



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY UPDATE



## AS SEEN ON THE ILLINOIS TOLLWAY: CHICAGO-AREA WATERWAYS

Illinois roadways, railways and airways are well-known and widely recognized for their impact on the state economy.

But often overlooked is the vast network of waterways that Illinois Tollway motorists travel over every day.

A major segment of the statewide waterway system is the Chicago Area Waterway System. This system is comprised of six separate waterways that course their way throughout Northern Illinois and the Illinois Tollway system. These include the Des Plaines River, Chicago River, Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, Calumet Sag Channel, Little Calumet River and Calumet River.

The Des Plaines River, the largest of the Chicago-area rivers, flows south 133 miles from southeastern Wisconsin and meets up with the Kankakee River southwest of

Joliet to form the Illinois River, a major tributary of the Mississippi River.

In Illinois, the Des Plaines River begins east of the North Tri-State Tollway (I-94) near Russell and winds its way back under I-94 just south of Six Flags Great America in Gurnee. It then continues under the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294), just north of Touhy Avenue, near Des Plaines and crosses under the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) in Rosemont near the River Road Toll Plaza. It continues streaming under the Mile Long Bridge on I-294 near Willow Springs and then southwest under the Des Plaines River Valley Bridge on the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355) near Lemont.

The Chicago River is perhaps the most famous of area waterways that pass under the

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## CRASH SETS OFF FIREWORKS, QUICK RESPONSE DOUSES DANGER AND REOPENS ROADS

Illinois Tollway emergency responders used to handling roadway crashes, fires and medical crises know that fireworks can erupt at any time—literally.

Last month, a commercial truck slammed into a barrier wall on the Tri-State Tollway (I-294), igniting its cargo of fireworks and triggering a fire so intense it shut down northbound I-294 and also closed St. Charles Road as flames scorched the underside of the bridge carrying it over the toll road.

But a rapid response to the June 4 crash on northbound I-294 by Tollway roadway workers, Illinois State Police and local fire departments quickly stabilized the situation and safely diverted other drivers away from the flames, which also forced the closure of the ramp connecting I-290 to St. Charles Road.

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Tollway system. Known for flowing backwards, hosting architectural boat tours and being dyed green every St. Patrick's Day, the Chicago River begins at Lake Michigan just south of Navy Pier and breaks off into two branches. The North Branch extends to Wilmette Harbor on the lake, while the South Branch connects the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, which was constructed in 1900 to reverse the flow of the Chicago River and prevent pollution from streaming into Lake Michigan. The Sanitary and Ship Canal runs parallel to the Des Plaines River beginning in Lyons and passes under the Mile Long Bridge on I-294 and the Des Plaines River Valley Bridge on I-355.

The Cal-Sag Channel – short for “Calumet-Saganashkee Channel” – links the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal near Lemont to the Little Calumet River, which continues east into Indiana and connects to the Calumet River. The Cal-Sag Channel flows under I-294 south of Cicero Avenue in Alsip. It also was created to draw pollution away from Lake Michigan and toward the Illinois River, as well as provide a navigable route to the industrial developments in the Calumet area.

Illinois Tollway motorists who catch a glimpse of these waterways are likely to see huge barges transporting a variety of commodities. These barges are critical to the statewide transportation network. One 15-barge tow

can remove 1,050 large trucks off Illinois roads, which not only helps alleviate congestion but also significantly reduces CO2 emissions.

These barges carry a variety of cargo, from dry goods such as corn, wheat and oats to liquids such as fertilizers and fuel. They also transport heavy machinery, bulk steel and precast concrete forms.

These waterways served as the lifeblood for Illinois residents for centuries before there were planes, trains and automobiles and they continue to play a major role in the state economy. Illinois waterways not only transport more than 90 tons of freight each, they are increasingly providing recreational activities such as boating, fishing and even swimming.

