

# Governor Pritzker Announces New Initiative to Improve Transportation Infrastructure, Save Taxpayer Dollars

August 25 2021 8:47 AM



CHICAGO – Building on his historic, bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital plan that invests \$45 billion in the state’s roads, bridges, railways and other critical projects over the next six years, Governor Pritzker today signed House Bill 253 into law. The

legislation requires the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to establish and implement a transportation performance program to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the state's transportation system.

Under HB 253, IDOT will also develop a statewide highway system asset management plan with the goal of preserving and improving the conditions of highway and bridge assets and enhance the existing system while reducing costs. To maximize the effectiveness of taxpayer dollars, going forward, IDOT will develop a performance-based project selection process to ensure existing transportation infrastructure like roads and bridges remain in good repair. The bill passed both the House and Senate with unanimous, bipartisan support.

"I'm proud that Illinois is a supply chain hub for the nation and this administration is committed to investing in our infrastructure to ensure we maintain that vital role. Through the Rebuild Illinois Capital plan – the largest infrastructure investment in Illinois' history – we're fixing roads and bridges across the state, creating jobs and opportunities in our communities," said Governor JB Pritzker. "This legislation will empower the hardworking team at IDOT to ensure those investments go as far as possible. And by establishing a performance-based project selection process, the administration is doubling-down on our commitment to being responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars."

"Illinois is the transportation hub of North America. With the distinction comes a huge responsibility that we are investing resources equitably, fairly and in locations where they make the most sense and do the most good," said Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. "Thanks to Gov. Pritzker's vision and the support of the General Assembly, we are making historic improvements in our transportation system with Rebuild Illinois. Now we will have even more tools that will strengthen our project-selection process and make it more transparent."

Beginning January 1, 2022, IDOT will be required to select projects for inclusion in their multi-year plan based on a selection process that weighs a variety of factors including congestion mitigation or improved traffic operations, economic development, livability, environmental impact, accessibility, and safety.

"Equity and data are at the heart of this new law. This also is important for the recovery of our State as we look at creative ways to build back better and stronger post-COVID-19," said State Rep. Kam Buckner (D-Chicago). "Transportation investment will help Illinois attract and retain businesses to our state, and now we will know which projects produce the best benefits and will have the ability to measure how these projects impact economic growth, improve access to jobs, and reduce the costs of transportation. We also will now be better prepared for a historic federal infrastructure investment."

“As new construction projects pop up around the community, Illinois taxpayers deserve to know the decision behind those projects and the impact it will have on their daily commute, local economy and overall safety,” said State Senator Ram Villivalam (D-Chicago). “By implementing a transparent, equitable and data-driven system, people can have the peace of mind that their tax dollars are going toward positive change for the area.”

“The transparent process established by this legislation will help IDOT and RTA more clearly focus on the transportation outcomes Illinois residents want, so we achieve the greatest public benefits for every dollar we spend,” said Audrey Wennink, Director of Transportation at Metropolitan Planning Council.

"This legislation gives the Illinois Department of Transportation and transit agencies a powerful tool to drive investment to the transportation projects with the biggest benefit for those that live and work here,” said Kelly Welsh, President, Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago. “This new performance-based approach will also help the Chicago region and State of Illinois retain and attract jobs by increasing major employers' confidence that transportation funds will be used to drive measurable, positive outcomes in economic growth, climate resilience, and equity."

“Center for Neighborhood Technology congratulates the governor and General Assembly for passing and signing into law, HB253. This legislation recognizes that maintaining and protecting our current infrastructure is not only prudent, but also makes the best use of limited available funding,” said Jacky Grimshaw, Center for Neighborhood Technology Vice President of Government Affairs. “Using performance measures to guide project selection and capital investment decisions will increase transparency about project impacts and assure that the benefits and burdens of our transportation system are fairly distributed”

HB 253 is effective immediately.