Village of Hinsdale
Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294)
Community
Information Meeting
February 27, 2017
Overview

• The Tollway Authority Board is an appointed Board with Governor Rauner having appointed Chair Schillerstrom.
• The Tollway Authority will finalize its plans for I-294 within the next six months.
• Everything we have heard from the Tollway Authority in the past three months suggests that, at this point, the Tollway Authority’s plan will include widening I-294 from four lanes to five lanes through Hinsdale.
• While the Tollway Authority has not ruled out the possibility of widening I-294 to six lanes through Hinsdale, that option seems less likely.
Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294)

The following materials have been copied directly from the Tollway Authority website and are from Tollway Planning meetings. Rocco Zucchero, whose name appears frequently on the Tollway Authority slides, serves as the Deputy Chief of Engineering for Planning for the Illinois Tollway Authority.

Taken from the Minutes from an April 21, 2016 Customer Service & Planning Committee Meeting:

“Chairman Schillerstrom highlighted that the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) reconstruction is an important and unique opportunity for the Tollway Authority. He suggested that to inform decision-making, the master plan process should provide a comprehensive examination of financially viable options, including ones which are unconstrained by current budgets and infrastructure.”

As you will see in the later slides, two pieces of “infrastructure” in Hinsdale that constrain the widening of I-294 are the Hinsdale Oasis and the BNSF Railroad Bridge across I-294 between Hinsdale and Western Springs.
Project Limits/Move Illinois Scope

- Project limits
  - 22.3 miles – 95th Street to Balmoral Avenue

- Central Tri-State reconstruction in Move Illinois Program
  scheduled from 2020 to 2022
  includes:
    - Mainline reconstruction = $1,694 million
    - Bridge and ramp repairs = $310 million*

* Entire Tri-State Corridor
Existing Conditions

 Improvement History

- **1958:** Original construction
  - Three lanes from I-55 to Balmoral Avenue
  - Two lanes from 95th Street to I-55
- **1972:** Widened to three lanes from 95th Street to I-55 and resurfaced
- **1992:** Widened to four lanes and resurfaced
- **2001:** Resurfaced
- **2012:** Resurfaced
Central Tri-State Challenges

- Highest traffic volumes on the system
- System interchanges and operational issues
  - Develop feasible alternatives that improve traffic flow
- Bridges in need of reconstruction or repair
- Two oases (Hinsdale and O’Hare)
- Utilities, railroads and billboards
- Constrained right-of-way

Presented by Rocco Zucchero on December 10, 2014
Prioritization of Issues

- **Congestion**: 43 votes
- **Access**: 42 votes
- **Flooding**: 38 votes
- **Freight**: 37 votes
- **Technology**: 29 votes
- **Noise**: 29 votes
- **Aesthetics**: 25 votes
- **Economic Development**: 25 votes
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian**: 20 votes

1st Tier = 3 points
2nd Tier = 2 points
3rd Tier = 1 point

Weighted number of votes by the Corridor Planning Council

2/28/2017
Central Tri-State Opportunities

- Explore roadway improvements
  - Reconstruct four lanes in each direction with wider median shoulder and inside lane
  - Reconstruct and widen to five lanes in each direction

Presented by Rocco Zucchero on December 10, 2014
Intermodal Terminals

Freight Terminals

Freight Employment Centers

Presented by Rocco Zucchero on November 13, 2015

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Area for Planning
Constrained Right-of-Way

I-294 North of Hinsdale Oasis, Hinsdale and Western Springs
Constraints – Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Bridge

Presented by Rocco Zucchero on April 21, 2016
Oasis
Project Timeline

**Corridor Planning Council Report (2016)**
- Broader vision to shape master plan

**Master Plan (2017)**
- Alternative analysis
- Advanced engineering studies

**Final Design Contracts (2017-2019)**
- Elgin O’Hare Western Access Project coordination
- Illinois Route 64 Coordination
- Permits, right-of-way, utilities

**I-294 Mainline Construction (2020-2022)**
- *Potential to advance construction sooner*
Village of Hinsdale Concerns regarding Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project

WHERE IS THE TOLLWAY AUTHORITY IN THE PLANNING PROCESS?

The timeline and steps provided on the following slide clearly show that the Tollway Authority is in the final step before its final design contract.