In total, the Illinois Marine Transportation System contributes \$36 billion to the state economy – or about 4 percent of Illinois' gross state product – and supports 166,000 jobs, according to a recently published [economic impact study](#) by the Illinois Department of Transportation. The entire state system is made up of approximately 1,100 miles of commercially navigable waterways that provide Illinois with connections to both the Atlantic Ocean – through the St. Lawrence Seaway and the Great Lakes – and the Gulf of Mexico via the Mississippi River.

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*I-294 Fireworks Crash, continued from page 1*

Despite the intensity of the early-morning blaze, Tollway crews were able to partially reopen northbound I-294 in about 3 hours, and had all lanes reopened later that day.

Working with its engineers and the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Tollway was able to conduct testing to determine that beams supporting St. Charles Road where it crosses I-294 were still intact, which allowed the road and I-290 ramp to open the following day.

“This was a dangerous and extremely unusual situation, but our roadway workers, Illinois State Police and other emergency responders reacted quickly and professionally to protect our customers,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “The outstanding work performed by everyone in this operation demonstrates the skill and cooperation we rely on to rapidly react to emergencies to keep our customers safe.”

Following the crash, Tollway road workers within minutes shut down northbound I-294 to keep drivers away from the burning vehicle and then began diverting vehicles onto nearby I-290 to keep traffic from coming to a standstill and slowing other emergency responders rushing to the scene. Some southbound lanes of I-294 also were closed to allow emergency vehicles—particularly fire engines—to approach the crash from that direction and get close enough to help extinguish the flames.

“We moved a lot of units to the scene very quickly and that was critical in keeping other drivers away from the crash and providing enough room so firefighters could get in to knock down the fire,” said Steve Mednis, the Tollway's general manager of traffic and incident management.



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Some vehicles on northbound I-294 that were blocked by the crash had to be turned around and evacuated out of the area for their own safety. The driver whose truck crashed escaped with minor injuries, and no other drivers or rescue workers were hurt.

After firefighter extinguished the stubborn fire, heavy-lift tow trucks that had staged nearby on a ramp move in to pull the charred truck out from under the St. Charles Road overpass and off I-294.

Tollway consultants inspected the barrier wall and pavement for crash and fire damage. A temporary crash attenuator barrier in place for construction had to be replaced but inspections found only superficial pavement damage that didn't require any resurfacing work.

Lift trucks were brought in so engineers could inspect the scorched underside of St. Charles Road and take core samples of beams supporting the bridge to ensure they remained structurally sound. After the testing revealed the beams were intact, St. Charles Road and the ramp connecting it to I-290 were reopened the day after the crash.

"You hope you won't have to deal with extreme situations like this but it is satisfying when our response goes smoothly and we're able to protect our customers and reopen our roads within a matter of hours," Mednis said.

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## TRAFFIC REBOUNDS BUT TRAVEL PATTERNS CHANGING AS DRIVERS CONTINUE RETURNING THIS SUMMER TO ILLINOIS TOLLWAY

The extended July 4th weekend is always busy on the Illinois Tollway as drivers travel to holiday barbecues and Independence Day celebrations, but this year—despite the pandemic—the Tollway system was even busier than expected.

During the lengthy holiday weekend, nearly 9.4 million vehicles traveled on the Tollway system—more than the 9.3 million projected to use the toll roads during that time. The number of vehicles—based on toll transactions—was almost back to the pre-pandemic levels recorded over the July 4th weekend in 2019.

And the increase in travelers over the holiday weekend not only reflects the continuing rebound in traffic as the pandemic eases, it also reflects a shift in traffic patterns as more drivers travel at different times during the day, especially on weekdays.

Commercial traffic remains strong, with toll transactions for trucks up about 8 percent from pre-pandemic levels as consumers and the transportation industry adjust to new economic patterns.

Saturday traffic also is rising, indicating more leisure and recreational travel is occurring this spring and summer as the economy has reopened.

