



Record of Meeting | October 23, 2024

On Thursday, October 23, 2024, The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority’s (“Tollway”) Board of Directors met in a special session in the Junior A/B Conference Room of the Westin Chicago Hotel in Lombard, Illinois. The meeting was held pursuant to the By-Laws of the Tollway upon call and notice of the meeting executed by Chairman Arnaldo Rivera and posted in accordance with the requirements of the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1, *et seq.*

[*Bolded entries indicate issues which may require follow-up to present or report to the Board.*]

Call to Order / Roll Call

Chairman Rivera called the meeting to order at approximately 12:03 p.m. He then asked the Board Secretary to call the roll, those Directors present and absent being as follows:

Board Members Present:
Director James Connolly
Director Jacqueline Gomez
Director Karen McConnaughay
Director Melissa Neddermeyer
Director Scott Paddock
Director Mark Wright
Chairman Arnaldo Rivera

Board Members Not Present:
Governor JB Pritzker [<i>ex officio</i>]
Secretary Omer Osman [<i>ex officio</i>]
Director Gary Perinar, Jr.
Director James Sweeney

The Board Secretary declared a quorum present.

Public Comment

Chairman Rivera opened the floor for public comment. No comment was offered.

Chair’s Items

Chairman Rivera opened the meeting by welcoming Board members and highlighting the importance of the retreat format as a dedicated space for open and collaborative dialogue. He emphasized that the meeting provides an opportunity to review and provide input on the progress of the strategic and capital plans, both crucial for defining the Tollway’s long-term objectives. Chairman Rivera expressed confidence in Executive Director Cassandra Rouse’s leadership



and underscored the Board's commitment to using this planning phase to reimagine the Agency. He encouraged active engagement, questions, and idea-sharing, and he thanked attendees for their dedication to the Tollway's future.

Chairman Rivera, having no further items, turned the floor over to Executive Director Cassandra Rouse.

Executive Director's Items

Executive Director Cassandra Rouse thanked Chairman Rivera and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide updates regarding the strategic and capital plans. She emphasized that the Tollway's efforts relative to these intertwined plans will set a high-level framework for the Tollway's future programs and guide both internal and external resource allocation. Executive Director Rouse highlighted the teams' progress since the last meeting and reaffirmed the commitment to an open and transparent planning process that actively engages diverse perspectives to benefit all communities. She encouraged Board members to participate actively in the retreat by asking questions, making suggestions, and providing insights. Concluding her remarks, she introduced Manjeet Ranu, National Planning Lead at WSP, to begin the first discussion item on Agency Visioning.

Subjects for Discussion

6.1 Agency Visioning

Strategic Planning: Mr. Ranu delivered a comprehensive presentation on the Illinois Tollway's strategic plan revision process and sought the Board's input on the draft Mission Statement, Vision and Goals. He also discussed three strategic categories that will inform the upcoming Capital Plan update.

He outlined the background of the strategic planning process, noting that preparatory work began in 2023 with extensive internal engagement and foundational assessments. Two significant workshops, referred to as charrettes, were conducted with the Tollway's leadership team to identify key themes and insights. The strategic plan targets Board action in the first quarter of 2025 and aligns with the Capital Plan and Annual Budget to ensure cohesive organizational direction.

Mr. Ranu proposed a draft Mission Statement that reflects a broader perspective, emphasizing not just regional but national connectivity and progress. The draft Vision Statement focused on fostering a culture that is innovative and equitable, considering the social, economic, and environmental needs of both the organization and the broader region.



Board members favored the expanded scope of the Mission and Vision statements but questioned the omission of explicit references to customers and quality of life. Directors emphasized that to resonate with the general public, the statements should highlight the Tollway's commitment to serving its users and enhancing daily life.

Regarding the draft Goals—which included Organizational Excellence, Diversity and Equity, Investment, Sustainability, and Innovation and Technology—Directors questioned whether these adequately address the Tollway's mission, due to the absence of explicit reference to customer service and quality of life enhancements. The discussion underscored the need for the strategic plan to be both visionary and grounded in the Tollway's core purpose of serving the public.

