

### COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

The Tollway provides businesses and individuals with opportunities to grow and succeed through training programs, strategic partnerships and investments in infrastructure.

Inclusion is the foundation of everything we do, and the Tollway is guided by three foundational goals: access, participation and advancement. This foundation supports long-term success through training and business development opportunities, a multitude of economic opportunities created by investments in infrastructure and the resources to ensure continued growth in a high-demand industry.



*The Illinois Tollway Department of Diversity and Strategic Development is a driving force for increasing economic opportunities in the diverse communities we serve.*

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Illinois Tollway Technical Assistance Program is designed to prepare established transportation-related construction firms to participate on highway and vertical construction contracts with customized education, guidance and feedback on general business and construction-specific operations, including strategic planning and assistance with the Illinois Department of Transportation pre-qualification application. The Program is comprised of seven partners who manage programs targeted to their region's needs and objectives at 12 locations across the Tollway system.

As a result of the Tollway's investment in the Technical Assistance Program more than 550 bids total have been submitted by clients since 2017, including nearly 210 bids on Tollway projects. These bids submitted on Tollway projects have resulted in 26 firms winning bids as prime or subcontractors on 19 contracts in 2017 and 59 contracts in 2018.

### EARNED CREDIT PROGRAM (ECP)

The Tollway's Earned Credit Program has functioned as an innovative way to reward contractors that hire and retain historically underrepresented men and women for construction industry workforce opportunities, including African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, women, eligible offenders and exonerated individuals, veterans and other economically disadvantaged individuals.

The Illinois Tollway's Earned Credit Program offers contractors and subcontractors a chance to earn bid credits toward future Tollway construction bids when they hire workers from a pool of qualified, pre-screened candidates. Overall, the use of Earned Credit Bid Program credits has influenced the award of 37 contracts with a cumulative value exceeding \$396 million and the use of nearly \$2.6 million in credits.



#### — INCLUSION —

**\$1.8 billion** committed to small, diverse and veteran firms since the start of *Move Illinois*

Nearly **45 percent** minority workforce on Tollway construction projects



#### — ACCESS —

**18** ConstructionWorks provider locations offer access to workforce training

**470** D/M/WBE, small and veteran-owned firms associated with *Move Illinois*



#### — PARTICIPATION —

**386** Earned Credit Program (ECP) hires since 2005

**\$103.9 million** paid to certified veteran-owned businesses since 2015



#### — ADVANCEMENT —

Nearly **400** unique businesses served by Technical Assistance

**154** Partnering for Growth agreements

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## PARTNERING FOR GROWTH PROGRAM

Partnering for Growth encourages prime consultants and contractors to assist D/M/WBE firms and veteran-owned businesses in remaining self-sufficient, competitive and profitable businesses. Under this program, emerging firms are mentored to become better businesses and more successfully compete for Tollway work and in return, prime contractors and consultants receive credits that can be applied to future Tollway contracts.

Many of the firms benefiting from the Partnering for Growth program have not only gone on to be awarded prime contracts with the Tollway, but they also have in turn reached back and mentored other small firms. As of 2018, more than 150 Partnering for Growth agreements have been supported by Tollway contracts.

## CONSTRUCTIONWORKS

Administered by The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, ConstructionWorks launched in 2018 and will provide free pre-apprenticeship training and support services to underemployed and disenfranchised individuals seeking training and career opportunities in the highway construction industry, including members of minority groups, women and veterans.

ConstructionWorks is expected to train and place at least 150 individuals in apprenticeship and training programs or advance participation within the skilled trades during an initial three-year term, with an emphasis on heavy highway skilled construction trades. The initiative will increase access to opportunities for disenfranchised individuals to work on Tollway construction projects in jobs including laborers, equipment operators, carpenters, electricians, iron workers and cement masons.

## REGIONAL INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

The Tollway is a leading agency in bringing together regional stakeholders to maximize collective investments and increase workforce diversity, especially in the skilled trades.

The Tollway is at the table with the Chicago Transit Authority, Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority and philanthropic organizations like the MacArthur Foundation, Chicago Community Trust and the Chicago Workforce Funder Alliance, to tackle the lack of diversity in skilled trades and implement one, five and 10-year approaches to addressing disparities.

Additionally, the Tollway and ComEd are discussing ways to provide access to entry-level construction opportunities through the ConstructionWorks and ComEd's CONSTRUCT Program which provides training for opportunities such as meter readers, truck drivers, customer service representatives, linemen and electrical apprentices.