During the holiday weekend, Saturday traffic was unexpectedly high. More than 1.5 million vehicles used the Illinois Tollway on Saturday, July 3, exceeding the projected total of 1.4 million vehicles and making it the second busiest travel day of the extended, six-day holiday weekend. That number exceeded the number of drivers using the Tollway during either weekend day of the July 4th holiday in 2019.

"We're pleased to see more drivers returning to our roads as the pandemic eases, with many commuting to jobs as our economy expands, while others are getting out and finally taking long-delayed vacations," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. "We're continuing to provide the same high level of safety and convenience to our customers whenever they choose to travel on our system."

While total passenger vehicle traffic remains lower than it was before the pandemic, weekend traffic volumes are returning to normal levels more rapidly than weekday traffic.

The Tollway is seeing some recent increases in vehicle traffic on Saturdays, where transaction volumes are up between 2 percent and 5 percent, which appears to reflect rising leisure and recreational travel in recent months.

Weekday traffic is spread more evenly throughout the day, with fewer vehicles traveling during peak morning rush hours, apparently because some employees are working more flexible hours, including heading to their jobs later in the day.

Spreading that traffic out over a longer period of time during the midday and afternoon is resulting in less congestion during morning and evening rush hours. That change benefits not just passenger vehicles but also commercial trucks, allowing them to more easily travel with less congestion on the Tollway system during those rush hours.

## ILLINOIS TOLLWAY BRIDGES FEATURED AT NATIONAL BRIDGE SYMPOSIUM

With a variety of highly impressive bridge projects underway, the Illinois Tollway was invited to share its expertise at this year's annual bridge symposium hosted by the Structural Engineers Association of Illinois and the National Council of Structural Engineers Association.

The July virtual conference featured a webinar by Acting Chief Engineering Officer Manar Nashif and Deputy Chief of Program Implementation Lanyea Griffin highlighting the Mile Long Bridge and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway bridge projects on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) and new interchanges for the new I-490 Tollway.

The Tollway webinar provided a general overview on the status of major bridge projects underway on the I-490 Tollway and I-294. In addition, a webinar by Tollway project manager EXP U.S. Services Inc. focused on technical aspects of the design of ramp bridges on the I-490/I-90 interchange.

The \$500 million Mile Long Bridge Project is one of the Tollway's most ambitious bridge projects in the Move Illinois Program. The two bridges that make up the Mile Long Bridge traverse two major railroads, three waterways, local roads and major distribution facilities for UPS and BNSF. A critical piece of infrastructures on I-294, the Mile Long Bridge serves up to 150,000 vehicle a day.

Construction of the two new, wider 4,800-foot-long bridge structures started in 2019, with the northbound structure completed in 2020 and the southbound structure scheduled to be completed in 2022. Each of the new structures will have fewer piers to reduce the environmental impact on the waterways and industrial areas below. Each structure will have 27 spans supported by 26 piers, compared to the 53 piers supporting each of the original structures.

The Mile Long Bridge is being built to accommodate the foreseeable future needs of the traveling public to the greatest extent possible, with the new structures expected to last as long as 100 years.

Further up the road, the Illinois Tollway is reconstructing the BNSF Railway Bridge, which carries the 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 allow for reconstruction and widening of the Tollway underneath. The new fourth track on the bridge will be used for maintenance purposes by BNSF.



*Removal of the old northbound I-294 Mile Long Bridge near Willow Springs*

Working in coordination with the BNSF Railway, the Illinois Tollway is providing for uninterrupted commuter rail and freight operations during bridge reconstruction. BNSF and Metra trains are currently using a temporary bypass bridge while construction of the new bridge is underway. On average, approximately 104 Metra and Amtrak trains cross the bridge daily, as well as 52 daily freight trains.

As part of the construction of the new I-490 Tollway, new interchanges will connect to I-90, I-294 and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

The I-490/I-90 Interchange will significantly improve travel and enhance mobility throughout the adjoining communities by connecting the new tollway to the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90). The \$120 million project to construct the new interchange will consist of four ramps, including a ramp bridge over I-90 connecting westbound I-90 to I-490 and will also include construction of a new multi-span bridge that will carry I-490 over the Metropolitan Water Reclamation of Greater Chicago's Touhy Avenue Reservoir south of I-90.