In response, Mr. Ranu and Executive Director Rouse acknowledged the valuable feedback and agreed to revisit the draft Mission Statement, Vision and Goals. They emphasized that the retreat's purpose was to gather such input and assured the Board that revisions would incorporate the suggested elements to better align the strategic plan with both the organization's aspirations and customer needs.

The presentation concluded with a discussion on connecting the Strategic Plan to the Capital Plan through strategic investments. The Board participated in an exercise to prioritize three categories of needs:

1. ****Maintain and Enhance****: Focusing on system-wide improvements and state-of-good-repair initiatives using innovative technologies.
2. ****Expand Access****: Developing new highways, upgrading existing roadways, and improving connectivity to Tollway facilities.
3. ****Diversify Offerings****: Broadening projects and assets beyond motor vehicle movement to include economic development, environmental initiatives, and community investments.

Directors were provided with examples under each category and were asked to consider prioritization in alignment with the strategic goals. The exercise aimed to gather preliminary insights to guide future capital investments and policy initiatives.

Throughout the discussion, the Board emphasized aligning the strategic plan with the Tollway's commitment to its customers and the broader community. They highlighted the need for the plan to be forward-thinking yet practical, ensuring it sets ambitious goals while remaining grounded in the organization's fundamental purpose of enhancing mobility, safety, and quality of life for all users.



Executive Director Rouse thanked the Board for their invaluable contributions and outlined the next steps in the strategic planning process. The team will incorporate the Board's feedback to refine the Mission Statement, Vision and Goals and will continue internal engagement to ensure responsiveness to both internal and external stakeholders. The finalized strategic plan will be presented for Board action in 2025, setting the course for the Tollway's future direction and impact.

[Director Neddermeyer departed the meeting at approximately 2:00 p.m.]

Executive Director Rouse introduced Michelle Graham, Senior Vice President of HNTB, to guide a discussion on Capital Planning.

Capital Planning: Ms. Graham delivered a presentation on the development of the Tollway's new capital plan, covering key elements of the capital planning process, including community outreach findings, stakeholder input, and industry best practices. The team highlighted feedback collected from local officials, community groups, and advisory team members regarding potential opportunities and priorities for the plan.

Discussions included:

1. **Community Impact and Economic Development:** Board members explored the Tollway's role in facilitating regional economic growth and enhancing community infrastructure. Topics included potential partnerships for system expansions, adjustments to low-income program accessibility, and future transit connections.
2. **Stakeholder and Advisory Input:** The presentation shared feedback from the stakeholder advisory team, focusing on guiding principles such as sustainability, innovation and customer-centric improvements. The Board reviewed "value statements" developed to align community needs with the Tollway's mission and potential future projects.
3. **Managed Lanes and Traffic Management:** Members discussed introducing managed lanes and pricing mechanisms on key corridors to improve congestion management and user experience. The potential for "choice lanes" or dynamically priced lanes, including partnerships for transit-oriented solutions, was also examined.
4. **Expansion and Access Projects:** The conversation addressed future expansion opportunities, including improved connectivity in the southwest and western suburbs and new interchanges to reduce access gaps. Projects discussed involved the feasibility of expanding connections to major regional hubs and integrating transit options.



5. ****Technology and Innovation in Traffic Management****: The Board reviewed the potential for expanding active traffic management and adopting new technologies to optimize traffic flow and provide real-time information, which included consideration of support for automated vehicles and innovative uses of Tollway infrastructure, such as expanding fiber access for local broadband needs.

6. ****Strategic Planning for Future Growth****: Board members expressed support for evaluating long-term projects, such as developing new corridors to support warehousing, data centers and high-speed rail. They noted that collaboration with IDOT and other regional stakeholders will be essential.

The Board directed the capital planning team to continue refining proposals, conduct feasibility studies on select projects, and consider strategic partnerships to maximize community benefits and enhance Tollway services.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, Chairman Rivera entertained a motion to adjourn. Director McConnaughay made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Director Connolly. The motion PASSED unanimously by voice vote.

The Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:07 p.m.

Minutes taken by: _____
Christi Regnery
Board Secretary
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority