



NEWS

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY SEEKS PROPOSALS FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE TO TRAIN AND PLACE DISADVANTAGED WORKERS IN ROADWAY AND TRANSPORTATION-RELATED CONSTRUCTION JOBS

Program will prepare underemployed and unemployed workers for careers in construction industry with Tollway contractors

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway has issued a request for proposals (RFP) to prospective vendors to establish and manage a new workforce development and technical assistance initiative that would train disadvantaged individuals to work in the roadway construction industry, provide support services and assist qualified workers in finding jobs with contractors working on Tollway projects.

The selected vendor will assemble existing educational and development agencies to provide comprehensive training and placement assistance for qualified job candidates across the 12 counties of Northern Illinois that are served by the Tollway, with a focus on providing services in Chicago and the south suburbs, as well as in the Aurora, Waukegan and Rockford areas.

The Tollway is seeking proposals from organizations, including not-for-profit organizations, that have experience in managing workforce development programs in Northeastern Illinois to identify, assemble and coordinate a network of satellite providers to deliver training and education services to program participants.

The selected organization will work with satellite providers and other partner organizations, including participating businesses, to prepare workers for meaningful career and employment opportunities in the highway and transportation-related construction industry. While the program primarily will focus on training new workers, it also will provide assistance to current or “incumbent” workers to enable them to gain new skills and training to progress in their field to more advanced, better-paying jobs.

The new workforce development and technical assistance program would complement existing Tollway training and technical assistance programs designed to provide opportunities for disadvantaged workers, including minorities, women, veterans, ex-offenders and economically disadvantaged individuals, to gain the training and skills needed to allow them to participate in the Tollway’s 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*.

The selected organization will propose a program that includes services intended to provide additional employment opportunities for these historically under-represented workers, including:

- Identifying and recruiting unemployed or underemployed individuals from across the Tollway’s service area to determine their interest and suitability in obtaining construction industry apprenticeships or related training.
- Preparing qualified candidates to enter U.S. Department of Labor registered apprenticeships and state-approved construction industry training programs, including providing pre-apprenticeship training and additional support services to ensure readiness.
- Developing relationships with key partners such as local construction trade organizations, construction businesses, community organizations and government agencies to ensure

apprenticeships, training programs and employment opportunities are available for qualified candidates in the program and that advancement opportunities are available for lower-level workers participating in the program.

- Performing continuing employment support and retention services to assist participants to qualify for meaningful career opportunities in the heavy highway construction industry.

The initial term of the contract is for three years, with the Tollway having the option to renew the contract for up to two additional years. The total term of the contract shall not exceed 10 years.

The RFP includes a Business Enterprise Program utilization goal of 28 percent and a Veteran-owned Small Business (VOSB)/Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business (SDVOSB) utilization goal of 4 percent.

An optional vendor conference will be held on Thursday, December 21, at 2 p.m. at Illinois Tollway headquarters, 2700 Ogden Avenue in Downers Grove.

RFP written responses are due to the Tollway on Thursday, February 15, by 10:30 a.m. For more information and to download the RFP, please visit the Tollway's website, illinoistollway.com, Doing Business section, Goods and Services, Bids page.

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.

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