The new I-490/IL 390 Interchange will feature four flyover ramps connecting the two Tollway roadways, along with two ramp bridges connecting to the west side of O'Hare International Airport. The \$340 million project includes construction of three miles of I-490 Tollway mainline roadway along with 16 ramps and 15 bridges to deliver full mobility on the west side of the airport.

Four flyover ramp bridges will include 24 concrete piers and 24 steel girders to support the new ramps with a total length of 3,800 feet. Bridge decks will be 50 feet above grade at their highest points. In addition, the two ramp bridges connecting to the west side of the airport will both total 1,900 feet in length with 17 steel girders to support the new ramps.

## ILLINOIS TOLLWAY SHARES INSIGHTS ON HOW TO SUCCEED IN DOING BUSINESS

Since the *Move Illinois* Program was launched in 2012, nearly 6,000 statements of interest have been submitted in response to a total of 31 professional services bulletins issued with nearly 300 individual professional engineering services contract items.

Contracts for work can include construction management and inspection, design work and other engineering services.

In 2020 alone, 272 statements of interest were submitted to win work on two advertised professional services bulletins that included a total of 10 contract items.

So, what can a firm do to stand out among the competition?

Speaking at the Illinois Society of Professional Engineers virtual annual conference on July 13, Deputy Chief of Program Implementation Pete Foernsler detailed ways in which these firms could stand out, especially encouraging firms to demonstrate a meaningful commitment to diversity, and offered advice including: Know your audience, its values and priorities, detail your capabilities and your strengths and also make it clear how your proposal meets the criteria.

For the Tollway, providing firms with these insights encourages higher quality proposals that carefully consider the ways in which they can best serve on Tollway contracts.

The ISPE Annual Conference attracted an audience of about 250 engineering professionals from firms of varying sizes throughout Illinois, primarily civil and structural engineering firms, that work in both the public and private sectors.

The Tollway was part of a panel on doing business state agencies, which included leaders from the Illinois Department of Transportation and Capital Development Board.

**UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OPPORTUNITIES**

- I-490 TOLLWAY PROJECT**
  - One construction management contract
- JANE ADDAMS MEMORIAL TOLLWAY**
  - One construction management contract
- CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY PROJECT**
  - Four construction management contracts
- SYSTEMWIDE**
  - Three design contracts
  - Two construction management contracts
  - One pavement roadway management contract
- I-294/I-57 INTERCHANGE PROJECT**
  - One construction management contract
  - One design contract

AN ESTIMATED \$237 MILLION SCHEDULED IN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES ADVERTISEMENTS FOR 2021

**ABOUT THE ILLINOIS TOLLWAY**

- Part of a dynamic transportation network**
  - Connects to regional transit network
  - Supports three international airports
  - Part of one of the nation's largest interstate systems
- Five roadways**
  - 294-mile system across 12 counties
  - Serves more than 1.6 million vehicles a day

## ILLINOIS TOLLWAY WINS FHWA BETTER MOUSETRAP COMPETITION

The Federal Highway Administration selected the Illinois Tollway's Roadway Electric Training System as one of the winners of its 2021 Build a Better Mousetrap Competition. It is the first time an Illinois project has been selected as a winner of this national award since the competition began in 2009.

The innovative training system was designed by veteran roadway lighting technicians Ben Pierce, Nick Perez and Eric Johnson to provide a more efficient, effective way to train probationary technicians.

"This national recognition highlights the kind of innovative thinking that makes the Illinois Tollway one of the best transportation agencies in the country," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. "We are proud to have an environment where everyone can contribute to making improvements that help everyone do a better job."



