



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor

Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

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CONTACT:
Gianna Urgo 312.814.4693
Guy Tridgell 312.793.4199

Request for Information Issued for Interstate 55 Managed Lanes Project

Industry feedback to help IDOT pursue innovative financing solution

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Transportation announced today it has issued a formal Request for Information (RFI) to assist in developing a plan to leverage private investment to build the Interstate 55 Managed Lanes Project. By continuing to pursue the project as a public-private partnership (P3), IDOT is committed to exploring innovative financing solutions to invest in the state's infrastructure, create jobs and grow the economy.

“This is an important step for a project that can serve as a model for how to rebuild our roads and bridges,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “Working together with the private sector, we can learn about best practices for projects like this, potentially saving taxpayers time and money.”

During the RFI process, private firms are encouraged to submit their ideas on how to best deliver the managed lanes under a P3 arrangement with the state.

Responses from the RFI are due to IDOT by Sept. 8. A forum will be held Sept. 20 at the Holiday Inn O'Hare for the public to learn more about the project. IDOT representatives will hold one-on-one meetings with potential private partners on Sept. 20 and 21.

The feedback received from the RFI will help IDOT in creating criteria and an overall plan to design, build, operate and maintain the managed lanes on I-55 if the project is pursued as a P3.

The project would add a tolled express lane to the expressway's existing median between Interstate 355 and Interstate 90/94, reducing congestion and making travel throughout the region more efficient. The 25-mile stretch accommodates 170,000 vehicles a day, with about 15 percent trucks, making it one of the most important commuting and freight corridors in the state.

According to statute, IDOT must receive the approval from the General Assembly to see the project through to completion. The plans for the additional capacity were approved last month by the Federal Highway Administration, paving the way for IDOT to begin seeking ways to deliver the project, estimated to cost \$425 million for construction.

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