

ACEC-IL Illinois Tollway Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 17, 2025 – Virtual Format
10:00 am – 11:00 am with Illinois Tollway Leadership (*below*)

Meeting Minutes by: Joy Schaad, Lakeshore Engineering, LLC

Tollway Attendees: Manar Nashif, John Donato, Marlene Vick, Mike Catolico, Cindy Williams, Jeff Allen, Sarah Kim, Karyn Robles, Jackie Forbes, Tiffani Sally, Laura Durkin, Johnny Morcos, Jim Mayer, Mike Valentino

I. ACEC Update - Kevin Artl, ACEC-IL Executive Director

- The Fall Conference begins tomorrow, we have strong participation of the Tollway, with staff presenting at several sessions.
- Illinois's legislature passed the transit governance and funding bill, and it included language to “encourage” the Tollway Board to approve a new capital program. It should be noted that the Tollway Board of Directors is required to approve a new capital program and certain toll highway act requirements must still be met.
- Tollway has been planning for a future capital program for over a year via advisory working groups and ACEC has participated in that work. ACEC will continue to support the Tollway during the regional hearings and as other needs arise.
- ACEC is in lump sum contracting discussions with the Tollway; a subcommittee has been formed to review forms, identify best practices and determine next steps, etc.
- A joint ACEC–IDOT–Tollway Innovative Project Delivery seminar is planned for January.
- The Vehicle Daily Rate has been increased to \$90/day under IDOT; Tollway has adopted the same for new contracts. ACEC is discussing implications for current contracts with the Tollway and IDOT.
- The DBE re-certification workload is significant statewide; the Tollway is supporting IDOT (900 vendors/service providers) and the City (800 vendors/service providers) in hopes of completion by January 1. Early submission by DBE firms is recommended.
- Upcoming ACEC events: IDOT briefings Dec 2 and Dec 15, IDOT Phase I training Dec. 9.

2. Tollway Comments – John Donato, Chief of Staff (for Director Rouse)

- Director Rouse sent regrets for not being able to join.
- John acknowledged strong industry engagement at recent Tollway & ACEC events.
- Noted impressive progress implementing the current capital programs and acknowledged the substantial upcoming workload tied to the new capital program.
- Emphasized his appreciation for the partnership with ACEC and its member firms and invited questions, with additional details to come from Manar.

3. ACEC Tollway Subcommittee Goals and Updates

a. Tollway Proposal Exhibits – Committee Chair Jason Martin, SE3

- The revised/simplified proposal exhibit forms were piloted on recent PSB selections.
- Tollway plans to move forward with finalized versions for the next selection.
- The new forms will be on the Tollway’s website shortly.
- The Tollway’s collaboration with ACEC is appreciated.

b. Upon Request Contract Management – S/C Chair Mark Heaton, Hanson

- ACEC conveyed industry concerns and the Tollway welcomed the feedback and collaboration.
- The Tollway responded with procedural revisions and internal guidance and training.
- New guidance for both design and CM is now posted and being implemented.

c. Consultant Rate Forms (CRF) and Invoicing – S/C Chair Denis Hogan, Baxter & Woodman

- Multiple meetings held to look at needs and challenges on both sides, and ways to simplify and streamline the CRF process and invoicing.
- ACEC recommended using rate ranges by classification tied to PSB listed “key personnel”.
- Various ideas are currently in internal review at the Tollway, and we hope to implement process changes in early to mid-2026.

d.) CM Field Document Efficiencies – Presently Vacant (seeking volunteers)

- October subcommittee meeting with the Tollway focused on ideas for improving field documentation efficiencies.
- Items under evaluation: HeadLight software for data transfer to e-Builder, drones for measurements, improved material tracking, ArcGIS-based As-built plan preparation.
- Additional volunteers with CM field-technology expertise are welcome. Firms with staff in other states may be able to tap some useful experience.

e. Lump Sum Contracting – Presently Vacant (seeking volunteers)

- Introductory meeting with the Tollway is being planned.
- Goal: explore opportunities for lump-sum contracting and other ways to improve contracting and invoicing.
- Seeking volunteers with relevant experience. During the call, Sagar Sonar, Kimley Horn volunteered to be the Chair of this committee.

