



March 2006

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2006 Construction Preview

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Talk to the Tollway

Tell us what you think by taking our quick survey:

[How well is the Tollway getting construction information to you?](#)

Congestion-Relief Program At-a-Glance

Governor Blagojevich's \$5.3 billion Program will reduce travel times by:

- Rebuilding/restoring 90 percent of the system
- Adding lanes to 117 miles of existing roads
- Converting 20 mainline toll plazas to Open Road Tolling
- Extending I-355 South by 2007

Open Road Tolling



<p>Now Available</p> <p>Irving Park Rd., Cermak Rd., Touhy Ave., 82nd St. and 83rd St. (I-294); Edens Spur (I-94); Army Trail Rd. and Boughton Rd. (I-355); and Aurora (I-88).</p>	<p>Opening This Year</p> <p>South Beloit, Belvidere, Marengo, Elgin, Devon and River Rd. (I-90); Waukegan and 163rd St. (I-294); Meyers/York Rd., DeKalb and Dixon (I-88).</p>
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Dear Tollway Customer,

As we embark on the second year of the Tollway's \$5.3 billion Congestion-Relief Program, I am encouraged by your positive feedback about the benefits delivered by the first batch of plaza conversions to Open Road Tolling last year.

Among the thousands who responded to the Tollway's survey in the January eNewsletter, an overwhelming majority said your trip has improved as a result of Open Road Tolling (ORT). More than half of those responding said you've saved up to 10 minutes on a one-way trip. One-fourth have saved 15 minutes or more per trip, so everyone who drives the Tollway can benefit.

The goal of ORT was to improve your quality of life, and many of your survey responses mentioned the reduced hassle, increase in safety, decrease in road rage and, above all, savings in trip time. By year's end, ORT will be in place at all mainline toll plazas. Thanks for your patience as we make ORT a reality for every driver.

Question of the Month

Q: Why can't tolls be suspended when there are backups during construction?

A: Since no state or federal taxes are used in the Tollway's day-to-day operations, your tolls pay for the construction and maintenance of the 274-mile Illinois Tollway system. Toll revenue is also used to finance revenue bonds to raise additional money for construction, and the bond indenture does not permit free movements on the Tollway since tolls are needed to re-pay the bonds. Therefore, the Tollway uses other methods detailed in this newsletter to minimize backups.

[Submit a Question to the Tollway*](#)

*All concerns will be addressed, but we may not be able to provide a personalized answer to each person who submits a question.



Update

3 Missed Tolls = Violation Notice

Drivers without an I-PASS transponder who travel through the I-PASS-Only lanes or an unattended lane three or more times will get a violation notice mailed to the

Nobody enjoys driving through a construction zone, but we are glad to hear that Tollway patrons appreciate our efforts to rebuild the system as quickly as possible, while minimizing the impact on traffic during construction. Thanks for taking the time to share your feedback.

April 3rd is the start of Work Zone Safety Week so please remember to slow down, watch the signs carefully, wear your seat belt and keep 100 percent of your attention focused on the road while driving in a construction zone.

Best wishes for a safe 2006.

Sincerely,
Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor

Construction Update

[Tri-State \(I-294\)](#) | [North-South \(I-355\)](#) | [Reagan Memorial \(I-88\)](#) | [Open Road Tolling \(ORT\)](#)



Rebuild & Widen

South Tri-State

Phase I: Kingery Expressway to 167th Street

The South Tri-State from the Kingery Expressway (I-80/94) in South Holland to 95th St. in Oak Lawn will be rebuilt and widened to four lanes with work now underway in the five miles south of 167th St. (Phase I).

- Northbound work from Markham Yard to 167th St. is complete; Markham Yard to Kingery scheduled for Summer 2006 completion
- Median work over the winter will ensure completion of southbound lanes fall 2006
- New Chicago Southland Lincoln Oasis opened in February.

Phase II: 167th St. to 95th St.

- Advance work scheduled to begin this summer
- All work is off mainline or on local roads
- Major rebuild and widen work scheduled to begin in 2007



Warming blankets are used to help cure concrete in cold weather to keep construction moving in winter.

vehicle's registered owner. Of course, the easiest way to avoid violations and save on tolls is to purchase an I-PASS transponder. For more information, please visit the Toll Violations section at illinoistollway.com.

