



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 2, 2021

STEARNS SCHOOL ROAD BRIDGE OVER TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-94) SET TO REOPEN

Bridge reconstruction work complete; landscaping, other minor work scheduled for later this year

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Tollway is preparing to reopen the new Stearns School Road Bridge over the Tri-State Tollway (I-94) ahead of schedule and plans to reopen the local crossroad bridge to traffic tomorrow afternoon, Friday, September 3.

“As part of the Illinois Tollway’s dedication to safety, we are committed to prioritizing the safety of both drivers and workers during construction,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “We understand the inconvenience that this approach to roadwork can cause, so we are always working to find ways when possible, to reduce the impact of this disruption to our customers.”

The local crossroad bridge — just north of the Gurnee Mills Mall and near Great Wolf Lodge and Six Flags Great America — was closed to traffic March 1, with a posted detour, for removal and reconstruction and is reopening to traffic two months ahead of schedule. Up to 15,900 vehicles use the bridge carrying traffic over I-294 daily.

Temporary, off-peak lane closures may be scheduled as needed as work will continue to complete punch-list items and landscaping for the Stearns School Road Bridge Project.

The Illinois Tollway, Village of Gurnee and Lake County Division of Transportation have worked in coordination to replace the 70-year-old Stearns School Road Bridge over the Tri-State Tollway (I-94). The \$12 million project includes \$5.4 million in local cost participation for the improvements.

As part of the Stearns School Road Bridge Project, the existing two-lane bridge carrying traffic over the Tollway was removed and replaced with a new, wider bridge structure to accommodate vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists traveling over I-94.

This Tollway-led project constructed the new bridge that carries three lanes of Stearns School Road over I-94 along with 4-foot-wide shoulders. To improve safety for pedestrian and bicycle access, the wider bridge maintained the existing pedestrian path on the north side as well as adding a new sidewalk on the south side.

The bridge replacement was necessary to extend the life of the local crossroad bridge and provide safe and convenient travel for Tollway customers. In addition, since the Illinois Tollway typically constructs new bridges with a 75-year service life, the new bridge will be designed to accommodate future local roadway improvements.

This work is part of the Tollway’s 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*.

Maps and construction about the Stearns School Road Project are available in the Projects section on the Tollway’s website at illinoistollway.com.

-more-

Work Zone Safety

Construction zone speed limits are in effect in all construction zones 24/7 and drivers should continue to watch for changing traffic patterns and use caution, especially when workers are present.

The Illinois Tollway reminds motorists that the “Move Over Law” requires motorists to change lanes or to slow down and proceed with caution when passing any vehicle on the side of the road with hazard lights activated. If you see flashing lights ahead, please move over or slow down.

Illinois State Police have zero tolerance for drivers speeding in work zones or failure to comply with the Move Over Law. The minimum penalty for speeding in a work zone is \$250 and can include up to a \$25,000 fine and a 14-year jail sentence for hitting a roadway worker. Penalties for failure to slow down or move over for a vehicle on the shoulder with flashing lights includes up to a \$10,000 fine, 2-year suspension of driving privileges and jail time, in extreme cases.

About Move Illinois

The Illinois Tollway’s 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*, is improving mobility, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, creating as many as 120,000 jobs and linking economies throughout the region. The first nine years of *Move Illinois* is on schedule and within budget, delivering the rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) as a state-of-the-art 21st century corridor and opening a new interchange connecting the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) to I-57. Progress continues on projects addressing the remaining needs of the existing Tollway system, delivering the Elgin O’Hare Western Access Project and planning for emerging projects, including reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294).

About the Illinois Tollway

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 294 miles of roadways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

