



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**LONG-TERM TRAFFIC SHIFTS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN THIS WEEK
ON CENTRAL TRI-STATE TOLLWAY (I-294) FOR 2021 ROADWAY WORK**

First piece of southbound counterflow lane set to begin between O'Hare Oasis and Wolf Road

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – Traffic shifts are scheduled to begin this week, including the start of a southbound counterflow lane, to accommodate roadway reconstruction and widening on the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project.

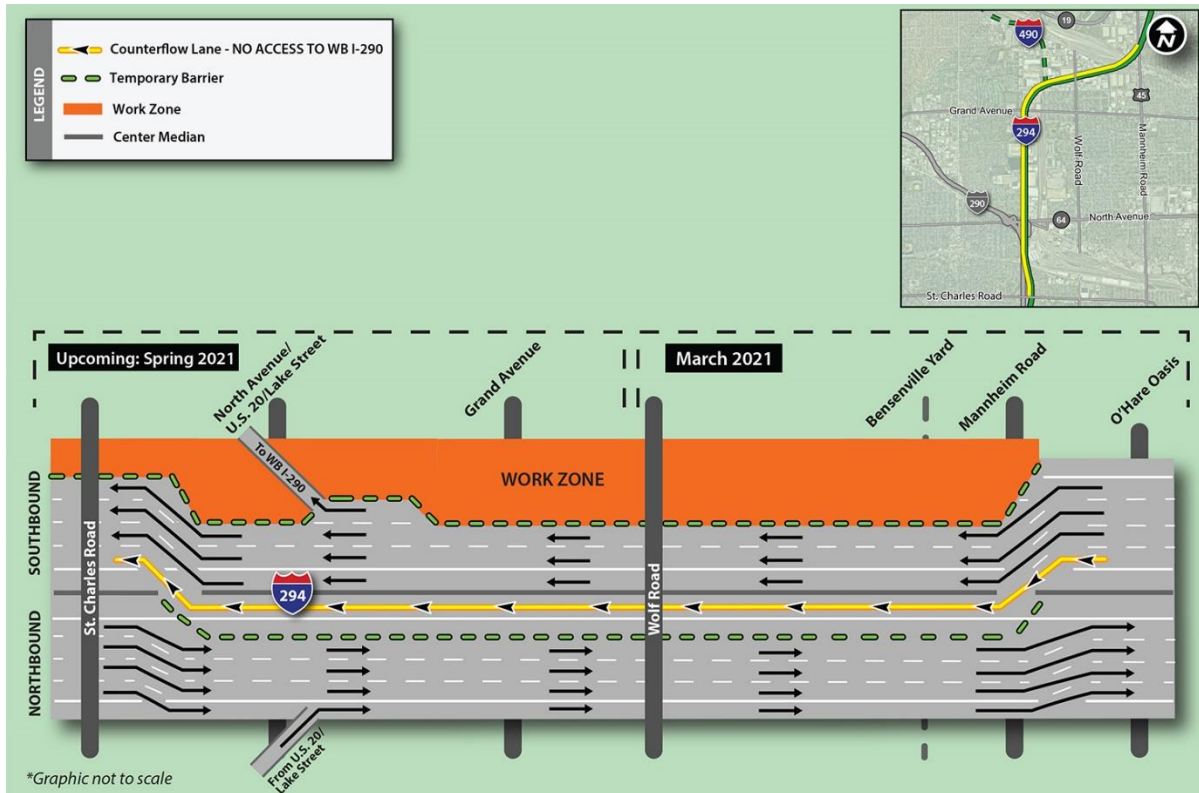
Electronic message signs and construction signage will be put in place in advance to alert drivers to changes in traffic patterns. The traffic shifts are necessary to accommodate a work zone and four lanes of traffic in both directions throughout construction. All work is weather dependent.

“The Illinois Tollway is committed to ensuring the roadway remains safe for both drivers and workers during construction, which is part of our overall commitment to roadway safety,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “We ask drivers to be attentive in work zones by watching for changing traffic patterns and using caution, especially when workers are present.”

This week, off-peak and overnight lane closures are scheduled to shift northbound traffic to the right and to install construction barrier wall. Following this work, overnight Thursday, March 4, into Friday, March 5, all southbound traffic between the O'Hare Oasis and Wolf Road is scheduled to be shifted to the left, with one lane of traffic traveling in the counterflow lane on the northbound side of I-294.

Additional traffic shifts will be scheduled this spring in both directions between Wolf Road and St. Charles Road and will complete a continuous counterflow lane from the Bensenville Yard Railroad Bridge to St. Charles Road.

The traffic shifts and counterflow lane will remain in this configuration through the end of 2021. During this time, southbound traffic entering the counterflow lane at the Bensenville Yard Railroad Bridge will not be able to change lanes until just past St. Charles Road and will not have access to the exit to westbound I-290. The counterflow lane will include shoulders and several emergency pull-out areas for drivers in need of stopping.



In 2021, the Tollway is beginning work to reconstruct and widen I-294 between Wolf Road and St. Charles Road, including rebuilding the bridges carrying I-294 over North Avenue, Grand Avenue and the Union Pacific Railroad and constructing the ramps that will connect I-294 to the new I-490 Tollway. Repair work is also scheduled on the Wolf Road Bridge over I-294.

Up-to-date information regarding lane closures will be available in the Illinois Tollway's Daily Construction Alerts. In addition, construction updates, project information, maps and detour information for work that is part of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project are available in the Projects section on the Tollway's website at www.illinoistollway.com.

Construction in this area is being coordinated with the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Federal Aviation Administration, Village of Schiller Park, Village of Rosemont, Village of Franklin Park, City of Elmhurst, Village of Berkeley and City of Northlake, as well as local fire and police departments.

Reconstruction and widening work on the Central Tri-State Tollway between Balmoral Avenue and St. Charles Road began in June 2018 and is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2024. Work in this northern section of the Central Tri-State includes repairing, resurfacing and widening I-294 between Balmoral Avenue and St. Charles Road along with improvements to medians, bridges and ramps, as well as reconstructing the inside shoulders to include Flex Lanes. The Illinois Tollway has already completed roadway, bridge and ramp improvements between Balmoral Avenue and the O'Hare Oasis in Schiller Park.

Work in this section also includes construction of the new I-490/I-294 Interchange with two new ramp bridges that will provide access for the new I-490 Tollway and a new southbound exit ramp from I-294 to County Line Road between Grand Avenue and North Avenue. Improvements as part of this project also include guardrail, drainage, lighting and signage installation, as well as landscaping improvements.

The \$4 billion Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project is reconstructing and widening the roadway between Balmoral Avenue and 95th Street to provide congestion relief, update old infrastructure to meet current and future transportation demand and address regional needs. This work is part of the Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*. More than 220,000 vehicles use the Central Tri-State Tollway daily.

Work Zone Safety

Construction 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. On I-294, a 45 mph work zone speed limit is in effect throughout the construction season.

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 includes up to a \$10,000 fine, 2-year suspension of driving privileges and jail time, in extreme cases.

About Move Illinois

The Illinois Tollway's 15-year, \$14 billion capital program, *Move Illinois: The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*, is improving mobility, relieving congestion, reducing pollution, creating as many as 120,000 jobs and linking economies throughout the region. The first nine years of *Move Illinois* is on schedule and within budget, delivering the rebuilt and widened Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) as a state-of-the-art 21st century corridor and opening a new interchange connecting the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) to I-57. Progress continues on projects addressing the remaining needs of the existing Tollway system, delivering the Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project and planning for emerging projects, including reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294).

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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