Construction on the Willow Run Expressway started in 1941 before the US entered the war . It was opened on September 12 , 1942 , to provide improved access to Ford 's Willow Run bomber plants . The highway was given the M @-@ 112 designation at the time . The expressway was extended eastward as the Detroit Industrial Expressway into Detroit ; the first section opened in 1943 and the remainder was completed in March 1945 . Land acquisition for the Edsel Ford

Freeway started in 1945 . Originally referred to as the Crosstown Freeway , the freeway became known as the Edsel Ford Freeway following an April 1946 petition . The interchange between the Lodge Freeway and the Edsel Ford Freeway was built in 1953 as the first full freeway @-@ to @-@ freeway interchange in the United States . In mid @-@ 1956 , the M @-@ 112 designation was decommissioned and replaced by a rerouted US 12 . During the mid @-@ 1950s , the Detroit Streets and Rails campaign proposed a high @-@ speed rail line in the median of the Willow Run , Detroit Industrial and Edsel Ford freeways ; instead of building the rail line , special boarding stations adjacent to dedicated bus lanes in the interchanges along the highway were used .

In other parts of the state , other segments of highway were built to bypass the cities along the future I @-@ 94 corridor . In 1940 , a southern bypass of Battle Creek opened along Columbia Avenue , and the former routing through downtown on Michigan Avenue became a Business US 12 (Bus . US 12) . In late 1951 or early 1952 , a northerly bypass of Jackson opened , and the former route through downtown on Michigan Avenue became another Bus . US 12 . By the next year , the western half of the Jackson bypass opened , including a bypass of Parma . In 1954 , a new bypass of Kalamazoo and Galesburg opened ; US 12 was rerouted to follow the new highway while M @-@ 96 replaced part of the old route and US 12A in the area .

The first planning maps from 1947 for what later became the Interstate Highway System included a highway along I @-@ 94 's route in Michigan . This highway was included on the 1955 plan for the " National System of Interstate and Defense Highways " with a proposed spur in the Battle Creek area . The modern I @-@ 94 was numbered I @-@ 92 between Benton Harbor ? St. Joseph and Detroit with I @-@ 77 from Detroit to Port Huron in the August 1957 plans .

In April 1958 , the MSHD wanted to provide a single number for a more direct routing of a Detroit @-@ to ? Chicago freeway ; the state proposed rerouting I @-@ 94 to replace I @-@ 92 in the state , but retained the I @-@ 77 designation . On June 27 , 1958 , AASHO adopted their original numbering plan for Michigan , minus the state 's proposed changes . Around the same time , a section of M @-@ 146 near Port Huron was converted into an approach freeway for the Blue Water Bridge .

= = = Interstate Highway era = = =

In January 1959 , officials announced that sections of US 12 , the Willow Run , Detroit Industrial and Edsel Ford expressways were to be given the I @-@ 94 designation , temporarily co @-@ designated with US 12 . These sections connected Ann Arbor to Detroit , along with a bypass of Kalamazoo to Galesburg and a bypass of Jackson . Later that year , additional segments of I @-@ 94 were opened , starting with a 10 @-@ mile (16 km) section from Hartford to Coloma , then another from Paw Paw to Kalamazoo which connected with a segment between Galesburg to Battle Creek . The overall 45 @-@ mile (72 km) section from Paw Paw to Battle Creek was dedicated on December 7 , 1959 . In addition , a new northwest ? southeast section of freeway was built east of Ypsilanti to create a more gradual curve in the routing between present @-@ day exits 185 and 186 , the original routing of the Willow Run Expressway having followed present @-@ day Wiard Road . Signage for the state 's Interstate Highways was placed on hold pending finalization of the numbering scheme , and by late 1959 that signage was being added starting with I @-@ 75 and followed by the other open segments of freeway in the state .

Sections of freeway opened in southwestern Michigan in 1960 between the Benton Harbor ? St Joseph area and between Jackson and Ann Arbor ; the latter was built over existing portions of US 12 . In this year Michigan became the first state to complete a border @-@ to @-@ border toll @-@ free Interstate within their state , running for 205 miles (330 km) from Detroit toward New Buffalo , the longest toll @-@ free freeway in the country at the time .

In January 1962 , the US 12 designation was removed from the I @-@ 94 freeway . In the process , the designation was transferred to replace the US 112 designation in its entirety . After this transfer , I @-@ 94 was no longer concurrent with US 12 , except for the Ypsilanti bypass . In 1963 the freeway was extended south of New Buffalo to end at M @-@ 239 . Traffic was diverted down M @-@ 239 into Indiana where State Road 39 carried traffic the rest of the way to the Indiana Toll

Road . By the end of the year , a section of highway opened between Mount Clemens and Marysville , and US 25 was rerouted to run concurrently along the freeway from the New Baltimore area northward .

The eastern terminus of I @-@ 94 in the Port Huron area was dedicated on October 14 , 1964 , signaling the completion of the highway between Marysville and the Blue Water Bridge . Two years later , the gap between the Wayne ? Macomb county line and the end of the freeway near Mount Clemens was filled in when another section of freeway opened . North of Albion , the route of the freeway previously crossed a branch of the New York Central Railroad at @-@ grade ; the crossing was eliminated when the tracks were removed in 1968 .

The sections originally designated as the Willow Run Expressway were rebuilt from Rawsonville Road in Belleville to Ozga Road in Romulus starting in 1972 . As part of this reconstruction , the segment between Haggerty Road and Ozga Road was widened from four to six lanes , and the eastbound lanes were realigned to facilitate construction of an interchange with I @-@ 275 , a western bypass of Detroit which was under construction at the time . The Willow Run segment was also resurfaced at this point , as the old road bed did not contain steel mesh . Construction of this interchange also obliterated a partial interchange with Huron River Drive .

