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NEWS

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY TO AWARD $4 MILLION CONTRACT TO PLAN FOR THE EXTENSION OF ILLINOIS ROUTE 53/120 IN LAKE COUNTY

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway's Finance Administration Operations and Strategic Planning Committees today recommended approval of a $4 million contract award to Schaumburg-based TranSystems Corp. to continue to plan for the proposed extension of Illinois Route 53/120 in Lake County.

"This is an important step forward for the Illinois Route 53/120 Extension, which is expected to create thousands of jobs and drive economic development in Lake County and the region for decades to come," said Governor Pat Quinn. "This project can also serve as a national model for how to design and build a roadway that preserves and protects the environment and local communities."

The new contract recommended for approval today will develop a detailed engineering concept, evaluate cost estimates, refine traffic and revenue analyses and survey customers' willingness to pay tolls on the proposed extension. The contract also includes services to study the environmental and economic impacts of the project. Work is expected to take 18 months to complete.

"The Blue Ribbon Advisory Council's recommendations were the result of an open and transparent process that included tremendous cooperation that helped us reach consensus on this project," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Kristi Lafleur. "We expect this process to be a model for planning for all Tollway projects moving forward. The contract that we are recommending today allows us to continue this important work."

Another key recommendation from the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council was development of a coordinated, corridorwide land use plan. Last June, after reviewing the Council's report, the Tollway's Strategic Planning Committee agreed to participate such a plan. Lake County and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) are working to advance the land use plan through CMAP's Local Technical Assistance program. The process will actively engage each municipality along the corridor to develop an integrated plan for land use, transportation, economic development and open space. The Blue Ribbon Advisory Council recommended that the completed plan be adopted by Lake County and each municipality. The corridor plan process is expected to be underway by mid-2013.

"We are very happy to see this important project move forward," said Lake County Board Chairman Aaron Lawlor. "Lake County will continue to take an active role in making the project a reality and is happy to partner with CMAP in advancing the corridorwide land use plan."

"This project provides an opportunity to not only build a road that's in harmony with nature, but also forge an integrated plan for development in Central Lake County," said George Ranney, co-chair of the Illinois Route 53/120 Blue Ribbon Advisory Council.

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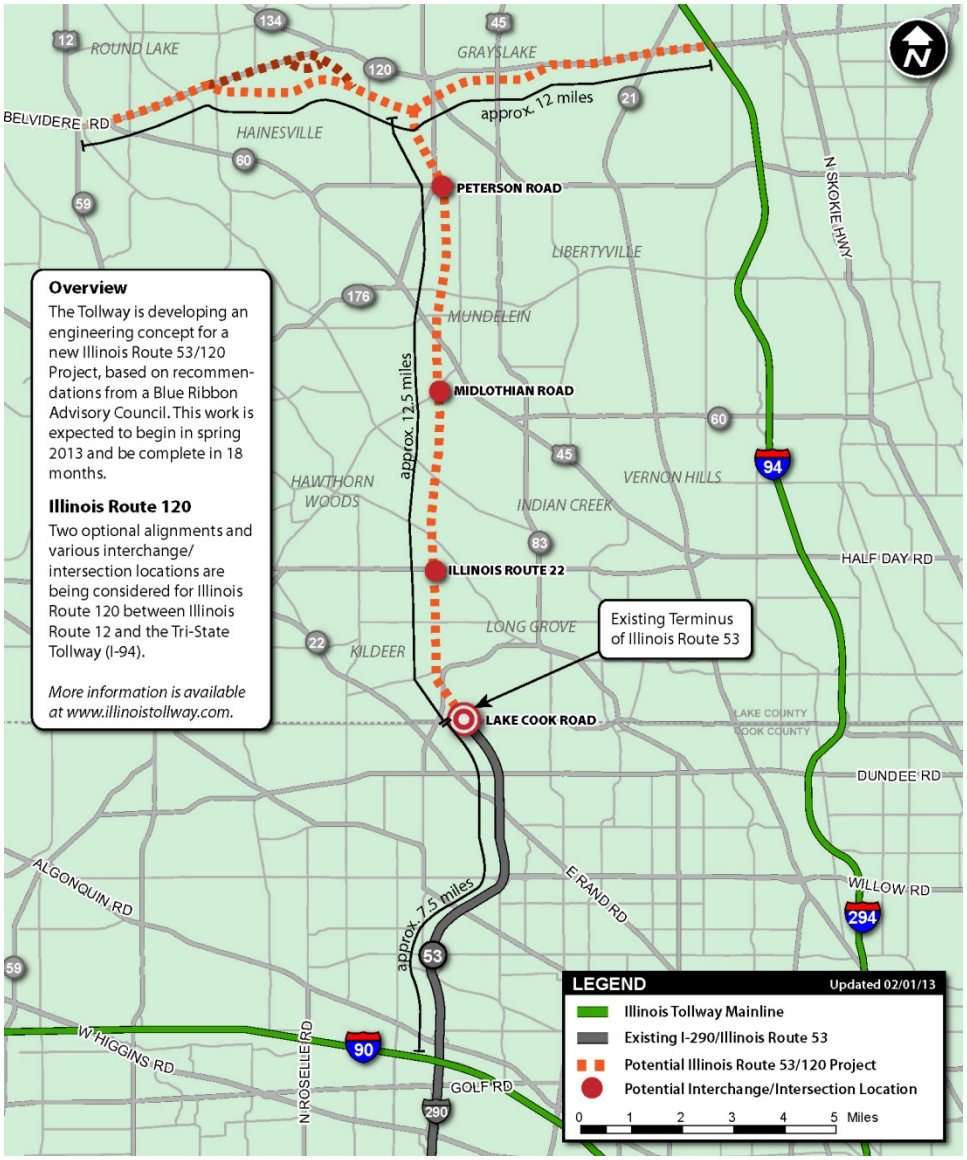
The Illinois Route 53/120 Extension is expected to cost between $2.3 and $2.7 billion. Cost estimates developed as part of the detailed engineering concept will inform future discussions on how to finance the project and potential sources of revenue. This could include local and other sources, as recommended by the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council.

The Blue Ribbon Advisory Council brought together public officials and representatives from business, labor, planning and environmental groups to assist in the planning and potential building of the Illinois Route 53/120 Extension in Lake County. Its final report recommended that the Tollway proceed with further development of Illinois Route 53 as a four-lane, 45 mph tolled parkway. The report also outlined the scope, configuration and design elements of the new roadway and proposed a financial framework for the project.

The Illinois Tollway Board of Directors is expected to approve the contract with TranSystems Corp. at its February 28, 2013, meeting.



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