



NEWS

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**ILLINOIS TOLLWAY SENIOR MANAGER OF STRATEGIC PLANNING RECEIVES
INNOVATIVE TRANSPORTATION SOLUTION AWARD FROM WTS GREATER CHICAGO**
Aimee Lee Recognized for Leadership on Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Master Plan

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – Illinois Tollway Senior Manager of Strategic Planning Aimee Lee is receiving the 2019 Innovative Transportation Solution Award from WTS Greater Chicago in recognition of her leadership in developing the master plan for reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294).

“Aimee Lee’s leadership of the project resulted in one of the largest infrastructure improvements currently in Chicago,” said WTS International Chair Maggie Walsh. “She exemplifies the mission of WTS to transform transportation through the advancement of women and serves as an inspiration for other women to take on greater leadership roles in the transportation industry.”

The WTS Innovative Transportation Solutions Award salutes the creative work of an outstanding and innovative transportation project or service that improves the quality of life for its users and the community. The award recognizes both innovation and how a female project manager successfully implemented those elements, meeting and overcoming challenges, as well as involving women in leadership roles on the project.

The WTS Greater Chicago Chapter provides and promotes opportunities for professional development and advancement of women in one of the nation's largest transportation hubs. Chapter members represent transit, freight rail, highway and aviation agencies, private consultants, municipalities, academics and students from across Chicagoland.

“It’s promising to see our staff recognized for their leadership in the development and planning of our region’s transportation network,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director José Alvarez. “It’s clear we’re fortunate to have Aimee as a part of our planning team, and I look forward to supporting our efforts to realize her vision for not only this project, but also future projects as well.”

Lee is being recognized for successfully leading a diverse team of planning professionals in launching the master plan for the I-294 Project under an aggressive schedule of about one year. The Tollway had never previously produced an extensive Master Plan in such a shortened time frame. Lee was empowered by senior management to make timely decisions that allowed the project to continuously move forward.

Women played a key role in developing the master plan. Five of the eight key managers on the team were women, providing senior management oversight, utility and right-of-way oversight and community outreach. Lee’s team managed and directed the work of four consultant teams consisting of 39 individual firms with contracts totaling nearly \$100 million. Eight of the 39 firms were woman-owned and 16 women led key task areas for the four consultant teams.

Reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) from Balmoral Avenue to 95th Street will provide congestion relief, reconstruct old infrastructure to meet current and future transportation demand and address regional needs. It is one of the largest transportation improvements in Northern Illinois.

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One of the major innovations of the master plan was that it was conducted to support future decision-making and carve out a regional long-term plan for the corridor. The cornerstone to the overall evaluation was input from external stakeholders including Tollway customers, communities, businesses and transportation partners. These efforts ensured that the master plan reflected the region's long-term needs, prioritizing corridor issues and identifying recommendations to inform ongoing planning.

In 2017, the Tollway expanded the *Move Illinois* Program by \$2.1 billion to advance a proposed \$4 billion recommended concept to improve the Central Tri-State Tollway, including original plans to replace the old pavement and bring the roadway, bridges and ramps into good repair, as well as additional improvements to address traffic congestion, access, flooding and freight concerns. The master plan also provides opportunities for the Tollway to deliver innovations such as SmartRoad with active traffic management and Flex Lanes to accommodate transit throughout the corridor.

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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