

Hinsdale residents and officials question need for widening I-294, seek commitment to transparency from Illinois Tollway Authority at committee meeting this week

For Immediate Release

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Hinsdale, IL - Several Hinsdale residents joined Village officials at an Illinois Tollway Authority committee this week to voice concerns about the need and justification of any potential project that would widen I-294.

If the potential re-widening project proceeds, Village officials say it will have a dramatic and detrimental impact on Hinsdale parks and open spaces, homeowners, the environment and on the community's economy.

Village officials and residents spoke at the Tollway Finance, Administration and Operations Committee meeting on March 15 where they questioned the need and justification for the project while also requesting that the Authority share more information and make a commitment towards full transparency as it considers options for the I-294 reconstruction.

"While we are opposed to widening I-294 based on the negative impact it will have on Hinsdale and surrounding communities, we also question the need for the project at all based on the State's financial crisis and other, more pressing infrastructure needs throughout the state," said Hinsdale Assistant Village Manager Bradley Bloom.

Also, with minimal debate, the Authority's Tollway Finance, Administration and Operations Committee voted to recommended full board approval of a \$33 million contract with AECOM Technical Services, Inc, for "Design Corridor Management, on the Tri-State Tollway (I-294)". The full Authority Board will consider the contract at its upcoming board meeting on March 23.

Earlier this month, the Village established an ad hoc committee of concerned residents that opposes any project that widens I-294 on the basis that it will encroach upon homeowners' property and park space and adversely impact the community's overall quality of life and economy.

"The Village, our ad hoc committee members and many of our residents are eager to see documents related to this \$33 million contract in hopes that it sheds some light on the Tollway Authority's plans," said Bloom. "We're eager, because, frankly, information about what is being considered has been scarce or hard to come by."

Bloom also noted that on March 3, the Village filed a Freedom of Information request with the Illinois Tollway Authority seeking, among other things, noise, environmental and noise studies related to the proposed I-294 reconstruction effort. The Village has not received those documents.

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