

**Item #16A:**  
**Village President Underwood**  
**IL Route 53 Extension - Update**

## David Lothspeich

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**From:** Illinois Tollway [info@mail.openroadsahead.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, November 22, 2013 1:00 PM  
**To:** David Lothspeich  
**Subject:** Illinois Route 53-120 Finance Committee Meeting Notice

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### The Illinois Tollway invites you to attend the Illinois Route 53/120 Finance Committee Meeting #2

*Tuesday, December 3, 2013  
2 - 4 p.m.*

Lake County Central Permit Facility, 2nd Floor  
500 West Winchester Road  
Libertyville, Illinois 60048

[Map/Directions](#) / [Add to Outlook](#)

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#### The agenda will include the following:

1. Roll call
2. Approve October 21, 2013 meeting minutes
3. Refined cost estimates
4. Next steps
5. Public comments
6. Adjournment

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Please RSVP by November 27 to:  
Cathy Valente, (630) 765-0433 or [cvalente@getipass.com](mailto:cvalente@getipass.com).

Agenda, presentations, and reports from the Finance Committee will be available in the Community Outreach section on the Illinois Tollway's website. Please don't hesitate to contact us with any questions.

[Unsubscribe or update your email address.](#)

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## ILLINOIS ROUTE 53/120 Project Overview

The Illinois Route 53/120 Project is proposed to be a 21st century urban highway – a *modern boulevard with a small footprint to protect the natural environment and preserve the character of Lake County*. It is envisioned as a multi-modal, sustainable and innovative transportation system that will address specific needs for congestion relief and provide greater connectivity.

### The current proposal includes the following improvements:

#### Extension of Illinois Route 53 – four lanes at 45 mph

- From Lake Cook Road to just south of Illinois Route 120

#### Upgrade of existing Illinois Route 120 (west end) – four lanes

- From U.S. Route 12 to west terminus of Illinois Route 120 Bypass

#### Illinois Route 120 Bypass – four lanes at 45 mph

- From east of Wilson Road to east of U.S. Route 45

#### Upgrade of existing Illinois Route 120 (east end) – four lanes

- From east terminus of Illinois Route 120 Bypass to the Tri-State Tollway (I-94)



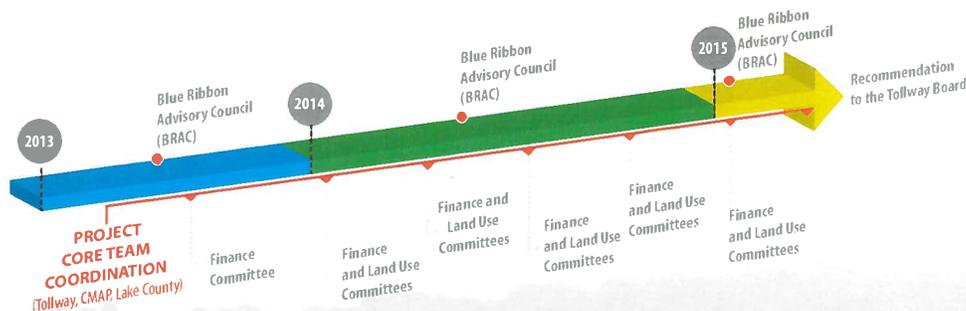
### BACKGROUND

An Illinois Route 53 northern extension has been considered since the 1960s. However, due to the lack of consensus among various interests, the project has not yet come to fruition. The Illinois Tollway established the Illinois Route 53/120 Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC) in 2011 to develop regional consensus on whether the Tollway should move forward with the project. The BRAC outlined its work and findings in the June 7, 2012 Resolution and Summary Report, which concluded that there is consensus for the Tollway to move forward with the project and provided the scope, configuration and design elements of the new roadway. The report also suggested potential methods for financing the project. The BRAC identified necessary next steps for the project, which serve as the basis for this current phase of work.

The BRAC defined a set of guiding principles to ensure the outcomes are clearly defined and the project fulfills its goals. The most important of these principles is to use innovative and environmentally beneficial design solutions to strike a balance between improving mobility and access while minimizing negative environmental and long-term developmental impacts.

## Current Phase of Work

The current phase of this project builds on the recommendations and framework outlined by the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC). The Illinois Tollway, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and Lake County will partner on a combined, two-pronged effort to examine the feasibility of the project with respect to financing and land use. To facilitate this effort, new Finance and Land Use Committees will help provide a recommendation to the Illinois Tollway Board of Directors as to whether the Tollway should continue to move forward with the project.



