ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 19, 2026

ILLINOIS TOLLWAY BOARD APPROVES $26.5 BILLION CAPITAL PROGRAM TO REDUCE CONGESTION, MODERNIZE TOLLWAY SYSTEM

Driving Connections program will support regional growth, guide transportation investments across Northern Illinois through 2042

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway Board of Directors today approved *Driving Connections*, a $26.5 billion capital program that will shape investment across the Tollway system through 2042, addressing congestion, aging infrastructure and the transportation needs of a growing region.

The Board also approved new passenger and commercial vehicle toll rates to fund the program beginning January 1, 2027. This represents the first increase in more than 15 years and ensures rates remain below the national average.

The *Driving Connections* investment is focused on rebuilding and rehabilitating roads and bridges, improving interchanges and access, reducing traffic delays and making the systemwide investments necessary to keep nearly 300 miles of Tollway safe and reliable.

“This investment is about planning responsibly for the future of a transportation system that is critical to our region,” said Tollway Board Chairman Arnie Rivera. "The *Driving Connections* capital program earned the support of the Tollway Board of Directors because connecting people and businesses through smart planning, strategic partnerships and collaborative projects will deliver benefits for the entire region.”

The Illinois Tollway’s action is the culmination of more than two years of strategic planning, analysis and public engagement. That work included hosting 13 public hearings across the 12 counties served by the Tollway and gathering more than 13,000 comments, with customers consistently identifying affordability, well-maintained roadways and fewer traffic delays among their priorities.

“We listened, we planned and now we have a responsibility to deliver,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassaundra Rouse. “Nearly 1.7 million drivers rely on this system every day, and our responsibility extends well beyond the next construction season. We know where congestion is growing, and we know how our infrastructure ages. *Driving Connections* gives us a responsible path to meet those needs and keep Northern Illinois moving for the next generation.”

The new capital program will be primarily funded through toll revenue, which will be supported by toll rate increases for both passenger and commercial vehicles, set to take effect on January 1, 2027. Funding for infrastructure improvements will also be generated through biennial toll rate adjustments for all vehicles tied to the Consumer Price Index.

The Illinois Tollway is a user-funded system that receives no state or federal tax dollars, and the new toll rate updates will support annual maintenance and operations, along with debt service for revenue bonds used to fund capital improvements for the Illinois Tollway system.

Building On Proven Results

- more -

Driving Connections will focus investment on some of the region's most persistent transportation challenges by reducing congestion, improving travel reliability and strengthening the connections people and businesses depend on every day.

The Illinois Tollway has demonstrated the impact its capital program investments can have. Improvements completed on the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) reduced travel times by approximately 25 minutes, while the Tri-State Tollway (I-294)/I-57 Interchange saves drivers up to 13 minutes in travel.

Those benefits extend beyond individual trips. A more reliable transportation system helps people reach jobs and communities, supports the movement of goods and strengthens a regional economy that depends on the Illinois Tollway every day, and *Driving Connections* investments will address the mobility and congestion challenges drivers currently face.

The Chicagoland area is particularly impacted by traffic, with the average Chicago driver spending about 100 hours per year in traffic – more than two full work weeks – costing about $1,800 in lost time (INRIX). This is more than double the national average of 43 hours per year sitting in traffic.

Stop-and-go traffic leads to higher fuel consumption and increased brake and engine wear, increasing costs over time. Studies by the Associated General Contractors of America and American Society of Civil Engineers show that poor road conditions cost drivers approximately $725 per year due to additional repairs, faster vehicle depreciation and increased fuel use and tire wear.

Funding Plan Overview

The funding plan approved by the Tollway Board of Directors includes toll rate updates for both passenger and commercial vehicles, including discounts for all I-PASS customers, effective January 1, 2027.

The plan represents the first toll increase in 15 years for passenger vehicle drivers, who comprise approximately 87 percent of the Illinois Tollway's 1.7 million daily users. The Illinois Tollway's average passenger toll for I-PASS customers will increase from an average of $0.07 per mile to approximately $0.11 per mile – below the national average of $0.16 per mile.

The increases for passenger vehicle toll rates will be 45 cents per toll for I-PASS users on the most common mainline toll plaza and the increase for commercial vehicle toll rates will be approximately 30 percent for I-PASS users.

In addition, all toll rates will also be adjusted every other year to account for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index-Urban (CPI-U) scheduled to begin in 2029. This increased predictability will allow the Illinois Tollway to deliver major capital projects responsibly while maintaining long-term financial stability.

A complete listing of all toll rates for each toll plaza and a trip calculator are available at www.illinoistollway.com/drivingconnections.

Capital Program Overview

The $26.5 billion Driving Connections capital program will provide significant benefits to drivers and communities by alleviating congestion, improving travel reliability and reducing driving costs.

The program scheduled for 2027 through 2042 will continue the Tollway's legacy of generating significant construction jobs, reinvesting program funds locally and benefiting the regional economy. Investments will include:

- Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355): $6.63 billion investment, including improving the I-355/I-88 Interchange and widening segments between I-55 and Army Trail Road to reduce congestion.
- Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88): $3.53 billion investment, including adding a new access point on the western portion of I-88, reconstructing the roadway from Illinois Route 56 to Illinois Route 251 and rehabilitating and widening key segments between the Aurora Toll Plaza and the Eisenhower Expressway.
- North Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294): $3.07 billion investment, including roadway rehabilitation and bridge reconstruction between Balmoral Avenue and the Edens Spur, as well as early design work for improvements at the I-294/I-90 Interchange.
- Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90): $2.60 billion investment, including roadway improvements from Elgin to the Kennedy Expressway – including eight miles of new SmartRoad infrastructure and an expanded interchange at Lee Street – plus reconstructing older roadway and bridge segments between Rockford and Elgin.
- South Tri-State Tollway (I-294/I-80): $2.39 billion investment, including roadway repairs and bridge reconstruction from 159th Street (US6) to 95th Street, roadway and bridge work – including targeted widenings – between Illinois Route 394 and 159th Street, plus five miles of new SmartRoad infrastructure.
- Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294): $1.87 billion investment, including roadway and bridge reconstruction from Balmoral Avenue to Wolf Road, a full interchange at Irving Park Road and design funding for a new bridge over the Bensenville Railroad Yard.
- Illinois Route 390 and I-490: $830 million investment to complete a joint project with the Chicago Department of Aviation to support further airport development that will be served by the new Illinois Route 390/I-490 Interchange, and rehab original segments of the Illinois Route 390 corridor.
- Programwide: $5.57 billion programwide investment, including funding that ensures the Tollway can address new challenges and opportunities that arise over the 15-year program. This includes funding for interagency partnership projects, such as the Corridor Opportunities for Regional Enhancements (CORE) initiative and partnership projects with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA), local communities and others. Funding is also provided for innovation and sustainability projects, modernizing maintenance facilities and upgrading back-office systems that support I-PASS and open road tolling.

More information about the Driving Connections capital program is available at www.illinoistollway.com/drivingconnections.

About the Illinois Tollway

# # #