



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 5, 2021**

## **BRIDGE BEAM DELIVERY BEGINS FOR NEW SOUTHBOUND MILE LONG BRIDGE ON CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294) PROJECT**

*Beam deliveries escorted by State Police will impact travel on I-90, I-294*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – Transport and delivery of bridge beams will begin next week for the Illinois Tollway’s new southbound Mile Long Bridge on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294). Delivery of new concrete and steel beams for the \$500 million Mile Long Bridge Project is anticipated to continue through early 2022.

As part of the \$4 billion Central Tri-State Tollway Project, the Illinois Tollway is reconstructing the Mile Long Bridge that carries up to 150,000 vehicles daily 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. Construction of the new northbound structure was completed in 2020 and construction of the new southbound structure is scheduled to be complete in 2022.

“This massive reconstruction of the Mile Long Bridge is right on schedule and as we continue to move forward we are working to ensure the roadway remains safe for both drivers and workers during construction, which is part of our overall commitment to safety,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “We will make every effort to minimize the impact of construction on our customers, and we ask drivers to please be patient as trucks carrying the new beams for the southbound bridge make their way to the construction site.”

The first deliveries of beams for the new southbound Mile Long Bridge are scheduled to begin Monday, August 9. The concrete beams will be transported by truck from a manufacturing site in Wisconsin traveling eastbound on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) and southbound on I-294 to the construction site. 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. All deliveries are weather dependent and schedules will be available on [Daily Construction Alerts](#) posted on the Tollway’s website.

The trucks with the beams will be parked along the southbound Mile Long Bridge during the day and beams will be installed on new bridge piers constructed over Des Plaines River and the Lawndale Avenue Solids Management Area owned by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District during daytime hours. No additional lane closures will be required for this work.

During the month of August, 65 precast, prestressed concrete beams will be trucked more than 100 miles to the bridge site with special 10-foot-wide, heavy-load semi-trailers, featuring 14 axles, rear steering and custom engineered swivel bolsters. Each of the beams weighs approximately 115 tons and the concrete beams will be transported from an assembly site in Wisconsin traveling eastbound on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) to southbound I-294 to the construction site. measure between 72 and 90 inches tall and between 111 and 187 feet long.

Altogether 250 concrete beams will be delivered to the site for the new southbound Mile Long Bridge Project. In addition, 165 steel beam segments also will be delivered from a fabrication site in Kentucky during the course of the project and used to form 52 steel beams installed over the County Forest

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Preserve property and the Chicago Sanitary & Ship Canal. Each of the steel beam segments will measure between 86 and 120 inches tall and between 39 and 234 feet long.

A \$184.6 million contract to build the new northbound bridge structure began in summer 2019 and was completed in November 2020. Work began on a second \$182.6 million contract in 2020 to remove the old northbound structure and deliver the new southbound Mile Long Bridge to drivers by the end of 2022. The entire Mile Long Bridge Project is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2023.

The Mile Long Bridge Project includes building two, new side-by-side 4,800-foot-long bridge structures designed to last 100 years and increasing capacity to five lanes in each direction. The original bridge structures were built in 1958.

Both of the new bridges feature 27 spans supported by 26 piers, compared to the previous structures with 53 piers, reducing the impact on waterways, roadway and rail operations below. In addition, the bridges' inside shoulders in both directions will be built to serve as Flex Lanes for transit, for emergency vehicles and as an alternate lane when warranted.

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, Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Coast Guard, 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.

Construction information about the Mile Long Bridge Project and the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project is available in the "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 \$250 with 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 nine 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 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.



**PHASE 1:**  
Build new northbound bridge

**PHASE 2:**  
Remove old northbound bridge  
and build new southbound bridge

**PHASE 3:**  
Remove old southbound bridge



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