



Mile Long Bridge Project

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Mile Long Bridge is a critical piece of infrastructure on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) corridor as it carries drivers over two major railroads, three water resources and local roads, and over a major distribution center for UPS and Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway.

The \$500 million Mile Long Bridge Project began in summer 2019 and is scheduled through 2023, including construction of two new, wider bridge structures, as well as stormwater, drainage and related infrastructure improvements. Construction on the new northbound bridge was completed in 2020 and on the new southbound bridge in 2022.

The Tollway is committed to maintaining four lanes of traffic in each direction throughout construction. Currently, up to 150,000 vehicles travel on the Mile Long Bridge daily.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Bridge Reconstruction

The Mile Long Bridge Project includes construction of two new bridge structures that will increase capacity from four lanes to five lanes in both directions as part of the Central Tri-State Project. In addition, the inside shoulders will be built to serve as flex lanes, which can be used for a variety of safety-related needs.

Built in 1958, the Mile Long Bridge 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 including UPS and the BNSF Railway.

The new Mile Long Bridge will include two, side-by-side 4,800-foot-long structures. The design of the new structures took into consideration the sensitive aquatic ecosystem, navigable waterways and existing railroad and roadway operations underneath the structure.

The project began with construction of the new northbound bridge to the east of the existing bridge in summer 2019. Construction on the new northbound bridge was completed in November 2020. Construction of the new southbound bridge structure was complete in October 2022

Work in 2023 includes the removal of the old southbound

structure and completing the reconstruction of the two ramps connecting northbound I-294 to 75th Street/Willow Springs Road. Additional work this year includes landscaping. All work on the project is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2023.

Each of the new structures has fewer piers to reduce the environmental impact on the waterways and industrial areas below. Each of the new northbound and southbound bridge structure has 27 spans supported by 26 piers, compared to the 53 piers supporting each of the original bridge structures.

The new bridge spans support a total of nearly 600 beams of various lengths, including both steel and concrete. Steel beams measure up to 10 feet tall and range in length from 57 feet to 134 feet long and concrete beams measure nearly 8 feet tall and up to 187 feet long each.

Local Road Improvements

As part of the project, the I-294 bridges over LaGrange Road and portions of the 75th Street ramps were reconstructed. In addition, after construction is complete, the Illinois Tollway will restore local roads used for construction access.

Local Utility Improvements and Coordination

The project also includes stormwater and drainage improvements including watermain replacements for the Village of Burr Ridge, Village of Hodgkins and West Suburban Water Commission, and water retention and detention enhancements.

Several utility projects are being completed in coordination with the bridge project including ComEd tower relocations, gas pipelines and a jet fuel line supplying fuel to O'Hare Airport.

Customer Impacts

Whenever possible, the Tollway uses traffic shifts and shoulders to safely accommodate a work zone and keep as many lanes open during peak hours as were available before construction.

Local Roadways

Delays and temporary, short-term closures are expected on Santa Fe Drive and Midwest Cargo Road underneath the

Updated 4/12/23

Mile Long Bridge as construction is underway.

In addition, throughout construction, Willow Boulevard will be used to transport construction materials in and out of the construction site. During construction, access will not be blocked, however, there will be increased construction traffic.

John Husar Trail Access

Throughout construction, bicycle and pedestrian access will be maintained on the John Husar Trail located in Forest Preserve District of Cook County property on the south side of the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal in Willow Springs.

A portion of the loop trail between Willow Springs Road and Mile Long Bridge will be closed through 2023 to allow construction access and to protect bicyclists and pedestrians as construction activity continues overhead.

PURPOSE

Originally constructed in 1958, the Mile Long Bridge is nearing the end of its service life. Frequently requiring repairs and disrupting traffic for customers, the Tollway plans to rebuild the Mile Long Bridge structure as part of the Central Tri-State (I-294) Project. By rebuilding the bridge, customers will experience increased safety and less on-going repair disruptions.

The Mile Long Bridge is being built to accommodate the foreseeable future needs to the greatest extent possible as it is expected to last as long as 100 years

In the meantime, bridge repair work will occasionally be necessary to extend the life of the existing bridge structure and provide safe and convenient travel for Tollway customers. Repairs will be limited to off peak travel times to minimize travel delays and impacts to customers.

The project is being coordinated with the Illinois Department of Transportation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad, Canadian National Railway, Cook County, Forest Preserve District of Cook County, DuPage Water Commission, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District UPS, along with local businesses and municipalities including Willow Springs, Hodgkins, Countryside, Burr Ridge, Justice, and police and fire departments. Permitting and coordination is also being conducted with Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife, Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), IDNR Office of Water Resources and the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission.

WORK ZONE SAFETY

The Illinois Tollway is committed to ensuring that the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) and local roads remain safe for both drivers and workers during construction, which is part of the agency's overall commitment to roadway safety.

Work 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

construction.

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.

Visit the Tollway's Work Zone Safety page at illinoistollway.com.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Tollway is committed to building green and minimizing the environmental impact of construction by reducing, recycling and reusing materials. In addition to reducing the cost of this work, reuse of these materials reduces the need for virgin asphalt materials and reduces energy consumption, greenhouse gases and the volume of material that would otherwise be sent to landfills.

GETTING TOLLWAY CONSTRUCTION INFORMATION

The Illinois Tollway has a variety of ways customers can get the latest travel information, including:

- illinoistollway.com – Projects section, live roadway images and real-time roadway incident information.
- [Daily construction alerts](#) — Daily and long-term lane and shoulder closure schedules.
- [Twitter.com](https://twitter.com) – Real-time roadway incident information at Tollway Trip 90, Tollway Trip 88, Tollway Trip 355, Tollway Trip 94/294 and Tollway Trip 390.