



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

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CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULED TO BEGIN ON BURLINGTON NORTHERN SANTA FE (BNSF) RAILWAY BRIDGE PROJECT ON CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294)

Off-peak lane closures and traffic shifts will be needed to prepare new construction work zone

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – Advance work is scheduled to begin this week as the Illinois Tollway prepares to begin rebuilding the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway Bridge over the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294). Construction of the new bridge is a multi-year project scheduled to complete by the end of 2022.

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.

“Reconstruction of the BNSF Railway Bridge will allow for improvements on I-294, one of the busiest sections of the Tollway, and is a critical piece of the Tollway’s \$4 billion Central Tri-State Project,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “The Illinois Tollway promotes safety of both workers and the public as we plan and implement roadway improvements. We will make every effort to minimize the impact of construction on our customers and ask drivers to please be patient and obey the work zone speed limits.”

Work in 2019 and 2020 includes construction of the bypass bridge that will allow for uninterrupted commuter rail and freight operations during bridge reconstruction. Once the bypass bridge is complete, the existing bridge will be removed and rebuilt in 2021 and 2022. On average, approximately 104 Metra and Amtrak trains cross this bridge daily, as well as 52 daily freight trains.

On I-294, the Tollway will maintain four lanes of traffic in both directions throughout construction using traffic shifts, however off-peak lane closures and intermittent full closures will be scheduled as needed for bridge beam removal and placement work.

Beginning the week of September 3, temporary, off-peak lane closures in both directions on I-294 will be scheduled for shoulder work between Flagg Creek North and Maple Avenue in preparation for a traffic shift. When the shoulder work is complete, traffic in both directions is scheduled to shift to the left with reduced lane widths.

Residents adjacent to the project can expect to see installation of a temporary, 8-foot chain-link construction fencing with dark mesh to create a safe work zone while limiting sight and nuisances around the construction zone on the mainline of I-294 and along the BNSF Railway. Throughout the bridge project, construction will be occurring adjacent to Veeck and Peirce Parks in Hinsdale and Spring Rock Park in Western Springs. As a result, a portion of each of the parks will be closed throughout the project to provide for a safe work zone and to allow park activities to continue throughout construction.

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The BNSF Railway Bridge Project is being coordinated with the Illinois Department of Transportation, 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 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. Posted signs advise drivers of a \$10,000 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 seven 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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