Each year, the FHWA's Better Mousetrap Competition looks for practical, proven and cost-effective innovations from transportation agencies across the country. The FHWA collaborates with Local Technical Assistance

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Program Centers to identify best practices of local transportation agencies, recognize the individuals and organizations that have found a better way to perform day-to-day business and share their improvements with their peers nationwide.

The Tollway's Roadway Electric Training System was one of three projects submitted on behalf of Illinois transportation agencies through the Illinois Department of Transportation's Technology Transfer Program. The Tollway won in the Bold Steps category, which recognizes a locally relevant high-risk project or process showing a breakthrough solution with demonstrated high reward.

The Build a Better Mousetrap Competition solicits ideas and inventions that focus on new or modified tools and equipment or feature streamlined processes that help local transportation agencies increase safety, reduce costs and improve efficiencies.

The Tollway's Roadway Electric Training System checked all those boxes.

The new, portable training equipment is safe and efficient. It can be transported and set up at any maintenance facility or anywhere else in about an hour. This allows seasoned roadway electric workers to conduct the trainings side by side with probationary technicians in a safe, comfortable environment.

Previously, standard practice was to train roadway electrical workers in the field under sometimes challenging conditions – working with high-voltage electricity during rain or snow storms or trying to communicate over the roar of high-speed traffic nearby.

The Roadway Electric Training System is cost-effective, as well. It was built using mostly discarded or scrap parts found around Illinois Tollway facilities – an old light pole, lights and wires from poles damaged in roadway incidents and wood, metal and other parts from the carpenter and sign shops. In total, the new equipment cost about \$1,315 – about half as much as it might cost to buy off the shelf

See the FHWA announcement [here](#).

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## HUNDREDS TURN OUT TO SUPPORT FALLEN STATE TROOPERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Hundreds of motorcycle riders and custom car enthusiasts met up on Saturday, July 17, at Illinois Tollway headquarters in Downers Grove for the Lieutenant Rich Kozik Memorial Park Motorcycle and Fun Car Run.

The annual fundraiser supports the Illinois State Police Heritage Foundation Memorial Park, a 1.5-acre memorial tribute to fallen troopers that serves as a place of solace for their families, friends and colleagues. The park emphasizes the Illinois State Police core values of integrity, service and pride through inscriptions on various park features such as sculptures, statues and monuments.

Lieutenant Rich Kozik served the Illinois State Police for 19 years, including working in District 15 as the special operations lieutenant responsible for overseeing the motorcycle unit, among other enforcement patrols, and actively promoting the statewide "Start Seeing Motorcycles" safety campaign.

He combined his passion for motorcycles with his dedication to the Illinois State Police by coming up with the idea for a motorcycle run to raise funds for the Memorial Park, which began in 2008 with 50 riders and has since grown to more than 500 participants each year. The run was named in his honor after he passed away while on duty in 2018.

Each year, the ride departs from Tollway headquarters in Downers Grove and three other sites throughout Illinois

– Dwight, Bloomington and O'Fallon. Escorted by Illinois State Police motorcycle patrol officers, participants travel along historic Route 66 and meet up at the ISP Memorial Park in Springfield.

The Tollway welcomes the event each year in support of its own Illinois State Police District – District 15 – whose troopers to patrol the Tollway system and serve the safety needs of Tollway customers.

"The Illinois Tollway shares with the Illinois State Police a commitment to protecting motorists and everyone who works on our roads," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. "We appreciate their service and honor the memory of those who have sacrificed so much for the people of Illinois."

Among the motorcycle riders and cruisers gathered at the Tollway's parking lots were State Police supporters from the Patriots, Road Docs, Windy City, Blue Knights, American PRIDE and other motorcycle clubs. Also on display at the Downers Grove site was the 100-Year Anniversary ISP patrol car, a classic look inspired by the vehicles used by State Police in the 1950s.

Check out photos of this year's run on Facebook at [ISP-Memorial-Park-Motorcycle-and-Fun-Car-Run](#) or on Twitter—[@ISPHFMP](#) or [#ISP2021RIDE](#). Visit the [ISP Heritage Foundation website](#) to learn more about the Memorial Wall and ways to support the foundation.

