



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 15, 2014

West Des Moines Contact:

McKinlee Ritter
Assistant to the City Manager
City of West Des Moines
515-222-3598
McKinlee.Ritter@wdm.iowa.gov

Waukeee Contact:

Amanda Gorsche Miller
Communications Director
City of Waukeee
515-978-7905
cell 515-240-5039
amanda@waukeee.org

**The Cities of West Des Moines and Waukeee Break Ground on
Grand Prairie Parkway Interchange**

The Cities of West Des Moines and Waukeee jointly broke ground today on the Grand Prairie Parkway Interchange project. Congressman Tom Latham, Waukeee Mayor Bill Peard and West Des Moines Mayor Steve Gaer all contributed comments at the ceremony celebrating the project that's been more than a decade in the making.

Held on the Grand Prairie Parkway Bridge connecting Waukeee and West Des Moines, both West Des Moines and Waukeee city councils attended, along with local business leaders. The collaborative project has a price tag of more than \$23 million, which includes engineering, inspection, purchase of the nearby rest area and contingencies. The cities will share the cost equally.

"We can get more accomplished by working together," said Waukeee Mayor Bill Peard. "We are excited that working with West Des Moines has been so successful and that the results will drive further growth in the Central Iowa economy."

The Grand Prairie Parkway Interchange will be a signature entrance off Interstate 80 and will serve as a vital link in continued commercial and residential growth in both Waukee and West Des Moines. Interchange drivers will be able to access the technology corridor in West Des Moines to the south, and the future Kettlestone development in Waukee to the north.

“Grand Prairie Parkway is an example of how regional collaboration efforts can have an abundant return on investment,” said Steve Gaer, Mayor of West Des Moines. “The interchange will open thousands of acres for new development, a new north-south route for traveling throughout the Western Des Moines Metropolitan area, and most importantly, additional opportunities for individuals and businesses to thrive in Iowa.”

The most innovative aspect of the Grand Prairie Parkway Interchange is its diverging diamond design—a first-of-its-kind transportation feature in Iowa. The diverging diamond design is well-known in other parts of the country for improving the safety of traffic entering interstate systems and allowing for increased vehicle capacity and reductions in time delays. The design also utilizes a smaller overall footprint which requires less right-of-way and leaves more room for development activity.

The interchange project is anticipated to begin in the coming month, while it is planned to reach completion in December 2015. Early estimates of traffic counts show 12,000 drivers a day will access the interchange once complete.

###