



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **COMMUNITY ADVISORS PRESENT TOLLWAY RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE TECHNOLOGY, REGIONAL MOBILITY AND ACCESS**

*Coalition of business, labor, civic and non-profit partners identify strategic investments for Tollway to serve customers, improve agency performance and make regional contributions*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – The Illinois Tollway today announced that its Stakeholder Advisory Team created to advise and provide long-term capital planning recommendations to the agency has finalized a report that will provide the framework for the agency to advance its long-term capital priorities.

The SAT, comprised of 40 leaders representing non-profit, civic, business, labor, environmental, transportation and advocacy organizations representing the Tollway’s 12-county region, has been meeting since April to define goals, provide guidance and regional input on the scope and impact for the Tollway’s next long-term capital program.

“We challenged the SAT to bring together their diverse voices and identify strategic investments needed to drive our region’s future,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassaundra Rouse. “The Illinois Tollway has always been an agency that recognizes and embraces this responsibility and constantly is looking for ways to best serve our region and our customers.”

Highlights of the SAT recommendations include urging the Tollway to:

- Seek new partnerships to advance clean air initiatives
- Encourage the construction of electric charging stations
- Expand its role as a leader in mobility solutions
- Identify equity investment opportunities to spur economic development

An overview of recommendations from the SAT was accepted at the Illinois Tollway’s December Strategic Planning Committee meeting. The Stakeholder Advisory Team report is available on the Tollway’s website <https://agency.illinoistollway.com/future>.

“We are energized by the enthusiasm and collaboration reflected in the Stakeholder Advisory Team’s work throughout this year and are excited about the potential for Tollway contributions to the region that lay ahead,” said Scott Paddock, Illinois Tollway Board Member and Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee. “This report will serve as an important tool as the Tollway considers its strategic priorities for our next long-term capital program.”

The SAT’s work has focused on delivering value statements and recommendations to advance four guiding principles provided by Governor JB Pritzker centering on innovation, equitable economic development, diversity and inclusion and sustainability.

The report outlines a set of eight value statements that will guide the Tollway’s capital planning efforts. These value statements represent the priorities of the SAT and define how the guiding principles could broadly be applied in the next long-term capital plan, including:

- Prioritize customer experience
- Foster a safe and healthy transportation system

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- Ensure equitable benefits of policies and investments
- Safeguard fiscal resilience and adaptability
- Implement forward-thinking technology
- Champion environmental stewardship
- Leverage regional partnerships and collaboration
- Integrate multimodal transportation options

“I want to thank the Illinois Tollway for creating a process that was comprehensive, inclusive and intentional,” said Caroline Portlock, Director of the Illinois Workforce Partnership. “The Tollway is known for successfully completing large capital projects and being a source of gainful and sustainable employment. The SAT ensured there was proactive stakeholder involvement in the agency’s capital planning, and I am grateful for the opportunity to engage and influence the future of the Tollway.”

The SAT recommendations to the Tollway deliver direction and ideas for the agency to consider to serve customers, improve agency performance and make regional contributions.

For customers, the SAT recommended the Tollway strive to be the safest network in the nation, enhance the customer experience through innovative and expanded services, support the efficient movement of people and goods, and explore innovative toll pricing models and solutions.

For agency operations, the SAT recommended the Tollway identify new opportunities for revenue, be a national leader in sustainable operations, continue growing a robust, highly skilled workforce pipeline, and also follow a procurement process that balances equity with efficiency and innovation.

To better serve the region, the SAT recommendations prioritized expanding the role of the Tollway in regional mobility solutions, advancing initiatives and partnerships that support clean and healthy communities, improving Tollway access and connectivity, as well as developing a Tollway resiliency strategy.

Members of the SAT include:

- Nick Jarmusz, AAA – The Auto Club Group
- Kevin Artl, American Council of Engineering Companies
- Kareem Broughton, Black Contractors United
- Arielle Johnson, Business Leadership Council
- Nina Idemudia, Center for Neighborhood Technology
- George Wright, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership
- Robert Reiter, Jr., Chicago Federation of Labor
- Dr. Lisa Bly-Jones, Chicago Jobs Council
- Erin Aleman, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
- Debra Jennings-Johnson, Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council
- Karen Freeman-Wilson, Chicago Urban League
- Mike Macellaio, Chicago & Cook County Building & Construction Trades Council
- Jack Lavin, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce
- Rich Gamble, Choose Chicago
- Gil Quiniones, ComEd
- Tom Kotarac, Commercial Club of Chicago
- Dorval Carter, Jr. Chicago Transit Authority
- Dr. Jerry Bell, Jr., Elite SDVOB Network
- Becky Knox, EVBox
- Cindy Gustafson, Federation of Women Contractors
- Ivan Solis, Hispanic American Construction Industry Association

- Megha Lakhchaura, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
- Jaime di Paulo, Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Eric Varela, Illinois International Port District
- Mark Denzler, Illinois Manufacturers Association
- Brad Cole, Illinois Municipal League
- Tim Butler, Illinois Railroad Association
- Mike Sturino, Illinois Road and Transportation Builders Association
- Larry Ivory, Illinois State Black Chamber of Commerce
- Matt Hart, Illinois Trucking Association
- Caroline Portlock, Illinois Workforce Partnership
- Dan Seals, Intersect Illinois
- Kevin Considine, Lake County Partners
- Brian Robb, Lion Electric
- Jim Derwinski, Metra
- Chris Conley, Metropolitan Planning Council
- Jill Koski, Morton Arboretum
- Wendell Dallas, Nicor
- Michael Davidson, Openlands
- Melinda Metzger, Pace Suburban Bus
- Leanne Redden, Regional Transportation Authority
- Michael Dunn, Rockford Metropolitan Area Planning Organization
- Dorri McWhorter, YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago

### **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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