



State of Illinois
JB Pritzker, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Omer Osman, Secretary

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Rebuilding Illinois: Gov. Pritzker announces \$96 million bridge milestone reached on I-80 in Will County

New DBE resource center opens contracting opportunities for diverse businesses

JOLIET – Gov. JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) were joined by local officials and community leaders today to celebrate the completion of several key bridges in the \$1.3 billion reconstruction and modernization of Interstate 80, a cornerstone project of the governor’s historic, bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital program. To create more opportunities for minority-and female-owned firms to do business on I-80 and other projects, Gov. Pritzker also announced the opening of a new local resource center in Will County for IDOT’s Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program.

“By making smart investments in the bridges that working families and businesses depend on, we’re building a better future for the entire region,” **said Gov. Pritzker**. “Today, I am proud to see these investments come to life with the modernization of several I-80 bridges and the opening of the new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Resource Center. Thanks to Rebuild Illinois, we are revitalizing our infrastructure and creating economic opportunities for communities across the state.”

The I-80 project is replacing the more than 50-year-old infrastructure along a 16-mile corridor in a booming territory for logistics and freight, adding multiple safety and capacity enhancements. It also is improving quality of life and creating thousands of construction and permanent jobs while positioning the region for long-term economic opportunity.

The bridges carrying both directions of the interstate over Hickory Creek, Richards Street and Rowell Avenue/Canadian National Railroad are now substantially complete, a \$96 million investment that kick-started the I-80 project. While the bridges will stay two lanes in each direction with expanded shoulders until all of the I-80 work is finished, the new structures eventually will accommodate three lanes each.

Also, as part of Gov. Pritzker’s directive to include small, local businesses on the project, IDOT has opened a new DBE Resource Center, 858 Center Court, Unit A, in Shorewood. Furnished with a computer lab and office equipment, the resource center will act as a free one-stop shop offering one-on-one assistance for firms that want to become certified DBEs and learn about contracting opportunities in the area without having to travel to meet with IDOT staff in Chicago

or Schaumburg. For more information, visit https://idot.click/DBE_Resource or call (815) 630-3400 to make an appointment.

“An investment in infrastructure is an investment in people, with the I-80 improvements positively impacting a vital area of the state for decades to come,” said **Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman**. “We are not just rebuilding one of the country’s main corridors for travel, but growing small businesses and creating good-paying local jobs to drive the Illinois economy forward.”

Since the I-80 project started, bridges over I-80 on Shepley Road and Wheeler Avenue have been rebuilt, as well as interchanges reconstructed at Houbolt Road and U.S. 30. This spring, ground was broken to rebuild and widen 11 mainline miles: between Ridge and River roads, River Road and Wheeler Avenue and from Rowell Avenue to Gougar Road. The bridges carrying Briggs Street and River Road over I-80 also are being replaced. Richards Street is being reconstructed with a new bridge deck over Hickory Creek, with all bridges crossing I-80 except Shepley Road including new or improved sidewalk and bicycle accommodations, removing the interstate as a barrier for people who walk, bike and roll.

Major elements remaining are new interchanges with I-55 and Larkin Avenue (Illinois 7), which will break ground next year. The final pieces are new Chicago Street (U.S. 52/Illinois 53) and Center Street interchanges as well as new bridges over the Des Plaines River, all anticipated to begin in 2026.

The entire project is anticipated to be substantially complete by the end of 2028, with landscaping, demolition of the Des Plaines River bridges and miscellaneous work extending into 2029. Visit I80will.org for more information, including a project map and timeline.

“Through the Rebuild Illinois program, the state has made major strides in improving local bridges and roads, including the modernization and reconstruction of I-80. As one of the biggest transportation hubs in the state, this is fantastic news for residents and tourists in Joliet and the surrounding area,” said **state Sen. Rachel Ventura (D-Joliet)**. “Not only will these investments improve major infrastructure, but also provide opportunities for minority- and female-owned firms to work on these projects.”

“The work on I-80 through the governor’s Rebuild Illinois initiative lays the groundwork for a more connected, modern Illinois. This milestone demonstrates what we can achieve when we work together across the aisle, ensuring long-term benefits for the state through bipartisan efforts,” said **state Rep. Larry Walsh (D-Elwood)**. “The new resource center will open doors for female- and minority-owned businesses through the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program, making sure that everyone has a stake in our state’s progress.”

Passed in 2019, Rebuild Illinois is investing a total of \$33.2 billion over six years into the state’s aging transportation system, creating jobs and promoting economic growth. Rebuild Illinois is not only the largest capital program in state history, but also the first that touches all modes of transportation: roads and bridges, transit, waterways, freight and passenger rail, aviation, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.

“This is a significant milestone in the historic I-80 reconstruction project, which will improve safety and access on this important corridor,” said **Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-**

Tarrant. “I appreciate Gov. Pritzker and Secretary Osman prioritizing this project and ensuring that local small businesses have an opportunity to access contracting opportunities through the new DBE Resource Center.”

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