# MOVE ILLINOIS CAPITAL PROGRAM UPDATE

The Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, Move Illinois, is improving mobility, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, creating as many as 120,000 jobs and linking economies throughout the region. The program is scheduled from 2012-2026.

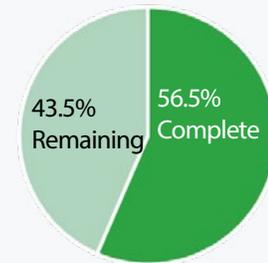
## MOVE ILLINOIS PROGRAM STATUS - DATA THROUGH JUNE 2021

### MOVE ILLINOIS PROGRAM BUDGET OVERVIEW (2012-2021)

**\$10.0 billion** or 71.0% of the program budget committed

- **\$5.7 billion**, or approximately 40.3%, in construction work
- **\$2.6 billion**, or approximately 18.2%, in consultant services
- **\$1.7 billion**, or approximately 12.0%, in other costs (utilities, ROW, misc.)
- **\$193.8 million** in reimbursement agreements has been approved; reducing overall program costs by 1.4%

**56.5%** of the Move Illinois Program is complete (work in place)



### PROGRAM EXPENDITURES (2012-2021)



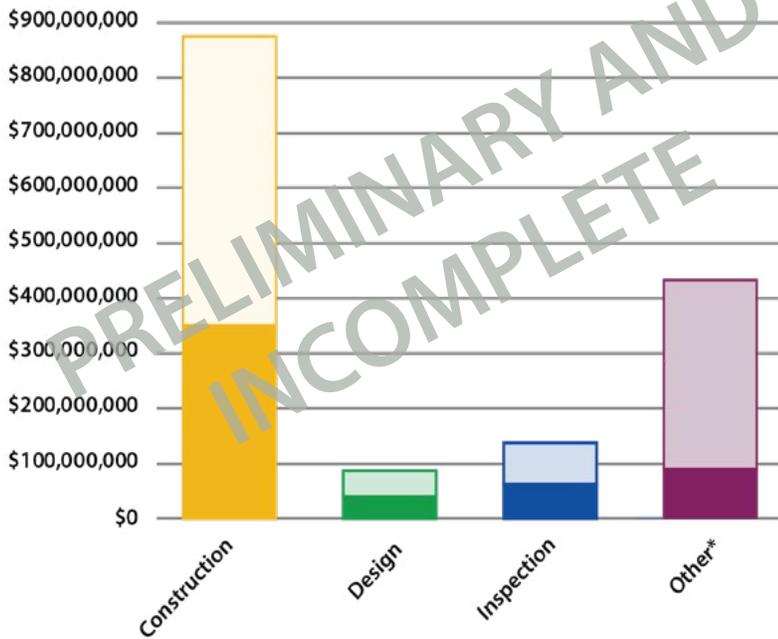
### PROGRAM BUDGET BY CORRIDOR (2012-2021)

Program Element	Current Budget (millions)	Original Awards to Date (millions)	Contract Changes (CO/EWO/Supp.) (millions)	Total Obligations* (millions)	Budget Remaining (millions)
I-94/I-294/I-80	\$4,380.2	\$2,697.9	\$130.7	\$2,828.7	\$1,551.6
I-88	\$360.3	\$304.0	\$4.0	\$308.1	\$52.2
I-90	\$2,359.4	\$2,237.6	\$82.0	\$2,319.6	\$39.8
I-355	\$265.7	\$150.7	\$14.8	\$165.5	\$100.2
SW	\$3,188.3	\$1,303.5	\$209.9	\$1,513.3	\$1,675.0
I-294/I-57	\$331.7	\$295.5	\$7.8	\$303.3	\$28.3
EOWA	\$3,266.4	\$2,432.7	\$146.6	\$2,579.3	\$687.1
Other emerging projects	\$121.1	\$40.2	(\$13.5)	\$26.7	\$94.4
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$14,273.0</b>	<b>\$9,462.1</b>	<b>\$582.3</b>	<b>\$10,044.5</b>	<b>\$4,228.5</b>

