

### **Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future**

The Illinois Tollway has developed and is asking for public comment on a comprehensive 15-year capital plan. The plan includes projects which complete the rebuilding of the 52-year-old system and commits nearly \$12 billion in transportation funding to improve mobility, relieve congestion, reduce pollution and link economies across Northern Illinois. Work on these capital improvement projects will begin in 2012.

The Tollway has spent the last year getting its fiscal house in order, making sure its operations are honest and efficient, and reviewing how to improve its customers' experience, while contributing to the economic growth of our state and region.

One of Illinois' greatest assets is its central location and strong transportation system. While the Tollway has focused on maintaining its current system, numerous communities throughout the region are advocating for new transportation projects with increasing urgency. Illinois residents, business owners, planners, elected officials and others understand that new roads can improve quality of life by saving people time and money, creating jobs and stimulating local economies.

While the demand for improved transportation is increasing, both federal and state dollars available for transportation are shrinking. The Tollway receives no state or federal tax dollars for maintenance and operations. Toll revenues pay for debt service, operation costs and all construction and maintenance of the system. The system is funded entirely by user fees and only those who use our system pay for it.

The goals of the Illinois Tollway's 2005 capital program were to rebuild much of the existing system, build the I-355 south extension and implement open road tolling to ease congestion. That work is now 85 percent complete – with nearly \$5 billion in improvements delivered on time and on budget. The last capital program was financed in part a toll increase for cash-paying and commercial customers only. Seventy-five percent of the Tollway's customers have not had a toll increase since 1983 – 28 years ago. As a result, the Tollway has the second lowest per-mile rate of any toll road in the nation.

The Tollway's proposed 2012-2026 capital plan includes rebuilding the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) as a 21<sup>st</sup> century, state-of-the-art corridor linking Rockford to O'Hare, a new interchange to connect I-294 to I-57 – one of only two places in the nation where interstates cross but do not connect – and a new all-electronic Elgin O'Hare West Bypass that can provide western access to one of the nation's busiest airports. In addition, the plan addresses the remaining Tollway system needs.

This capital plan will create more than 120,000 permanent jobs and add \$21 billion to the economy. For every \$1 billion of annual construction, more than 13,000 construction-related jobs will be created. And, this capital plan sustains those jobs over the next decade.

Congestion costs the Chicago area between \$4 billion and \$7 billion annually. The Tollway's new capital plan will ensure that the Chicago area remains competitive with other major cities in the U.S. and around the world. Without an innovative, multi-modal transportation system capable of handling increased travel demand, our regional economy will suffer.

## Key Facts

When the Tollway opened for business in 1958, toll rates were set at 30 cents – just 10 cents less than they are today.

Seventy-five percent of the Tollway's customers have not had a toll increase since 1983 – 28 years ago.

The Tollway currently has the second lowest per-mile toll rate of any toll road in the nation.

No other drivers on toll roads elsewhere in the U.S. have gone without a toll increase since 1983.

The last time the Tollway adjusted toll rates was in 2005, doubling cash tolls for cars, while leaving the price of electronic tolls unchanged. This successfully induced electronic toll payments and, today, more than 83 percent of the Tollway's transactions are electronic.

Without a Tollway, the state would need to raise the gas tax by about 9 cents a gallon statewide to cover the maintenance and operation of the Tollway's existing roads. The tax would need to increase by about 11-12 cents a gallon if the tax was only applied to the Tollway's 12-county service area. To fund the infrastructure improvements included in this capital plan, the state would need to raise the gas tax by more than 20 cents a gallon.

Forty cents in 1983 is equivalent to 90 cents today. The proposed new rates are still lower than if they had kept pace with inflation. The price of a full-sized car has almost tripled, and a gallon of milk has gone from \$2.26 to \$3.62.

Since April 2010, the Tollway has implemented one-time or multi-year budget cuts of \$62.2 million and more than \$14 million in annual recurring savings. The Tollway has eliminated 106 positions in the 2011 budget – a 6 percent cut for a total of 1,598 employees and a 17 percent cut in the Tollway's workforce since 2002.