To determine the feasibility, the analysis will focus on five key study areas: design, environmental, financing, operations and regulatory. CMAP's Land Use Plan will feed into the design, environmental and financing aspects of the analysis. The outcome of this effort will help to answer the overarching questions "Is the project feasible?" and "Should the Tollway build the project?"

To view the BRAC's recommendations, as captured in the **June 2012 Resolution and Summary**, please go to the "Construction/Planning" section of [www.illinoistollway.com](http://www.illinoistollway.com) click on "Community Outreach", then click on "Illinois Route 53/120."



Chicago Metropolitan  
Agency for Planning



Lake County

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For more information, visit [www.illinoistollway.com](http://www.illinoistollway.com) or email the Community Outreach Coordinator, Cathy Valente at [cvalente@getipass.com](mailto:cvalente@getipass.com).



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**Illinois Route 53/120 Project**

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**About the Feasibility Analysis**

In 2012, the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council (BRAC) proposed the Illinois Route 53/120 Project as a 21st century urban highway – a modern boulevard with a small footprint to protect the natural environment and preserve the character of Lake County, while providing much needed congestion relief and greater connectivity. The Tollway’s Board of Directors reviewed the BRAC recommendations and agreed to move forward with a coordinated, corridorwide land use plan led by Lake County and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, as well as a feasibility analysis to determine how the project can be financed.

[Fact Sheet](#)

For more information on the project and to view the draft potential map of the Illinois Route 53/120 Project, click on the Fact Sheet link on the right.

To determine how the project can be financed, the Tollway’s feasibility analysis will focus on five key study areas: design, environmental, financing, operations and regulatory. Also, as guided by the BRAC Summary report, the financing effort needs to “analyze potential funding options and pursue corridor concepts to the extent that they are financially viable, fiscally sustainable and equitable.”

The Tollway’s feasibility analysis is anticipated to be complete in early 2015. While this effort will not determine the exact location and configuration of the route nor a construction timeline, it may provide a foundation for future design and construction efforts.

For more information, email [IL53120Info@getipass.com](mailto:IL53120Info@getipass.com).

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**Finance Committee**

As part of a partnership with the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and Lake County, the Tollway is forming and leading a Finance Committee, which will consider detailed project information from the feasibility analysis to develop a financing strategy for the project. Ultimately, the Finance Committee will seek to answer the questions “Is the project feasible?” and “Should the Tollway build the project?” Its work will be the basis to develop a recommendation to the Illinois Tollway Board of Directors as to whether the Tollway should continue to move forward with the project.

At the same time, CMAP will form and lead a Land Use Committee that will recommend a corridor land use plan. [For more information about the Corridor Land Use Plan and Committee.](#)

For more information, email [IL53120Info@getipass.com](mailto:IL53120Info@getipass.com).

The first Finance Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, October 21. [View the Meeting Notice and Agenda.](#)

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**Blue Ribbon Advisory Council**

The Blue Ribbon Advisory Council includes local elected officials, transportation and planning agencies and a diverse group of environmental, civic, business and labor representatives that serve in an advisory capacity as the current phase of work gets underway. While the bulk of the BRAC’s work is complete, the primary objective in this phase is to ensure that the Tollway’s efforts align with the groundwork laid by the Blue Ribbon Advisory Council in 2012.

In this next phase, the Tollway, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), and Lake County will partner on a feasibility analysis and corridor land use plan, both of which were recommended by the BRAC as next steps for the Illinois Route 53/120 Project.

[BRAC Member List](#)

For more information, email [IL53120Info@getipass.com](mailto:IL53120Info@getipass.com).

**Council Documents**

[September 17, 2013 - Presentation \(pdf\)](#)

[September 17, 2013 - Meeting Summary \(pdf\)](#)

[View the video of BRAC meeting one on September 17, 2013.](#)

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Article updated: 12/2/2013 5:38 AM

# Save time or money on extended Route 53? You decide

By Marni Pyke

Do I want to pay \$3.45 instead of 95 cents to travel from Arlington Heights to Libertyville 12 minutes faster? How about \$2.95 rather than 95 cents to shave seven minutes off my commute?

Or what about \$1.20 for a savings of six minutes?

