



## 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 was complete in 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.

### PROJECT SUMMARY

#### Bridge Reconstruction

The Mile Long Bridge Project included 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 were 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 includes 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.

In 2023, the old southbound structure was removed and the reconstruction of the two ramps connecting northbound I-294 to 75th Street/Willow Springs Road were complete. All work on the project was completed 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 was complete, the Illinois Tollway restored local roads used for construction access.

#### Local Utility Improvements and Coordination

The project also included 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 were completed in coordination with the bridge project including ComEd tower relocations, gas pipelines and a jet fuel line supplying fuel to O'Hare International Airport.

### PURPOSE

Originally constructed in 1958, the Mile Long Bridge was nearing the end of its service life when the Tollway rebuilt the Mile Long Bridge structure as part of the Central Tri-State (I-294) Project. By rebuilding the bridge, customers experience increased safety and less on-going repair disruptions.

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

The project was coordinated with the Illinois Department of Transportation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railroad,



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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.

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 include 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](http://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](http://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.