

## **Building of North-South (I-355) South Extension**

The Illinois Tollway is constructing a 12.5-mile, three-lane extension of the North-South Tollway (I-355) from where it currently ends at the Stevenson Expressway (I-55) through Will County to I-80. This project is part of the Tollway's \$5.3 billion Congestion-Relief Program to reduce travel times.

### **Update – Latest Construction Info**

Equipment is now being moved in and out of the construction corridor at construction entrances that were built on both sides of crossroads in the southern sections of the I-355 corridor, and work in 2006 will feature bridge and interchange construction. A runaround is now in place until fall 2006 at Bruce Road, moving traffic to temporary pavement parallel to the road so work can begin to construct a bridge to carry Bruce Road traffic over the path of the extension. Preliminary work also has begun for construction of the 1.3-mile Des Plaines River Valley Bridge. Work also began this year on the I-55 and I-80 interchanges. 139<sup>th</sup> Street will permanently close between Cokes Road and Archer Avenue in late spring.

### **Minimizing Impact to Reduce Delays**

There are minimal impacts to drivers in the early stages of construction. The South Extension will look similar to the south end of the current North-South Tollway – where the road is depressed and runs underneath existing local roads. This aids in the reduction of roadway noise. There is occasional need to move equipment over some local crossroads listed below\*. No equipment will be moved during peak travel times.

The South Extension will run under Cedar Rd.\*, Route 6\*, Bruce Road\*, 167<sup>th</sup> St.\*, Gougar Rd.\*, 163<sup>rd</sup> St.\*, 159<sup>th</sup> Street\*, 127<sup>th</sup> St.\*, 151<sup>st</sup> St., 135<sup>th</sup> St.\*, 143<sup>rd</sup> St.\*, and 171<sup>st</sup> St./Archer Ave\*, and also will include a mile-long bridge over the Des Plaines River, and will also run over 135<sup>th</sup> St.\*, I-55 and Internationale Pkwy.

### **Work Zone Safety**

Remember to drive safely in work zones; see the Tollway's Work Zone Safety page at [www.illinoistollway.com](http://www.illinoistollway.com).

### **Schedule**

The first contract on the project began in late 2004 clearing the land that the new road is being built on. Major earthwork began in spring 2005 on the south end of the project. Additional work began in fall 2005, including embankment excavation and drainage work. Additional runarounds will be constructed in 2006 at 127<sup>th</sup> St., Archer Ave., 143<sup>rd</sup> St., 151<sup>st</sup> St., 167<sup>th</sup> St., US Route 6 and Cedar Road. Bridge construction at Gougar Road began in March, requiring a detour. Interchange work has begun at I-55 and I-80.



**Rendering of Des Plaines River Valley Bridge.**

### ***Construction of Des Plaines River Valley Bridge***

The project includes the construction of a 1.3-mile, six-lane bridge over the Des Plaines River Valley. The structure is a pre-cast, post-tensioned concrete bridge that will rise 90 feet above the ground at its highest point, with three lanes in each direction. The bridge will run from north of Bluff Road to south of New Avenue and will span the I & M Canal, the Sanitary & Ship Canal, several railroad lines, the Des Plaines River, and the Forest Preserve in the central section of the bridge. Work began in March to drill the caisson foundations for the new bridge piers and construction north of Bluff Road. Crews also have begun drilling foundations for bridge piers south of New Avenue. The bridge will feature a total of 34 piers; five piers north of Bluff Road will be 10-20 feet in height, and the 29 piers south of Bluff Road and through the Valley will have an average height of 75 feet.



**These pier footings are ready for the next concrete pour. Each pier consists of four support columns, topped with a pier cap.**

A low-level bridge was constructed over the Des Plaines River and will be used to move equipment during construction of the Des Plaines River Valley Bridge. Once the project is complete, the bridge will be turned over to the Will County Forest Preserve for use in connecting their trail systems. The Tollway will utilize the low-level bridge in order to inspect and maintain the Des Plaines River Valley Bridge. There will be minimal impact to drivers with construction of the Des Plaines River Valley Bridge, since it is not in close proximity to residential areas or businesses.

### ***Construction of I-55 and I-80 Interchanges***

The interchange at the terminus of I-355 and the Stevenson Expressway (I-55) is under construction. The new interchange will feature eight ramp movements, including three flyover ramp bridges. The work underway now includes grading and building up for the flyover ramps, retaining wall work, and construction of bridge piers to support the flyover ramps. All mainline lanes remain open during this phase, with shoulder closures and a lane closure on the I-55 collector-distributor road in place to provide work areas for retaining wall work.

Work began this spring at the site of the new I-80 interchange at Cedar Road, where the inside shoulders are closed for center pier construction to carry flyover ramp bridge traffic.



**Grading work continues at the I-355/I-55 interchange.**

**Purpose – Pertinent Details on Why and How**

The new extension will serve Will County, one of the fastest growing counties in Illinois, and provide a regional connection that improves north-south mobility between Interstate 55 and Interstate 80. The extension will reduce travel times by 20 percent and provide a more direct route between residences in Will County and areas where jobs are more plentiful, such as the O'Hare area, therefore benefiting the entire Chicagoland region.

The South Extension will run through 13 Municipalities/Townships in three counties including: Bolingbrook, Downers Grove Township, DuPage Township, Homer Glen, Homer Township, Lemont, Lemont Township, Lockport, Lockport Township, New Lenox, New Lenox Township, Romeoville and Woodridge. There are six proposed interchanges planned at I-55, 127<sup>th</sup> St., 143<sup>rd</sup> St./IL 171 (Archer Ave.), 159<sup>th</sup> St., US 6, and I-80.

The project includes noise abatement walls at 6 locations for developments that were platted before April 1999, when the road became public knowledge. See the Noise Abatement Fact Sheet for more information.

**For further information, visit [www.illinoistollway.com](http://www.illinoistollway.com) & view the Construction section.**

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