My brain hurts after completing the Illinois tollway's online Route 53/120 project feasibility study.

The survey team at RSG Inc. offered 10 scenarios comparing my current route (the Jane Addams Tollway to the Tri-State to Route 176) with the proposed Route 53 extension up to Route 120 into Lake County.

"The goal of the tollway's survey is simply to assess customers' willingness to pay to use the new roadway," tollway Communications Chief Wendy Abrams said.

As background, Lake County's been mulling and fighting over whether to extend Route 53 for years. But a 2009 referendum where a majority of residents supported the idea led to the tollway taking the project under its wing — sort of.

Problem is, no one's sure how to pay for the construction.

The tollway is fronting planning costs, which included shepherding an unlikely coalition of elected officials, environmentalists, engineers and businesses (also known as a Blue Ribbon Committee) that reached a consensus in mid-2012.

The reason they agreed is the unique design — a beautiful parkway with high-tech features like bioswales and low speeds of 45 mph maximum designed to protect fragile wetlands and species along the route.

Such beauty comes at a price — \$2.5 billion or so — and there's a significant funding gap that tolls on the extension won't pay for. Keep in mind the tollway is anticipating levying tolls of 20 cents a mile on the route, compared to 6 cents on the rest of the system.

Here's what else the survey wanted to know. Would I rather pay:

95 cents for 53 minutes using the Jane Addams and Tri-State or \$1.45 for 49 minutes on the new Route 53 extension?

95 cents for 53 minutes using my current route or \$2.70 for 45 minutes on the new extension?

And, how likely would I be to share my car with two others if a 10 percent discount was offered for carpoolers?

Ever the cheapskate, I opted for 95 cents in the first two questions.

The carpool question was tough, generating multiple trains of thought. I support carpools, but my trips into Lake County are either on a reporting assignment when I'm alone or into Wisconsin for family vacations when we take the Tri-State. (But if the Tri-State is backed up, say on a July Fourth weekend, would we try the Route 53 extension? I can visualize the argument with my husband now ...)

The tollway has not yet voted on whether to build the extension.

The Blue Ribbon Committee is engaged in analyzing funding options to find something that is "financially viable, fiscally sustainable and equitable," Abrams said.

One reader who did the survey complained the consultants didn't ask if people would just as soon avoid paying tolls altogether and use existing highways. Another gripe was that the survey, which costs \$107,000, didn't explain the Route 53 funding issues.

Abrams explained that "questions posed in the survey are purely directed at understanding an individual's decision-making when there are trade-offs between travel time and tolls paid. Assuming time and budget management plays into most people's daily decisions, takers of the survey should be able to answer these questions irrespective of having information about the cost of the project and its funding gap."

And if you want to check out the survey, keeping in mind it's for people who drive into Lake County, go to [rsgresearch.com/i13205/survey/1/en-us?bl=1&anon=true](http://rsgresearch.com/i13205/survey/1/en-us?bl=1&anon=true).

One more thing

The Route 53 proposal also includes improving Route 120 from Route 12 to the Tri-State along with a Grayslake bypass.

Options for making up the shortfall include: adding tolls on the Tri-State Tollway at Route 132 and the Wisconsin border or increasing the Waukegan toll; levying project-specific gas or sales taxes in Lake County; and tolling the existing part of Route 53 between Lake-Cook Road and I-90, which several Cook County mayors oppose.

Your voice

This Thanksgiving season, I'm thankful for you! Keep reading, commenting, questioning and setting me straight.

Kevin Cutton of Arlington Heights said last week's column about the summer's Metra scandal makes him wonder "why no one is being held accountable by federal, state or county attorneys? There seems to be a pattern in this country when no one is being held accountable for lying, corruption or malfeasance," Cutton wrote.

And, the Daily Herald's Jim Slusher had an interesting tidbit about the dismantling of a tollway while visiting his son in Atlanta.

"There were signs all over the place to the effect of 'We keep our promises!'" Slusher said.

"Apparently, the system had promised that once the tollway was paid for, they'd take down the booths and make it an open road.

The last day for tolls was Nov. 22.

"My son said the tolls in Atlanta were supposed to be taken down years ago, but the financial arguments were made to keep them up a while longer. And, the most interesting thing of all to me was that on the day the tolls were to be removed, the booths weren't all taken down yet, and at each station they had a person standing on the cement blockades in front of the booths waving an orange flag to let people know they could drive through without paying."