



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR PAT QUINN

# NEWS

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## **Governor Quinn Opens Long-Needed Interchange**

### *New Interchange Will Ease Congestion in Mount Vernon*

MOUNT VERNON – October 27, 2009. Governor Pat Quinn today announced the completion of a new interchange at Interstate 57/64 and Veterans Memorial Drive in Mount Vernon. The new interchange, which is opening eight months ahead of schedule, provides full access on and off of Veterans' Drive for both northbound and southbound motorists on I-57/64.

"I salute everyone who worked to make this critical interchange a reality," said Governor Quinn. "Not only will it ease congestion, but it will improve access to the interstate for businesses and serve as an important tool for future economic development in Mt. Vernon."

This new interchange will greatly enhance access, safety and mobility for motorists traveling to the rapidly developing areas in the southern part of Mount Vernon. The interchange will also ease congestion at the existing I-57/64 interchange with Illinois 15, which has seen immense development and now supports more than 33,800 vehicles per day.

"This project greatly improves the access to many areas within Mt. Vernon, which will make travel safer and more efficient," said Illinois Department of Transportation Secretary Gary Hannig. "Interstate 57/64 and Veteran's Memorial Drive are heavily traveled, so this new interchange brings a sigh of relief to motorists."

The \$15 million project includes entrance and exit ramps onto I-57/64 and an overpass and road that extend Veterans Memorial Drive west to intersect with Wells Bypass. The project was primarily funded by Federal Highway Administration through the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU). Construction began October 31, 2007 and was completed eight months ahead of schedule.

The idea to extend Veterans Memorial Drive over the interstate dates back approximately 15 years. Local officials were diligent in pressing for the interchange to ease congestion on Route 15 and to allow for development adjacent to the area that Veterans Drive services. Through the continued efforts of city government, the scope of the project was enlarged to include the diamond interchange for access to Interstate 57/64 for motorists on Veterans Memorial Drive.

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