f. Alternative Contract Delivery – S/C Chair Jim Shaw, RS&H

- An ACEC sponsored Tollway-IDOT Seminar planned for January 27, 2026, to learn each agency's goals, structure, and constraints and to hear from firms that have performed Alternative Delivery projects to share their insights and experiences.
- Subcommittee plans to meet with the Tollway shortly after the seminar to discuss their objectives and ways that ACEC can support them.

g. NEW "Working with the Tollway" Subcommittee – Chair TBD

- New initiative to capture tips, lessons learned and best practices for Tollway project delivery.
- Goal: develop guidance document or a seminar to help educate new PMs and firms in a first-time Prime consultant role.
- The goals and overall scope is being developed.
- Volunteers are invited to participate.

4. "Getting to Know the Tollway" – Business Systems, Mike Catolico, Chief

- Mike gave an overview of relevant aspects of the Business Systems Department. (see presentation slides attached to the minutes).
- They are responsible for all the technology that supports tolling from the roadside equipment to the back office to support efficient, equitable customer service.
- For context, ISTHA has 5 roadways, approximately 300 lane miles, and currently processes over 3 million transactions daily.
- Equipment includes the gantries, IPass system antennas that read if there is a transponder in the vehicle, cameras (front and rear plate photos), sensors in the road (inductance loops) to count axles to assess the correct toll amount.
- He explained the packaging and transmission of the data to the back office: vehicle detection, image capture, and classification into single transactions.
- ISTHA built a system that can do predictive maintenance, i.e. identify and perform maintenance and repairs before the equipment breaks down and often remotely. This reduces lane closures that could have traffic and safety implications.
- He discussed future infrastructure-free tolling concepts, such as telematics systems that charge based on road usage instead of fuel consumption. Mike showed a video demonstrating this technology that is currently being developed by the Tollway.
- He highlighted recent improvements to customer service including the capabilities of the new Tollway app.

5. Diversity / DBE Program Update – Marlene Vick, Chief of Diversity & Strategic Development

- Tollway reaffirmed its commitment to DBE, VOSB, and small-business participation.
- The current recertification is a significant statewide effort; the Tollway is coordinating closely with IDOT and the UCP certifying agencies to be of support.

- The Tollways' Technical Assistance providers are available to assist firm owners prepare their personal narratives and financial documentation.
- All options are on the table, and the Tollway welcomes continued industry feedback on DBE program needs and challenges.
- John Donato reiterated the value of and commitment to diverse suppliers.
- Firms seeking recertification are encouraged to submit early.

6. Engineering & Planning Updates – Manar Nashif, Chief Engineering Officer

Before his planned remarks, Manar commented on the importance of the Alternative Delivery Subcommittee, the upcoming training and the January workshop, and acknowledged IDOT's great work on their Alternative Delivery program. He noted that IDOT recently awarded its first CM/GC contract to Granite. ISTHA meets regularly with IDOT on Alternative Delivery: sharing lessons learned and working to ensure that the two programs are as similar as possible given the distinct legislative authority granted to each agency. The Tollway is interested in feedback as they implement and refine their program.

Also, regarding the new *Working with the Tollway* subcommittee, he noted the attrition in the industry (both at the agencies and on the private side) and his hope that this group can assure that the culture is carried forward. The Tollway has its unique aspects. The Tollway culture is evident in answering "What does it mean to work for the Tollway?", "What's important to the Tollway?" (i.e., efficient project delivery, partnership and collaboration, working through problems, all parties pulling in the same direction, etc.)

Regarding the Tollway's Business Systems department, it's important to understand that Business Systems is both the customer and the customer support team. We need to consider their needs in our designs and during construction and help them to help the end user. Also, the mobile app is great.

a. Staff Updates

- The new Senior Project Manager in Engineering: Muaz Ahmed
- The Deputy Chief of Planning started in June: Tiffani Sally
- The new Land Acquisition Manager: Stephanie Kilpatrick (*Manar took the opportunity to remind the audience that ROW acquisition routinely takes 18 months and if the ROW needs change while in the acquisition phase, it will take 18 months from that new start date. ROW needs to be sufficiently considered in all project schedules!*)

b. Capital Program Updates

i. The Move Illinois Program

- In year 14; approx. 82% complete with \$13.6B committed (90%); the final year is 2027.