The final section of I @-@ 94 in Michigan opened to traffic on November 2 , 1972 , when the connection across the state line into Indiana was dedicated . This last segment in Michigan between M @-@ 239 and the state line opened when Indiana completed an 18 @-@ mile (29 km) segment of freeway in their state .

= = = Since completion = = =

On August 16 , 1987 , Northwest Airlines Flight 255 crashed after attempting to take off from Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County Airport , killing all but one passenger , Cecilia Cichan , upon exploding at an overpass at Middlebelt Road . A decade later , in July 1997 , the second span of the Blue Water Bridge opened between Port Huron and Point Edward , Ontario .

The original interchange with US 24 (Telegraph Road) had only two bridges and left hand exits were used throughout . This interchange was reconfigured in 2005 to a single @-@ point urban interchange (SPUI) design that was completed in December of that year . A pair of bridges called the Gateway Arch Bridges (alternately " Gateway to Detroit ") was incorporated in the new interchange .

In 2011 , construction was started to widen I @-@ 94 / I @-@ 69 approaching the Blue Water Bridge allowing for dedicated lanes for local traffic and for Blue Water Bridge traffic . The lane configuration changes have confused drivers in the area , especially motorists with outdated GPS devices ; because of this , MDOT installed updated signs complete with American and Canadian flags to help prevent drivers from heading to Canada by mistake .

Additional construction in the Port Huron area started in late 2013 to rebuild and reconfigure the I @-@ 94 / I @-@ 69 interchange outside the city . The project improved 3 @.@ 7 miles (6 @.@ 0 km) of freeway , replaced several bridges and ramps and cost \$ 76 million . In June 2014 , MDOT closed the ramps from I @-@ 69 eastbound to BL I @-@ 69 through the interchange until later in the year . The project is slated to be completed in 2015 .

= = Memorial highway names = =

As the original expressway through the center of Detroit was being planned in the 1940s , it was unofficially named the Harper ? McGraw Expressway after the streets along which it was to run . Some initial support surfaced to name it after Roy Chapin , the late president of the Hudson Motor Car Company and a former United States Secretary of Commerce under President Herbert Hoover . On April 23 , 1946 , the Detroit Common Council voted instead to name the highway after Edsel Ford , the son of Henry Ford and president of the Ford Motor Company from 1918 until his death in 1943 .

Two other original sections of I @-@ 94 's predecessor highways in the Detroit area were given

early names . The westernmost of these is the Willow Run Expressway , named for the Willow Run complex . The plants at Willow Run produced B @-@ 24 Liberator bombers by Ford Motor Company during World War II . The second , the Detroit Industrial Expressway , continued the route of the Willow Run Expressway eastward into Detroit . Both highways were built to move workers from Detroit to the industrial plants at Willow Run during the war and were later incorporated into I @-@ 94 in the 1950s as part of a Detroit ? Chicago highway .

The section of I @-@ 94 northeast of Detroit was named after former Congressman James G. O 'Hara by the Michigan Legislature . O 'Hara was a World War II veteran who served in the United States House from 1959 until 1977 . During his tenure in Congress , he procured federal funds for the construction of I @-@ 94 through his district . The first attempt to name the highway after him failed in 1991 , but the honor was included in a budget bill passed in 1997 . The section of I @-@ 94 was dedicated on October 16 , 1998 , after donors privately raised nearly \$ 10 @,@ 000 (equivalent to \$ 16 @,@ 945 in 2015) to pay for the highway signs .

A segment of I @-@ 94 in Battle Creek between the exits for Business Loop I @-@ 94 (BL I @-@ 94) and I @-@ 194 was named the 94th Combat Infantry Division Memorial Highway by the Michigan Legislature in 2002 . The name honors a unit of the US Army which was activated at the nearby Fort Custer in 1942 and served with distinction in the European theatre of World War II . Because the unit originated in Battle Creek , and its number matched that of the freeway , the Legislature thought it only fitting to name the section of highway for the unit . The name was dedicated in ceremonies at a rest stop along the section of I @-@ 94 on September 28 , 2002 .

Another piece of I @-@ 94 in Calhoun County was designated in 2004 as part of the Underground Railroad Memorial Highway . Starting in 1990 , the National Park Service started working to identify routes of the Underground Railroad . The Battle Creek area was active in the railroad during the Civil War , and the section of I @-@ 94 between exits 98 and 110 east of Battle Creek was included in the memorial designation .

In June 2012 , after a resolution passed by the Michigan Legislature was signed by Gov. Rick Snyder , a portion of I @-@ 94 in Taylor between Inkster and Pelham roads was named the " Auxiliary Lt. Dan Kromer Memorial Highway " after a 20 @-@ year veteran of the Taylor Police Department , who was killed in 2010 while helping motorists who had car trouble .

= = Exit list = =

= = Related trunklines = =

There are nine highways related to I @-@ 94 in Michigan . The first is the spur into downtown Battle Creek numbered I @-@ 194 and nicknamed " The Penetrator " and officially called the " Sojourner Truth Downtown Parkway " . This auxiliary Interstate Highway runs for about three miles (4 @.@ 8 km) to connect I @-@ 94 northward into downtown . The other eight highways are business loops of I @-@ 94 that connect various cities ' downtowns with the main freeway . Unlike I @-@ 194 , these loops are not freeways . Located from west to east along I @-@ 94 's routing in Michigan , they serve Benton Harbor ? St. Joseph , Kalamazoo , Battle Creek , Marshall , Albion , Jackson , Ann Arbor , and Port Huron .