



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY PREPARES FOR NEW BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUE ON BURLINGTON NORTHERN SANTA FE (BNSF) RAILWAY BRIDGE PROJECT

*Steel beam delivery and assembly scheduled in May and June,
with summer-time weekend closures planned on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294)*

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – As construction of the new Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway Bridge over the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) continues, activity will begin on site this week to prepare for a new bridge structure and to accommodate uninterrupted train and commuter rail service throughout the project.

During this portion of the project, the Illinois Tollway will integrate on-site bridge segment assembly, as well as the use of self-propelled modular transporter (SPMT) technology for the installation of the new bridge beams to provide flexibility, enhance safety and reduce traffic disruption. Use of the SPMT technology will allow the Tollway to reduce significant impact to its customers to two weekends, compared to two months of overnight and weekend lane closures with full stops typically scheduled for conventional bridge construction.

“We’re always looking to work with our contractors to encourage innovation, reduce construction time and deliver projects more efficiently,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “In this case, our team is excited to see this new approach on this unique and challenging project.”

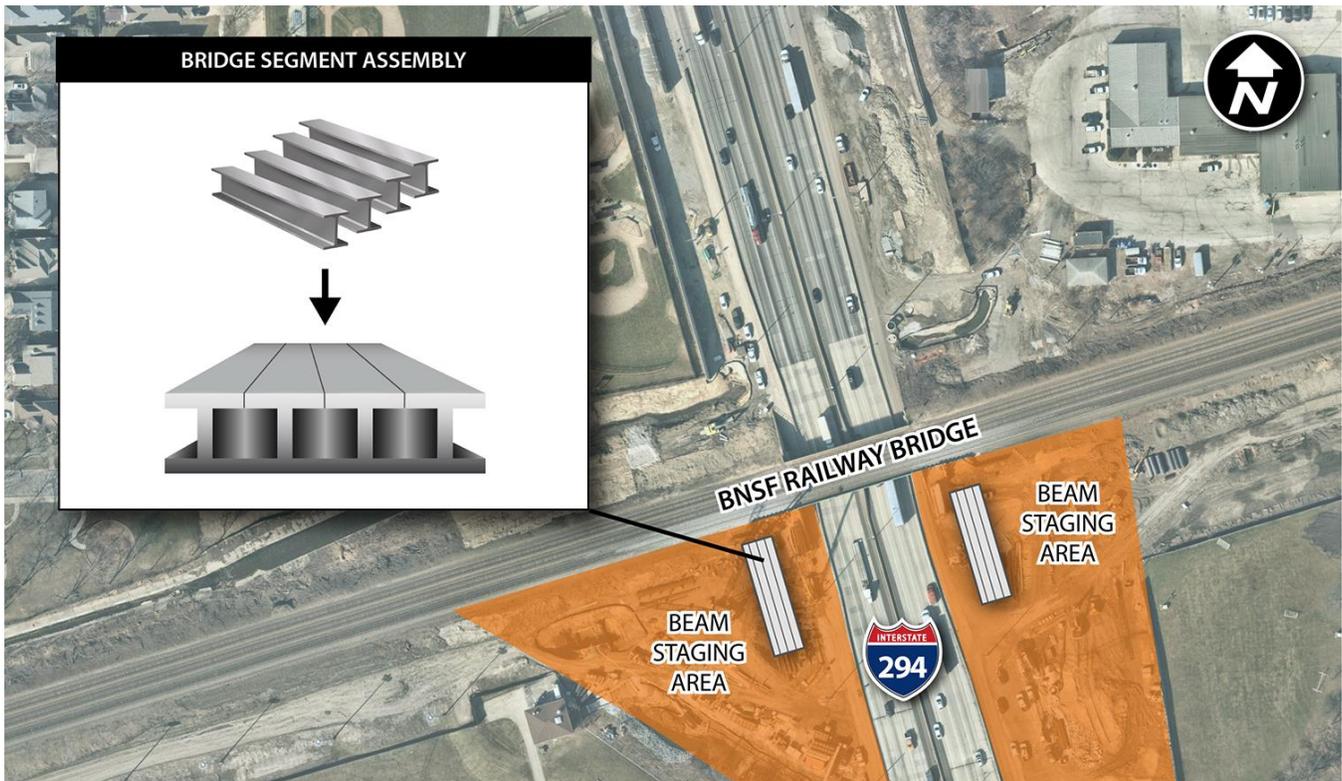
During conventional bridge construction, traffic that travels under the bridge is typically disrupted with lane reductions and temporary, full roadway closures during activity over multiple nights and weeks to protect motorist and worker safety. However, the Tollway’s use of SPMT technology will allow for complex work of assembling bridge segments from portions of steel beams off of the roadway, rather than suspended over existing traffic lanes.

Working in roadside staging areas, construction crews will perform most of their work away from traffic, with the ability to work during the day without interruptions and near ground level in a safer environment. When bridge segment assembly is complete, crews will use a self-propelled modular transporter (SPMT) vehicle – a combination of multi-axle platforms operated through a computer-controlled system – to lift, carry, and set the very large and heavy segment of bridge beams. The motorized vehicle moves at walking speed and is capable of carrying the large structures and positioning them precisely into final position.

Electronic message signs and construction signage will be put in place in advance to alert drivers to any shoulder, lane closures or traffic disruption. All work is weather dependent.

The week of May 11, delivery of materials to the jobsite located just south of the BNSF Bridge is scheduled to begin and workers will start the process of assembling approximately 24 steel girders into six bridge segments. This work is anticipated to continue through June.

After assembly is complete, the Tollway will schedule two weekends of extended closures this summer on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) for bridge segment installation with the SPMT vehicle on one side of the Tollway at a time. One weekend of closures will allow the Tollway to reduce I-294 northbound traffic into a single a counterflow lane on the southbound side. The second weekend of closures will allow the Tollway to reduce I-294 southbound traffic into a single a counterflow lane on the northbound side.



Up-to-date information regarding additional lane closures will also be available in the Illinois Tollway's [Daily Construction Alerts](#).

The Illinois Tollway is reconstructing the BNSF Railway Bridge, which carries the triple-track railroad over I-294 between Hinsdale and Western Springs, to accommodate the reconstruction and widening of the Central Tri-State Tollway. The existing bridge will be replaced with a longer, wider two-span steel beam structure that will accommodate four tracks and will allow for reconstruction and widening of the Tollway underneath. The new fourth track on the bridge will be used for maintenance purposes by BNSF.

The BNSF Railway Bridge Project is being coordinated with Metra, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway and Cook County, along with local municipalities, park districts, as well as police and fire departments.

The work is part of the Illinois Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*. Construction information about the BNSF Bridge Project is available in the Projects section on the Tollway's website at www.illinoistollway.com.

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. On I-294, a 45 mph work zone speed limit is in effect throughout the construction season.

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 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 eight 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.

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