Manage Your Account
Online:
<http://www.getipass.com/>
Call: 1.800.UC.IPASS

Minimizing Impact



Keeping Lanes Open

The Illinois Tollway works hard to minimize the impact of road construction on your commutes and leisure travel. As part of the maintenance of traffic plan, engineers do everything possible to provide the same number of lanes during construction as there were prior to construction and try to limit lane closures to off-peak hours.

Other State Programs

In addition to Open Road Tolling, following are other state programs designed to improve your quality of life.

Avoid the Dan Ryan

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is starting the major re-construction of the Dan Ryan

Central Tri-State Balmoral Ave. to Dempster St.

Work begins this fall to rebuild the Central Tri-State and widen it to four lanes.

- Work starts in northbound lanes this year; southbound starts in 2007.
- Three lanes will remain open to traffic during daytime hours.
- Project scheduled to be completed by end of 2008.

[Read More About I-294](#) | [Back to Main Menu](#)



Extension I-55 to I-80

The North-South Tollway is being extended 12.5 miles south from the Stevenson Expressway to serve growing Will County, and is scheduled to be completed in 2007.

- Construction began this month on the 1.3-mile long bridge that will carry I-355 traffic over the Des Plaines River Valley.
- Construction complete on a low-level bridge that will be used to haul equipment to build the Des Plaines River Valley Bridge and will eventually become a scenic bike path across the Des Plaines River.
- Crossroad bridge construction requires runarounds and the closure of Gougar Rd. near 163rd St. soon. Detours will be posted.



This low-level bridge is being used to haul equipment to build the Des Plaines River Valley bridge and will eventually become a bike path.

[Read More About I-355](#) | [Back to Main Menu](#)



Rebuild & Widen

Naperville Rd. to Finley Rd.

- Begin advance work this spring, mostly off-system
- Interchange improvements at Naperville Rd., in 2006
- Minimal mainline impacts in 2006; two-year rebuild and widen to begin in 2007

Expressway (I-90/94). Work begins in April in both directions of the Dan Ryan on Chicago's South Side from 13th Street to the Bishop Ford (I-94) / I-57 Interchange.

Of the six existing lanes in each direction, three lanes will be out of service, creating major delays. For more information, please visit <http://www.avoidtheryan.com/>.

Reverse Commute Survey

If you live in the City of Chicago and commute to the suburbs for work every day, you might qualify to get paid to participate in a transportation survey.

Transportation researchers are conducting a survey to study the transportation habits of "reverse commuters." The results will help guide transportation improvements in the region. To see if you qualify to participate, call (866) 901-0541 or follow the links below.

[Take the survey...](#)

Health Insurance for Kids

If your children do not have health insurance, *All Kids* may be right for your family. *All Kids* is a new state program that gives every child in Illinois access to comprehensive, affordable health insurance. To start receiving health benefits [visit the All Kids website](#) and click on "Enrollment Information."

Affordable Prescriptions

I-SaveRx was created to provide a safe and affordable

IL Route 59 to Washington St.

- Rebuilding and widening to four lanes of this five-mile section, known as the "washboard," is virtually complete.

[Read About Ongoing I-88 Projects](#) | [Back to Main Menu](#)

Roadway Rehabilitation IL Rte. 251 to U.S. Rte. 30

Rehabilitation of this 32-mile section at the western end of I-88 in Northern Illinois has been completed, providing a smoother and safer ride.



[Read About Completed I-88 Projects](#) | [Back to Main Menu](#)

Systemwide Toll Plaza Conversions



By the end of 2006, all 20 mainline toll plazas will be converted to Open Road Tolling (ORT) for non-stop I-PASS travel. We apologize for delays created by this work.

- Remaining plazas to be converted in 2006 include South Beloit, Belvidere, Marengo, Elgin, Devon, and River Rd. (I-90); Waukegan and 163rd St. (I-294); York/Meyers, DeKalb and Dixon (I-88).
- Delays are expected, so allow extra time if planning trips through the Tri-State's 82nd St., 83rd St. and 163rd St. toll plazas, as well as the plazas just south of the Wisconsin state line (South Beloit on I-90 and Waukegan on I-94) on weekends during the upcoming summer travel season.



Building under construction at the new eastbound toll plaza at Meyers Road.