And the map presented to the Village on slide 29 clearly shows the easements and right of ways needed by the Tollway Authority as it relates to the BNSF railroad and Veeck Park.
Timeline and Next Steps

- 2015: Corridor Planning Council
- 2016: Master Plan
- 2017: Utilities, right-of-way, permits and railroads
- 2018: Final design contract

Presented by Rocco Zucchero on April 21, 2016
Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Chronology

- December 2014 - Tollway Authority develops Master Plan Vision identifying congestion as an issue. While the possibility of widening I-294 was mentioned, at this point it was just one of several possibilities.

- Since December 2014 Village officials have been staying abreast of activities related to the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) reconstruction. The initial focus of the interaction with the Tollway Authority was on drainage. The Tollway Authority also discussed gaining access to Peirce and Veeck Park in the event that the BNSF Bridge needed to be replaced as part of the Tollway Authority project.

- April 2016 - Tollway Authority acknowledged that the existing BNSF bridge was in good condition relative to other infrastructure along the route, which caused staff to question the reason for the Tollway Authority’s interest in replacing the BNSF Bridge. Staff deduced it was likely that the Tollway Authority was contemplating replacement primarily to allow widening of the roadway. However, the Tollway Authority could not confirm or deny that widening would occur. The Tollway Authority said no plans were final and that it would meet with the Village in the Fall 2016 to provide a status.
Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Chronology

- November 2016 - Village Officials meet with the Tollway Authority regarding the need for easements from the Village for reconstruction of BNSF Bridge. Tollway Authority discloses new BNSF Bridge *will be built to accommodate up to six lanes* in each direction.
- November 2016 - Tollway Authority conducts sound measurements in the Woodlands.
- December 2016 - President Cauley, Trustee LaPlaca and Village Staff meet with the Tollway Authority where it becomes clear that the Tollway Authority is very far along in its discussions with BNSF, as they presented a map identifying areas for easements that are needed from the Village to reconstruct bridge. President Cauley states the Village *will not authorize/approve* any easements not knowing what the final plan is for Tollway.
- February 6, 2017 - President Cauley meets with Tollway Authority Chairman Schillerstrom. Chairman Schillerstrom stated that no final decision has been made, but a final decision will be made within six months. Schillerstrom indicated that the final decision will most likely include widening of I-294 through Hinsdale.
- February 9, 2017 - Village Letter to Community published in Hinsdalean Newspaper.
Proposed Alternatives Discussed with Mr. Schillerstrom on February 6, 2017

• **Don’t widen I-294 at all.** Mr. Schillerstrom’s response was, in effect, that was not an option.

• **Start the widening of I-294 north of Hinsdale.** Mr. Schillerstrom responded that was not a practical solution.

• **Move the center line of I-294 through Hinsdale to the east, because there are fewer residences and parks on the Western Springs side of I-294.** Mr. Schillerstrom said that was a possibility and would look into it.

• President Cauley asked Mr. Schillerstrom if there were other options. Mr. Schillerstrom responded that he couldn’t think of any.

• We described the devastating effect widening I-294 into Hinsdale would have on residential property, our parks and the Hinsdale Oasis. Mr. Schillerstrom’s only response was “I know there will be a lot of unhappy people.”
Village of Hinsdale Concerns regarding Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project

1. Impact potential widening would have on residents and schools (Adventist Academy) on eastern border of community from Tollway potentially encroaching on property and the associated noise

2. Impact potential widening would have on the Village’s parks and loss of mature trees

3. Impact of creating “shoo-fly” and impact on the community use of parks for a period of two years or more

4. Impact potential widening would have on the Hinsdale Oasis that provides $550,000 in revenue to the Village

5. The Tollway Authority has suggested that the goal of any potential expansion would be to use its easements or right of of way (ROW). However, many of the Tollway’s easements and ROWs are very close to Hinsdale homes and parks. The Tollway Authority has the ability to use Eminent Domain to initiate “quick take” or condemnation procedures. Generally, the Tollway Authority also has the authority to take the land, even if the land is being used by the municipality. All that is required is approval of the Illinois Commerce Commission.
Village of Hinsdale Concerns regarding Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project

IMPACT TO HOMEOWNERS
Noise Concerns

• The main goal of the I-294 project is to reduce congestion. It is implied that the Tollway Authority will add lanes to reduce congestion. Additional lanes will generate more truck and vehicle traffic which will increase noise pollution in the Village.

• If the Tollway Authority widens I-294, the sound wall in certain areas, could move to within feet of homes, parks and athletic fields. The Village requests that the Tollway Authority use the most current sound deadening technology available for all of its sound walls.

