



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**February 5, 2024**

**INSTALLATION OF OVER-THE-ROAD GANTRIES FOR  
CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294) SMARTROAD  
SCHEDULED BETWEEN WOLF ROAD AND BALMORAL AVENUE**  
*Temporary overnight lane closures scheduled through March*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – Temporary overnight lane closures are scheduled to begin tonight and continue through March for the installation of 14 over-the-road SmartRoad gantries as part of the Central Tri-State (I-294) Project. The Illinois Tollway is installing the new SmartRoad gantries as part of active traffic management technology that will make travel more efficient for Tollway customers.

Beginning February 5, overnight lane closures will be scheduled as needed starting at 8 p.m. on northbound and southbound I-294 between Wolf Road and Balmoral Avenue with traffic reduced to a single lane at times with intermittent, 15-minute full closures for the installation of the SmartRoad gantries over the road. All lanes will reopen by 5 a.m. the following morning when work is scheduled.

Electronic message signs and construction signage will be put in place in advance to alert drivers to the overnight work. Up-to-date information regarding lane closures will be available in the Illinois Tollway's [Daily Construction Alert](#). All work is weather dependent.

Each of the new SmartRoad gantries installed will be equipped with electronic signage and message boards that will be operational upon completion of the reconstruction and widening work on the northern section of the Central Tri-State Tollway between Balmoral Avenue and St. Charles Road by the end of 2024 and after the new SmartRoad system installation and testing is complete. The new gantries will not be used for toll collection or toll violation enforcement.

## **I-294 SmartRoad**

As part of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project, the 22-mile corridor will be reconstructed to include flexible infrastructure to enable the Tollway to add new “smart” features as needed or as they become available in the years to come. Altogether the new I-294 SmartRoad corridor will include a total of 80 high-tech gantries placed every half mile between 95<sup>th</sup> Street and Balmoral Avenue.

The new I-294 SmartRoad will feature:

- Active traffic management (ATM) – ATM will provide real-time information to drivers on message boards specific to each lane of traffic that will include the nature and status of traffic incidents, advisory speeds, real-time lane closure notification and traffic pattern changes.
- State-of-the-art wireless traffic sensors – New traffic sensors will be activated to provide more comprehensive travel time information. Sensors will also be added to ramps along the corridor, enabling the Tollway to monitor them for potential backups.
- New Flex Lanes (inside lanes and shoulders) on I-294 that can be used to direct traffic around an incident to keep traffic flowing and reduce backups to provide reliable service.

-more-

To support the new SmartRoad, the Central Tri-State Project includes upgrades and expansion of the roadway camera system on I-294 from analog to digital high-definition to enhance the Tollway's ability to better respond to roadway incidents. The new roadway cameras will provide increased coverage and include the full length of the Central Tri-State corridor from Balmoral Avenue to 95<sup>th</sup> Street.

Enhancements will also include state-of-the-art weather stations upgraded to provide pavement monitoring and weather conditions at critical locations, including bridges throughout the system.

In addition, the SmartRoad gantries will include overhead electronic message boards with higher-resolution, full-color graphic capable models, which will feature smaller, four-color digital message signs to enhance communications with drivers throughout the corridor.

Construction updates, project information, maps and detour information for work that is part of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project are available in the Projects section on the Tollway's website at [www.illinoistollway.com](http://www.illinoistollway.com).

The \$4 billion Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project is reconstructing and widening the roadway between Balmoral Avenue and 95<sup>th</sup> Street to provide congestion relief, update old infrastructure to meet current and future transportation demand and address regional needs. This work is part of the Tollway's *Move Illinois* capital program. More than 220,000 vehicles use the Central Tri-State Tollway daily.

### **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 with 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 16-year, \$15 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*, is improving mobility, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, creating as many as 165,220 jobs and linking economies throughout the region. The first 12 years of *Move Illinois* are on schedule and within budget, delivering the new Illinois Route 390 Tollway and a rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) with its new SmartRoad corridor, as well as 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 new I-490 Tollway Project and 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.

# # #