- Expect to commit a spend of a billion dollars this year. The same with four of the five prior years. Quite an accomplishment of our industry – all working together.
- Recent accomplishments include lane openings on the Central Tri-State from Ogden to I-55, reopened ramps at the Ogden Ave Interchange, new movements to open at the I-290/I-88 interchange, shortly. Credit to the Master Planners, DSEs, DCM and CCM for progressive thinking to deliver benefits to the users in advance of full project completion.
- Also, dramatic progress in the Elgin O’Hare corridor: a new western access interchange; York Road is being transformed, and building a new interchange to connect I-490 with Franklin Ave.
- Tier 1 plaza conversions to barrier free are underway.

ii. Bridging the Future Program

- A three-year overlap with Move Illinois and it will end in 2031.
- 7-year, \$2B program; \$130M committed to date.
- The I-88/I-355 interchange master plan is underway,
- Four Tier 2 plaza conversions are in design and will be progressing to construction.
- I-390 extension and a new interchange at County Farm Rd, Hanover Park

iii. Next capital program

- John Donato clarified that the revenue from toll increases recently discussed alongside the transit bill will go to the Tollway system not to public transit. He noted that there has been some confusion based on how the information was introduced.
- Both chambers of the IL Legislature passed the bill, but it awaits signature by the Governor which is expected to occur.
- The Tollway process has not varied and will include 12 public hearings before the Tollway Board will need to vote to approve any toll increases.

c. PSB Updates

i. PSB 25-3

- Six items on this bulletin (combined value is \$28M)
- 163 Statement of Interests received – Means a big workload for reviewers, but it’s good to have a lot of competition to get the best quality service.
- Once scoring and selection is complete the Tollway will attempt to negotiate the contracts ASAP.
- Includes Phase II design for new access at I-88/York Road, and some CM contracts on the Central Tri-State: overlay Ogden to I-55, mainline reconstruction from St Charles Rd. to North Ave. and a few CM upon-request contracts.

- IL-390 Design Build Project: the RFQ has been issued and the Statements of Qualification received. Evaluations are underway and we will develop a shortlist. An RFP will be issued to the shortlisted firms. Proposals will be evaluated and a final selection announced.

ii. Upcoming Opportunities

- The 2026 PSB look-ahead was just published (Nov 13th) with three bulletins.
- PSB 26-1 includes additional CCM Services for I-490 corridor, some CM for CTS, systemwide DUR and CUR, and Land Acquisition Services upon request.
- PSB 26-2 shows the next PMO contract.
- PSB 26-3 includes: CM for the UPRR bridge reconstruction over I-90 near Belvedere, and rehab work on I-90 between Kishwaukee River and Rockton Rd. on the west end. Have selected a DSE, so will need a CM there. The four Tier 2 Plazas that are in design now, will each need a CM in 2026.
- Regarding potential GEC and Traffic Engineering consultant contracts, the Tollway is aware that the current contracts are nearing their completion and is evaluating options moving forward and information will be announced at a later date.

d. Vehicle Daily Rate

- Tollway has adopted the \$90/day rate for new contracts matching the IDOT rate; and guidance for how it will be handled on existing contracts will be provided soon.

7. Closing Discussion & Final Remarks

- Reminder: a training on the Central Engineering Payment System (CEPS) Authorization to Proceed (ATP) process will be held tomorrow afternoon; the webinar link was shared in the chat.
- Manar said he was looking forward to the ACEC conference in Springfield and would be speaking on the selection process panel.
- Jason thanked Manar for his remarks and for the advice to critically listen to Tollway at events to potentially inform their subsequent submittal of SOIs and other submittals.
- Jason reminded Tollway that ACEC and the members stand ready to help and support the Tollway as they move forward on the new Capital Program and approval process.
- The meeting adjourned at 10:59 AM with well wishes for safe travel to Springfield.