• The Village will insist on no change or betterment of current conditions with respect to noise.
Backyard of home on 600 Block Harding

Tollway easement extends to chain link fence

Tollway easement extends to wood fence.
600 Block Harding
Backyard of home on 400 block Mills

Tollway easement extends to chain link fence
Mills Street
Forest Preserve-Office Park-Cancer Treatment Center-Graue Mill Condominiums
Village of Hinsdale Concerns regarding Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project

IMPACT TO

Hinsdale Adventist Academy School
Village of Hinsdale Concerns regarding Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294) Project

BNSF BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION

• As part of this project, the Tollway Authority has expressed significant interest in reconstructing the three-track Hinsdale railroad/BNSF bridge that crosses I-294 north of 47th Street.
• The bridge is a 70-mile per hour zone, which makes it a valuable corridor for both commuter and freight train traffic. BNSF has instructed the Tollway Authority that it is mandatory for all three tracks to stay in operation throughout any bridge reconstruction.
• Therefore, Tollway Authority representatives have indicated that the thought would be to create a “shoo-fly” to add additional tracks in order to reroute trains. This “shoo-fly” could have significant bearing on Hinsdale, as it has the potential to adversely impact parks, the Veeck combined sewer overflow (CSO) and the private residences on Highland Road.
Peirce/Veeck Park Temporary Railroad Tracks
Peirce Park with Tollway Property Line Illustration drawn by Tollway Authority Engineers
Impact on Residential Properties and Parks

• The following group of slides were shared with Tollway Authority when we met with them in December 2016.

• We invited the Tollway Authority to tell us if they disagreed with our assessment of the impact widening I-294 would have on homes and parks.

• The Tollway Authority did not disagree.
Tri-State Tollway Widening Impacts on Peirce Park

• As at Brook Park, the sound barrier wall is directly adjacent to the Tollway shoulder – approximately 50-feet from the Tollway ROW line.

• East of the sound barrier wall is a drainage ditch and boundary fence. It is assumed if the wall must move 15-feet, the drainage ditch and boundary fence must move 15-feet west also. This equals 3.8% of the total park area.

• Relocation of the boundary fence west would eliminate the dugouts and spectator area east of the two, smaller Little League diamonds rendering these fields unusable. There is already a shortage of Little League fields in Hinsdale.
Tri-State Tollway Widening Impacts on Veeck Park

- A chain link fence separates Veeck Park from the Tollway ROW instead of a sound barrier wall.
- Moving the fence 15-feet west will bring it near the top of the privacy berm on the east side of Veeck Park.
- The soccer fields, softball diamond, skate park, nor access to the Wet Weather Facility will be impacted by moving this fence relocation.
Tri-State Tollway Widening Impacts on Woodland Park

- Woodlands Park is 108 feet wide at its narrowest.
- If the tollway widens to five lanes in each direction, this could expand the tollway ROW by an additional 12-15 feet. This is a loss of 28,575 square feet (7.8%) of Woodland Park.
- The yellow line shows the approximate property taking within the south half of Woodlands Park.
- The major impact will be the removal of the natural sound barrier (trees) within the 15-foot acquisition.
- More trees may be impacted since the construction of a new sound wall will impact up to half their root systems outside the 15-foot area.
- While tree replacement can be part of this project, the replacement trees will typically not be mature and will not provide the same sound protection and aesthetic qualities for decades.
Tri-State Tollway Widening Impacts on Woodland Park (North End)

- Relocation of the sound barrier walls at the north end of the park will bring them within 30-feet of 703 Harding Road.
- The break between the walls will then be aimed directly at the home which will amplify the traffic noise rather than reduce it.
Brook Park
Tri-State Tollway Widening Impacts on Brook Park

- The sound barrier wall is directly adjacent to the tollway shoulder – approximately 40-feet from the Tollway ROW line.
- East of the sound barrier wall is a drainage ditch and boundary fence. It is assumed if the wall must move 15-feet, the drainage ditch and boundary fence must move 15-feet west also.
- This moves the boundary fence near or on the east edge of the north parking lot and the walking path.
- Tennis, football (played on the open space running NW – SE across Brook Park), and little league baseball should not be impacted.
- As with Woodlands Park, many mature trees that provide additional sound absorption will be removed.
Why is the Oasis Important?

Many residents are unaware of the benefit to having the Tollway Oasis in Hinsdale.