\*Total Obligations = Original Awards to Date + Contract Changes (CO/EWO/Supplements)

NOTE: \$572.2 million of additional Right of Way and Utility Authorizations reclassified from Contract Changes to Original Awards to Date

## 2021 PROGRAM PROGRESS (THROUGH JUNE 2021)



## 2021 PROGRAM METRICS (THROUGH JUNE 2021)

Awarded **30** construction and professional services contracts

Awarded **25** construction contracts less than \$10 million

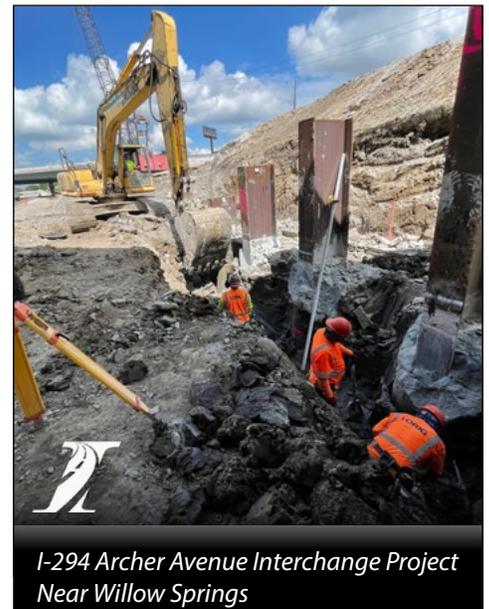
Closed out **42** construction and professional services contracts

2021 YTD	2021 Estimated Expenditures	Progress Through June 2021**	Percent Complete
Construction	\$875,274,678	\$349,788,937	40%
Design	\$86,967,410	\$39,771,209	46%
Inspection	\$138,102,465	\$63,466,469	46%
Other*	\$433,731,030	\$89,391,281	21%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,534,075,583</b>	<b>\$542,417,895</b>	<b>35%</b>

\*Other includes non-roadway, right-of-way, utilities and third-party payments.

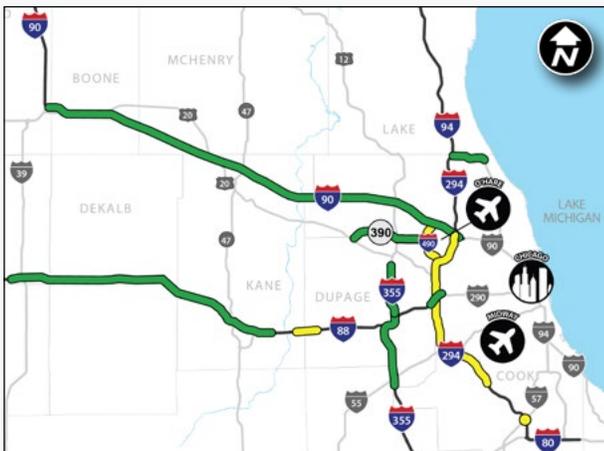
\*\*Financial data presented is preliminary, unaudited and subject to change.

Preliminary financials are provided, as end-of-year data will be confirmed with the closing of the general ledger.



I-294 Archer Avenue Interchange Project Near Willow Springs

## MOVE ILLINOIS PROGRAM PROGRESS MAP



### COMPLETED

- ◆ Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) Rebuilding and Widening
- ◆ Illinois Route 390 Tollway Construction
- ◆ Existing System Needs – Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), Edens Spur Tollway (I-94)
- ◆ Tri-State Tollway (I-294)/I-57 Interchange – Phase 1

### CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

- ◆ I-490 Tollway Construction
- ◆ Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Reconstruction
- ◆ Tri-State Tollway (I-294)/I-57 Interchange – Phase 2
- ◆ Existing System Needs –Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88)