



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY LAUNCHES SMARTROAD ON NORTHERN SECTION OF CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294)

New I-294 SmartRoad goes live between Wolf Road and Balmoral Avenue as Tollway wraps up roadway reconstruction and widening to provide five lanes in both directions

DOWNERS GROVE, IL –The Illinois Tollway turned on its latest SmartRoad today on the northern section of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) between Wolf Road and Balmoral Avenue in conjunction with the opening of the new fifth lane for northbound traffic.

The integration of 14 over-the-road SmartRoad gantries providing active traffic management technology coupled with the completion of roadway reconstruction and widening on the northern section of the Central Tri-State Tollway Project are part of the Illinois Tollway's ongoing commitment to improving travel efficiency for Tollway customers as part of the *Move Illinois* Capital Program.

As part of the Tollway's Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project, work in the northern section between Balmoral Avenue and North Avenue began in June 2018 and is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2024. In addition to activating the new SmartRoad, work has included reconstructing, resurfacing and widening of the I-294 mainline roadway from four to five lanes in both directions along with improvements to bridges and ramps, as well as reconstructing the inside shoulders to provide for Flex Lanes.

“Bringing SmartRoad to the Central Tri-State Tollway is a realization of our vision to provide our customers with a connected system of roadways that use cutting-edge technology and innovation designed to meet current and future transportation needs,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassandra Rouse. “The Tollway has become an information superhighway with technology built into our roadways so we can make traveling safer and more efficient for Tollway customers.”

SmartRoad, launched on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) between I-294 and Barrington Road in 2017 and now on a portion of I-294 between Balmoral Avenue and Wolf Road, incorporates active traffic management using cameras, sensors and overhead gantries to more quickly bring detailed roadway information to drivers so they are better able to make their personal travel decisions.

Flexible infrastructure and innovative technology enable the Tollway to communicate with drivers in real-time to provide traffic incident information, lane closures, traffic pattern changes and travel times.

In addition, the Tollway also will be able to add new smart technology features to the roadway as they become available in the future.

I-294 SmartRoad

As part of the Tollway's \$4 billion Central Tri-State Tollway Project, the 22-mile corridor is being reconstructed and widened including flexible infrastructure enabling the Tollway to add the active traffic management features. Altogether, when construction is complete, the I-294 SmartRoad corridor will include 80 high-tech gantries placed every half mile between 95th Street and Balmoral Avenue.

[The new I-294 SmartRoad features:](#)

- **Active Traffic Management (ATM):** ATM will provide real-time information to drivers on message boards specific to each lane of traffic, including the nature and status of traffic incidents, advisory speeds, real-time lane closure notifications, and traffic pattern changes.
- **State-of-the-art wireless traffic sensors:** New traffic sensors will be activated to provide more comprehensive travel time information. Sensors will also be added to ramps along the corridor, enabling the Tollway to monitor them for potential backups.
- **New Flex Lanes (inside lanes and shoulders) on I-294:** These lanes can be used to direct traffic around an incident to keep traffic flowing, reduce backups, and provide reliable service.

To support the new SmartRoad, the Central Tri-State Project includes upgrades and expansion of the roadway camera system on I-294 from analog to digital high-definition to enhance the Tollway's ability to respond to roadway incidents. The new roadway cameras will provide increased coverage along the full length of the Central Tri-State corridor from Balmoral Avenue to 95th Street.

Enhancements will also include state-of-the-art weather stations upgraded to provide pavement monitoring and weather conditions at critical locations, including bridges throughout the system.

Overhead structures, known as SmartRoad gantries will include electronic message boards with higher-resolution, full-color graphic capabilities, which will feature smaller, four-color digital message signs to enhance communication with drivers throughout the corridor.

The \$4 billion Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project is reconstructing and widening the roadway between Balmoral Avenue and 95th Street to provide congestion relief, update old infrastructure to meet current and future transportation demand and address regional needs. This work is part of the Tollway's Move Illinois capital program. More than 220,000 vehicles use the Central Tri-State Tollway daily.

About Move Illinois

The Illinois Tollway's 16-year, \$15 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*, is improving mobility, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, creating as many as 165,220 jobs and linking economies throughout the region. The first 12 years of *Move Illinois* are on schedule and within budget, delivering the new Illinois Route 390 Tollway and a rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) with its new SmartRoad corridor, as well as 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 new I-490 Tollway 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.

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