The tax revenue generated at the Oasis represents a significant funding source and impacts the Village’s ability to provide quality services to the Village.
Financial Impact from Loss of the Oasis

- Annual Tax Loss to Village: $550,000
- $300,000 in tax revenue from sale of gas and convenience items
- $250,000 in tax revenue from restaurants
- The projected tax loss to Village during a 3 year Tollway construction is estimated at $1.65M
Hinsdale Oasis
Footbridge
The Village is still unclear as to what will become of the footbridge that connects Western Springs and Hinsdale and enjoyed by the residents of both communities.
CONCLUSIONS

• The Tollway Authority is seriously considering widening I-294 through Hinsdale.

• Widening I-294 will involve potentially moving the sound wall 12 to 15 feet further west for each traffic lane that is added. If the sound wall is moved, the drainage that runs parallel to I-294 and the safety fence will have to be moved 12 to 15 feet to the west.

• The relocation of the sound wall will encroach into backyards, take away scarce parkland and eliminate mature trees.

• The expansion of I-294 to accommodate more truck traffic will greatly increase the traffic noise levels in east Hinsdale.

• The loss of $550,000 from the Oasis would have a serious detrimental affect on Hinsdale’s financial strength.

• The Tollway Authority plans to make a final decision about widening I-294 within the next six months.
Next Steps
Stay informed and voice your opinion

Village residents have previously been successful in having their voices be heard by the Tollway Authority:

**Tollway expansion of the 1990s**

The I-294 expansion that took place in the early 1990s involved protracted negotiation between the Tollway Authority, the Village, and other surrounding municipalities related to noise barriers, storm water management, maintenance of the pedestrian overpass between Hinsdale and Western Springs, and other issues. **Ultimately, with the involvement of Village staff, active resident groups, and local and state politicians, these issues were resolved to the Village’s satisfaction and the project was completed in 1993.**

According to historical files, the Village has purchased two significant pieces of property from the Tollway Authority. Those purchases include a portion of Veeck Park and Woodland Park.

**In each of these instances, it took a concerted effort on the part of Village staff and the Village Board to ensure that the interests of the Village and its residents were addressed. It is evident that the upcoming project will require this same level of advocacy and action by Hinsdale residents.**
Action Plan

- Village will pass a Resolution opposing any expansion of I-294 until final plans and final impact to Hinsdale residents are known.
- Village will request that should the Tollway Authority move any of the sound walls, the Tollway Authority will have to accommodate any drainage concerns that negatively impact adjacent properties.
- Village would require a noise abatement study as part of any Tollway Authority project.
- Village will hire its own experts to review the results and represent the Village’s interests.
- Village requests that the Tollway Authority utilize alternate engineering technology solutions such as moving the center line to reduce the potential impact to the Village of Hinsdale.
- Village requires assurances that it will not lose revenue due to the potential widening of I-294; Tollway Authority will maintain operation of restaurants during construction.
- Village will not approve any easements requested by the Tollway Authority for construction to the BNSF Railroad bridge or as part of the I-294 project until final plans are known.
Update on the Tri-State

The Tollway Authority is actively considering plans to widen I-294. This would add one or two lanes in each direction and would have a negative impact on both residential and public properties in Hinsdale. The Tollway Authority will make a decision within the next six months. To voice your opposition, please fill out your comments below. Your comments will be sent to the Governor's Office, IL State Tollway and the Village of Hinsdale.

Name: 

City or Town: 

Email: 

Comments: 

Sign me up for email updates for I-294

Upload a Letter:  Choose File  No file chosen

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Or write to:
Mr. Robert Schillerstrom, Chair
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority
2700 Ogden Avenue
Downers Grove, Illinois 60515
# Tollway Authority Commission

## Meeting Dates

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<tr>
<th>2017 Meeting Dates</th>
<th>Board Meeting</th>
<th>Finance Administration and Operations Committee (FAO)</th>
<th>Customer Service and Planning Committee (CSP)</th>
<th>Diversity and Inclusion Committee</th>
<th>Audit Committee</th>
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(rescheduled no date yet)
Important Contact Information

• Village of Hinsdale
  – Villageofhinsdale.org
  – E-mail tollway@villageofhinsdale.org

• Illinois Tollway Authority
  – Illinoistollway.com
  E-Mail:294TriState@getipass.com

• Governor Rauner
  – https://www.illinois.gov/gov/contactus