[Read More About Open Road Tolling](#) | [Back to Main Menu](#)

Feature Story

2006 Construction: It's About Time

Designed to bring congestion relief

way for the people of Illinois to save money on the cost of prescription drugs. To start saving up to 80% on the cost of your prescription drugs, [visit the I-SaveRx website](#) or call toll-free 1-866-ISAVE33 (1-866-472-8333).

as soon as possible, Tollway construction continues into 2006. In record time, the Congestion-Relief Program is already improving the lives of customers by reducing travel times. Following is a preview of work underway or to begin this year.



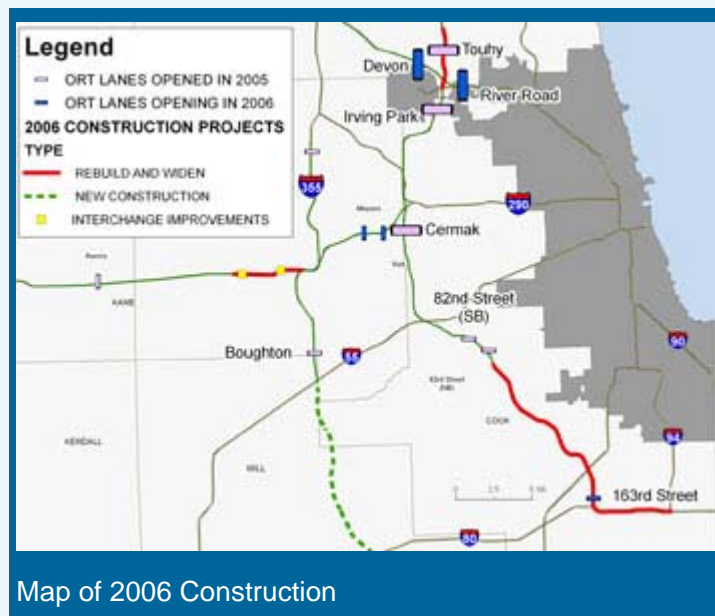
New Projects in 2006

- I-294: Rebuild & widen the Central Tri-State between Balmoral Ave. and Dempster St.; work in northbound lanes
- I-355 South Extension: Begin building the Des Plaines River Valley Bridge, crossroad bridges, and major interchanges at I-55 & I-80

2005 Projects Continuing Into 2006

- I-88: Off-system advance work for next segment to be rebuilt & widened from Washington St. to Finley Rd. including Naperville Rd. interchange improvements
- Toll Plaza Conversions: Bring Open Road Tolling to the 11 mainline toll plazas not converted in 2005
- I-294: Complete the rebuild & widen project from the Kingery Expressway to 167th St.; work in southbound lanes

See Construction Update for more details



Map of 2006 Construction

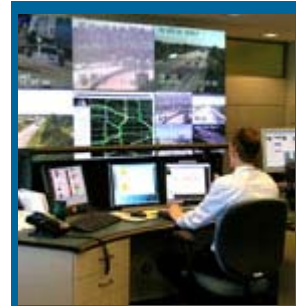
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Moving Traffic Along

Traffic 'On the Air'

Drivers rely on radio and TV traffic reporters for information about their daily commutes, so the Illinois Tollway spends a lot of time keeping the media up-to-date with construction information and traffic conditions. Last year, the Illinois Tollway sent more than 600 construction advisories to traffic reporters and transportation media about pending road projects and expected impacts.

The Tollway's Traffic and Incident Management System (TIMS) center also sent thousands of e-mails directly to on-air traffic reporters with real-time updates. TIMS enables the Illinois Tollway to better detect and confirm an incident on the roadway in order to deploy the appropriate maintenance and emergency vehicles and clear the roadway more quickly.



The Traffic Operations Center monitors traffic and shares information with the news media and drivers.

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Safety Zone

April 3-9 is Work Zone Safety Week

Slow down and pay attention when driving in construction work zones. That's the message of Work Zone Safety Week. The Illinois Tollway and the Illinois Department of Transportation team up again this year for work zone safety promotional events. Construction workers often toil in work zones with speeding traffic just inches away. They benefit from your safe driving and so do you. In a work zone, drivers are just as likely as workers to get hurt or die.

The penalties for speeding in work zones are steep. You could get fined a minimum of \$375, regardless of whether or not there were workers present. The penalty for hitting a worker is a \$10,000 fine and 14 years in jail.



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Questions? [Contact Us](#)

Illinois Tollway
2700 Ogden Ave. - Downers Grove, IL 60515
630-241-6800 - <http://www.illinoistollway.com/>

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