

Gov. Pritzker Celebrates Upcoming Completion Of Peoria's Bob Michel Bridge

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PEORIA — Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Transportation joined local officials and community leaders today to highlight and celebrate the upcoming completion of the Bob Michel Bridge rehabilitation. The \$24.6 million project also better connects people who walk, bike and roll between the East Peoria Levee and Peoria Warehouse districts. Made possible by the Pritzker administration's historic

Rebuild Illinois capital program, the work was condensed into one construction season, making completion of the improvements quicker, safer and cheaper.

“When I first became Governor, it was clear we needed to improve safety and foster economic growth in this region, so we embarked on the largest rebuild of roads and bridges in state history here in Peoria and throughout Illinois,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “Our extraordinary workforce is putting on the finishing touches — the final installation of expansion joints and pavement markings — but this bridge will be fully operational before we ring in the new year. This has been a nearly \$25 million investment in the future of Peoria, delivering the smooth and safe transportation experience that Illinois families deserve.”

The [Bob Michel Bridge](#) carries approximately 17,000 vehicles a day on Illinois 40 over the Illinois River between Peoria and East Peoria, with both communities experiencing thriving commercial and retail revitalization along the riverfront. In March, it was closed to accommodate the construction of a new deck, a first since the bridge opened in 1993. The project also included structural repairs, modernized traffic signals and drainage improvements.

Narrow sidewalks on both sides of traffic were consolidated into a 14-foot-wide path protected from Illinois 40 by a concrete barrier, providing a safer travel option for bicyclists and pedestrians while providing connections to the region’s trail network, including the Rock Island Greenway Trail and the River Trail of Illinois. New LED lighting was installed to improve visibility and safety.

All project elements are anticipated to wrap up with the bridge reopening, weather permitting, in mid-December.

By closing the bridge completely to cars and trucks and not performing the work in multiple phases, the project was completed in less than a year, resulting in a time and cost savings. The safety risk to workers and the public also was reduced by eliminating traffic moving through the work zone.

“Providing multiple safe, reliable mobility options for the public is one of the centerpieces of Rebuild Illinois,” said Illinois Transportation Secretary Omer Osman. “The Bob Michel Bridge project not only expedited longtime maintenance needs but also delivered on finding new, exciting ways to get around the greater Peoria area.”

“The reopening of the rehabilitated Bob Michel Bridge signifies an important day in our community,” said Peoria Mayor Rita Ali. “Although it was a challenge to adapt to the closure of a well-traversed bridge, it was a worthwhile disruption for the improvements made will result in better traffic flow and improved access to businesses and

surrounding communities. Thank you to Governor Pritzker for funding this project through Rebuild Illinois.”

“As a community that recognizes and appreciates the regional benefits that the Bob Michael Bridge brings to the greater Peoria area, we are excited to celebrate its reopening,” said East Peoria Mayor John Kahl. “The infrastructure enhancements that have been made by IDOT to the Bob Michael Bridge will provide improved safety and accessibility for our residents and visitors for many years into the future.”

The Bob Michel Bridge is one of several efforts to revitalize bridges in the Peoria area made possible by Rebuild Illinois.

Besides the Bob Michel Bridge improvements, the \$10 million rehabilitation of the Illinois 17 bridge to the north in Lacon was completed in November. The ongoing \$167 million replacement of the eastbound McClugage Bridge is anticipated to finish in 2025, with the signature 650-foot-wide arches expected to be moved from the river and into place later this month. One of the first projects under Rebuild Illinois, the \$42.2 million redecking of the Murray Baker Bridge, was completed in 2020.

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

Accomplishments through year four of Rebuild Illinois include approximately \$12.1 billion of improvements statewide on 5,339 miles of highway, 533 bridges and 762 additional safety improvements. Visit <https://idot.click/Rebuild-Illinois> for information on other Rebuild Illinois projects happening throughout the state.

“Today, we’re celebrating not just an infrastructure upgrade, but a testament to our collective determination to enhance connectivity and community safety,” said state Senator Koehler (D-Peoria). “The wellbeing of our residents is imperative, and with the modernization the Bob Michel Bridge has undergone, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists can be assured their safety is a top priority.”

"Rehabilitating this bridge will continue to help cut unnecessary drive time, increase the customer base for local businesses and create good construction jobs that are such a boon for our community. I'm also happy to see further resources devoted to making pedestrians and cyclists safer," said state Rep. Sharon Chung, (D-Bloomington)."

Infrastructure projects like this have a wide range of benefits that will improve the lives of countless Illinoisans for years to come, and I'm happy to be here to witness the beginning of those benefits."

"This project underscores our commitment to improve this community's infrastructure, create jobs and attract investment," said Speaker Pro Tempore Gordon-Booth, (D-Peoria). "It's another great example of the real impact Rebuild Illinois is making in the lives of residents across the state, and I appreciate the hard work from local and state officials who helped to make today a reality."

"As a lifelong Peorian, I'm very pleased to see the Bob Michel Bridge modernization and improvement project come to fruition," said House Deputy Minority Leader Ryan Spain (R-Peoria). "The Peoria region is an economic and transportation hub for central Illinois. With the completion of this project and the continuing investment in our infrastructure, particularly our network of river bridges, it will help ensure long-term benefits for our communities, families and small businesses for many years to come."

"On behalf of the 17,000 union construction professionals and over 300 partner contractors I represent, we appreciate opportunities provided by the Rebuild Illinois Capital plan championed by Leader Gordon-Booth, Senator Koehler and Governor Pritzker," said West Central Building & Construction Trades Council Executive Director Clinton Drury. "The eight month project to reconstruct the Bob Michel bridge provided thousands of work hours to local construction professionals and local contractors, stimulating the local economy. Projects like these provide real opportunities for the younger workforce to enter the trades and hone their skills, while also employing seasoned journeymen and women. Our members take great pride in building central Illinois and the Bob Michel bridge rehabilitation is a great example."