



INFRASTRUCTURE COUNCIL



Newsletter

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October 14, 2022

The Infrastructure Council is an initiative of the Illinois Chamber that brings together Chamber members with a focus on increasing infrastructure investments in a strategic and thoughtful way to boost the overall business climate in Illinois. Our focus is on the public and private systems that are essential to Illinois businesses.

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US Army Corps of Engineers: Brandon Road Electric Barrier Safety Issues

Provided below is a message from US Army Major General Diana Holland on electric deterrents at Brandon Road. The message was originally provided in a letter to the American Waterways Operators.

The Recommended plan for the Brandon Road Inter-basin Project, which includes an electric deterrent, was approved by for construction in the Water Resources Development Act 2020. The goal of implementing the Brandon Road Inter-basin Project is to, "Prevent to the maximum extent practicable the upstream transfer of aquatic nuisance species from the Mississippi River basin into the Great Lakes basin while minimizing impacts to waterway uses and users." The electric deterrent is a proven effective measure to prevent the passage of fish. The Great Lakes and Mississippi River Inter-basin Study Brandon Road feasibility study assumed the electric deterrent would be turned off as vessels approached, traveled through, and were within the lock. Life-safety will be a primary factor of consideration in the design, construction, and operation of the project, in addition to fish deterrence.

Our design team is working with modelers to develop a safe and effective electric deterrent at Brandon Road. Modeling indicates promising opportunities to deter fish at Brandon Road while minimizing impacts to navigation. Once the measures have been constructed, the Corps of Engineers and USCG will conduct safety testing and evaluation of the operation of the electric deterrent, acoustic deterrent, and bubble deterrents, all within the engineered channel, to assess safe operating parameters for each measure. Informed by the results of safety testing and continued coordination with USCG and the navigation community, the Corps of Engineers will work to maximize structural deterrent effectiveness, which may include increasing the assumed operating duration or continuously operating the electric deterrent, while maintaining life safety.

IDOT Joins in Pledge to Boost Opportunities for Minority- and Women-owned Businesses

At an event hosted by the Equity in Infrastructure Project, the Illinois Department of Transportation and Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman joined the transportation departments of California, the District of Columbia, Kansas, Louisiana and Michigan in signing a pledge to leverage infrastructure spending to build wealth in underserved communities through increased opportunities for historically underutilized businesses.

The Equity in Infrastructure Project was founded by Denver International Airport CEO Phillip A. Washington, former U.S. Deputy Secretary of Transportation John D. Porcari and others in anticipation of the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act signed last year by President Biden.

By signing the pledge, the departments of transportation commit themselves to increasing the number, size and scope of contracts going to historically underutilized businesses by facilitating access and reducing barriers to compete for projects. Historically underutilized businesses include Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms, Women-Owned Business Enterprises and Small Business Enterprises. Pledge signers are expected to boost the number of such firms growing to become prime contractors and participating in joint ventures or as equity participants by the end of 2025.

Home stretch to Vote for I-74 Bridge as Nation's Best

Only two weeks are left to vote for the new Interstate 74 bridge over the Mississippi River as the top transportation project in the country. On the line is national prestige and \$10,000 in prize money that the Iowa and Illinois departments of transportation will award to the Quad City Engineering & Science Council. The public is encouraged to vote daily in the People's Choice Awards at americastransportationawards.org. The public can vote online once a day until the contest wraps up Oct. 21.

Led by the Iowa and Illinois departments of transportation, the I-74 Mississippi River Bridge project was recognized as a contest finalist for improving safety and mobility, enhancing quality of life, and positioning the Quad Cities for future economic opportunity.

Opened in 2021, the bridge has four lanes in each direction and a bike and pedestrian path with a scenic overlook, connecting residents and visitors alike to hundreds of destinations and events throughout the Quad Cities. The approximately \$1 billion project includes twin river bridges as well as improved

interchanges, ramps and local roads. For more information on the project, visit www.i74riverbridge.com.

Rulemaking

There was no new proposed rulemaking of note for this Council in the October 14th edition of the Illinois Register.

However, looking back at the content of the September 16th edition of the Illinois Register, the Secretary of State is still accepting written comments on proposed rulemaking that will remove the requirement that Illinois Commercial Driver's License (CDL) applicants who hold valid out of State CDLs retake their CDL written and skills exams.

The Illinois Chamber has submitted a comment in support of this rulemaking. If you are still interested in submitting a comment on behalf of your organization, it can be mailed to the following addressing:

Pamela Wright

Office of the General Counsel

298 Howlett Building

Springfield, IL 62756

View the October 14th Illinois Register [here](#).

Legislative Update

No bills of interest were introduced, moved or signed into law this week.

Session Update

As a reminder, the General Assembly has released the schedule for veto session. Lawmakers will be back in Springfield Tuesday, November 15 - November 17 as well as November 29-December 1.

View and download the veto calendar [here](#).

Looking forward, Legislators have been informed to keep their schedules open between January 4th-10th for potential lame duck session dates. We will let you know when those dates are finalized.



Register Today: WC Conference

Workers' Compensation is an issue for all Illinois employers. Injuries can occur at any workplace and can include anything from lifting injuries to

falls and more. Illinois Chamber's Workers' Compensation Conference is designed to not only assist employers to stay in compliance, but also to provide tips and topics intended to help employers to reduce their workers' comp costs in the process. Make plans to attend the 15th Annual Workers' Compensation Conference on November 2, 2022 at the Doubletree Hilton in Lisle.

Infrastructure Council members receive a discounted rate of \$189 Early Bird rate by using the code `Infra2022` when registering at ilchamber.org/workerscompconference before October 23.

Articles of Interest

[Illinois Chamber looks for fiscal discipline in state budget](#)

[Top of the Illinois ballot: What to know about the Workers' Rights Amendment](#)

[Biden Proposes New Labor Rule Granting Millions of Gig Workers Employee Status](#)

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