



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 3, 2020

FINAL BEAM DELIVERIES SCHEDULED FOR NEW NORTHBOUND MILE LONG BRIDGE ON CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294) PROJECT

Beam deliveries escorted by State Police will impact travel on I-90, I-290, I-355, I-80, I-55 and I-294

DOWNERS GROVE, IL — The Illinois Tollway is scheduled to receive final deliveries of steel and concrete beams this week, keeping construction of the new northbound Mile Long Bridge on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) on schedule to open to traffic later this year.

The final bridge beam transports to the work site are anticipated to be completed by the end of the first week in August, including 22 concrete beams from a Wisconsin manufacturing plant and material for approximately 10 steel beams from an Indiana manufacturing plant. Altogether, material for more than 430 concrete and steel beams has been delivered to the construction site near Countryside, Hodgkins, Willow Springs and Justice since February.

“In addition to navigating the challenges we are facing due to COVID 19, the Tollway and our contractors continue to rise to the challenge of keeping construction projects moving,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “Work on the new Mile Long Bridge has continued throughout the pandemic, including significant coordination between contractors and multiple transportation agencies to deliver these massive bridge beams.”

Transport trucks with the concrete beams will be escorted by Illinois State Police, as needed, and will be traveling at a low rate of speed between hours of 4:30 a.m. and noon on weekdays. Beams measuring up to 8 feet tall and up to 187 feet long, will be transported from the Wisconsin border traveling eastbound on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) to I-290, then south to the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), south to I-55 and then east to southbound I-294 where they will exit at 75th Street to the construction work site on Santa Fe Drive.

Steel beam segments each measuring up to 8 feet tall and up to 111 feet long will be transported from the Indiana border traveling northbound on the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) and will not require a State Police escort. The times of deliveries will vary and to accommodate the beam installation, overnight lane closures will be scheduled on northbound I-294. A single lane closure will begin at 6 p.m. between the 83rd Street Toll Plaza and the Mile Long Bridge, followed by a double lane closure at 8 p.m. between Archer Avenue and the Mile Long Bridge. All lanes are scheduled to reopen by 5 a.m. the following morning on weekdays and by 9 a.m. the following morning on Saturdays.

Daily lane closure and construction information about the Mile Long Bridge Project is available in the Projects section on the Tollway’s website at illinoistollway.com.

This work is part of the Illinois Tollway’s project to reconstruct the Mile Long Bridge that carries traffic over two major railroads, the Des Plaines River, the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal and the Illinois & Michigan Canal and local roads, and over several major distribution centers.

The Mile Long Bridge is one of the first major construction segments for the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project. Currently, up to 150,000 vehicles travel across the Mile Long Bridge daily. Construction is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2023.

-more-

The project includes building two, new side-by-side 4,800-foot-long bridge structures to increase capacity from four lanes to five lanes in each direction as part of the reconstruction and widening of the Central Tri-State Tollway between Balmoral Avenue and 95th Street. In addition, the inside shoulders on the bridge will be built to serve as Flex Lanes to provide for transit, assist emergency vehicles and serve as an alternate lane to reduce traffic congestion when warranted.

The design of the new bridge structures took into consideration the sensitive aquatic ecosystem, navigable waterways and existing railroad and roadway operations underneath the structure. Each of the new structures will have fewer piers to reduce the environmental impact on the waterways and industrial areas below. Each bridge will have 27 spans supported by 26 piers, compared to the existing structures with 106 piers. The spans will be made up of a total of nearly 600 steel or concrete beams of various lengths.

The Illinois Tollway is coordinating work on the Mile Long Bridge Project with the Village of Hodgkins, Village of Countryside, Village of Willow Springs, Village of Justice, Cook County, the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), IDNR Office of Water Resources and the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission, as well as numerous businesses located near the Mile Long Bridge.

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

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 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 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 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.

#