



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**January 13, 2020**

## **MILE LONG BRIDGE BEAM DELIVERY BEGINS THIS WEEK ON CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294) PROJECT**

*Beam deliveries escorted by State Police will impact travel on I-90, I-290, I-55 and U.S. Route 45*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – Transport and delivery of bridge beams will begin this week for the Illinois Tollway’s new northbound Mile Long Bridge on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294). This work is part of the Illinois Tollway’s project to reconstruct 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 first deliveries are scheduled to begin Tuesday, January 14. All deliveries are weather dependent and schedules will be available on [Daily Construction Alerts](#) posted on the Tollway’s website. Transport trucks will be escorted by Illinois State Police and will be traveling at a low rate of speed between hours of 4 a.m. and noon on weekdays.

Beams 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, north to U.S. Route 45, south to exit at the job site at West Lawndale Avenue Island on the east side of the bridge.

Delivery of more than 230 concrete beams from an assembly site in Wisconsin to the construction site near Countryside, Hodgkins, Willow Springs and Justice will continue over the coming months. The precast, prestressed concrete beams will be trucked approximately 300 miles to the bridge site with special 10-foot-wide, heavy-load semi-trailers, featuring 14 axles, rear steering and custom engineered swivel bolsters.

Initially, 40 beams will be delivered throughout January, each weighing approximately 115 tons and measuring 90 inches tall and 200 to 218 feet long. These beams will be installed on new bridge piers constructed over the Lawndale Avenue Solids Management Area owned by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District. Additional deliveries of concrete and also steel beams will continue throughout the year.

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.

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 95<sup>th</sup> 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

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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 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*.

Construction information about the Mile Long Bridge Project is available in the "Projects by Roadway" section in the Explore Projects section on the Tollway's website at [illinoistollway.com](http://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 \$375. 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 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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.