



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH – GOVERNOR

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 29, 2008

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Governor Blagojevich Announces Completion of Interstate 55 Widening Project

I-55 Corridor Improvement Project added one lane in each direction from Weber Rd to I-80; goal is to increase safety and reduce congestion

ROMEDEVILLE – Governor Rod R. Blagojevich today announced the completion of the \$165 million Corridor Improvement Project of Interstate 55 in Will County. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) held a ceremony today that included local and state officials celebrating the end of major construction activities for the project. The project entailed adding a third lane to the roadway in both directions from Weber Rd. to I-80, in an effort to improve safety and reduce congestion.

“I am happy to announce that this construction work on I-55 is wrapping up. It will be a lot safer for drivers to travel through Will County,” said Governor Blagojevich. “I am proud of IDOT for working to make this Interstate a better roadway for thousands of motorists who travel on it every day.”

IDOT worked closely with Illinois State Police (ISP) to strictly enforce a work zone speed limit of 55 miles per hour during the daytime and 45 miles per hour at night when lane closures were in effect. Troopers used motorcycle patrols, squad cars and a mobile photo enforcement van to enforce work zone speed limits. The fine for a first work zone speeding offense is \$375 and up to \$1,000 for a second offense.

“We are pleased to provide significant congestion relief and improve safety along the I-55 corridor in Will County,” said IDOT Secretary Milton R. Sees. “We also want to thank motorists for their patience traveling through the work zone. The I-55 widening project was a priority, both to enhance safety and because it will now provide congestion relief in one of the fastest growing parts of the state.”

“It is always rewarding when such an important project that you have invested time and energy into comes to fruition. The new lane will provide desperately needed traffic relief to this bottleneck,” said State Rep. Brent Hassert.

Major construction activities for Interstate 55 began in August of 2006. During the past few

years, crews have completed:

- * Advance work, shoulder resurfacing
- * Bridge widening
- * Dynamic message board and sign installation
- * Adding center median barrier wall
- * Adding additional third lane
- * Resurfacing entire mainline

The total duration of the project totaled two years and three months. That timeline included advance work and mainline work. IDOT will be installing sound walls along sections of I-55 during the next construction season at a cost of \$22 million. This year's work on Interstate 55 was a continuation of a project that started last spring with the widening of seven bridges in the corridor.

As work is wrapping up on I-55, IDOT is starting advance work on the next major project in Will County: the widening of IL Rt. 59 along a six mile stretch from IL Rt. 126/Lockport St. to US Rt. 52/ Jefferson St. and reconstruction of the interchange at I-55 and IL Rt. 59. The Rt. 59 project is anticipated to have a two year construction schedule.