



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 23, 2022

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT INTRODUCES AMENDED AGREEMENT WITH ILLINOIS
TOLLWAY, PAVING THE WAY FOR IMPROVED ACCESS TO O'HARE
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

Terms permit the transfer of city land, use of airport property during construction of I-490 tollway

Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot introduced an ordinance to City Council today that would amend an agreement with the Illinois Tollway, allowing for the transfer of 202 acres of City-owned land at O'Hare International Airport from the City to the highway authority. The Tollway will also be granted use of airport property during construction of the planned I-490 Tollway, which will connect the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) on the north with the Tri-State Tollway (I-294) on the south.

"The amended agreement with the Illinois Tollway, which I have introduced to City Council, provides a clear path forward toward the jobs, minority contracting opportunities, and improved airport access offered by the I-490 plan," said Mayor Lightfoot. "I thank CDA Commissioner Jamie Rhee and her staff for their stewardship in making these negotiations possible, as well as Executive Director José Alvarez and the entire Tollway team for their continued partnership in the years ahead."

Under the terms of the intergovernmental agreement, the Illinois Tollway will pay \$107.8 million to the City of Chicago for the land and various use agreements. Among other measures, the agreement will transfer approximately 202 acres of airport property from the City to the highway authority. It will also permit the use of approximately 415 acres of airport land during the construction of the new I-490 Tollway.

The agreement, approved by the Illinois Tollway Board of Directors last week, also provides for site preparation of City-owned airport land as part of the overall I-490 Project, which provides the potential for future development on the airport's western border.



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



“The City has worked closely with the Tollway since 2017 on various technical coordination items, including working to solve the difficult challenges associated with the I-490 roadway and its close proximity to O’Hare Airport’s southern-most runway as well as properties used by the Canadian Pacific and Union Pacific railroads,” said Commissioner Rhee of the Chicago Department of Aviation, which owns and operates O’Hare International Airport on behalf of the people of Chicago. “This portion of the roadway is subject to further engineering and design, but we are confident that the City’s continued partnership with the Tollway will ensure all developments remain compatible with one of the world’s busiest airports.”

The agreement will be referred to the City Council Committee on Aviation for its review and consideration.

“The level of partnership required between the Tollway, City of Chicago, Chicago Department of Aviation and the railroads to achieve our mutual goals on this complex project cannot be understated,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Alvarez. “I’d like to thank Mayor Lightfoot, Commissioner Rhee and her entire team, reiterate our thanks to the railroad leadership, as well as local, state and federal stakeholders for their continued support.”

“This partnership between Illinois Tollway and the City of Chicago sets up Chicago residents for improved access to the airport and minority contracting opportunities,” said Alderman Matthew O’Shea, 19th Ward. “As the Chair of the Aviation Committee, I am proud to endorse this ordinance and thank Mayor Lightfoot, Commissioner Rhee, and the Illinois Tollway Board of Directors for ushering change.”

Additional details about the I-490 Tollway Project can be found on the [Illinois Tollway's website](#).

###