

# Longmeadow Parkway FAQ's

<http://www.co.kane.il.us/dot/foxBridges/longmeadowPkwy.aspx>

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## OVERVIEW

### **What Is Longmeadow Parkway?**

Longmeadow Parkway (LMP) is a minor arterial roadway about 5.6 miles in length, extending from Huntley/Boyer Road to IL Route 62, including a new Fox River Bridge crossing. The proposed road passes through portions of the villages of Algonquin, Carpentersville and Barrington Hills, as well as unincorporated areas of Kane County. The western terminus is at Huntley Road west of Randall Road, about 1,300 feet northwest of the Huntley/Boyer intersection. From Huntley Road to the Fox River, the corridor runs through mostly undeveloped properties or new subdivisions that were developed with a dedicated right-of-way to accommodate the corridor. After crossing the river, the corridor parallels existing Bolz Road, to the eastern project terminus at Illinois Route 62.

### **Why Do We Need a Longmeadow Parkway?**

When completed, LMP will address existing and future traffic needs and reduce existing/projected area congestion. It will improve accessibility and mobility in support of economic growth and job creation. Congestion and travel delay is increasing on area roadway network with negative impacts to local streets/neighborhoods in northern Kane County while there have been no new Fox River Bridges built in upper Fox Valley since the I-90 tollway extension in the 1950s. There has been a tenfold population increase west of the Fox River since the 1980s while northern Kane County is currently a leader in new housing starts for the Chicago region.

### **Is Longmeadow Parkway a Toll Way?**

No. LMP is not a toll way as it is inaccurately referred to in a March 2016 advisory referendum in Dundee Township. All of the 5.6-mile corridor will be free to the public, with the exception of only the Fox River Bridge. The bridge has a projected toll rate of \$0.75 (75 Cents), and toll collection will cease once the bridge debt is retired.

### **Is There Enough Population Growth to Support Construction?**

Yes. In 2014, the [Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning \(CMAP\)](#) updated 2040 population growth projections that show an additional 146,000 people in Dundee, Rutland, Grafton and Algonquin townships. LMP addresses current and projected growth models.

### **Does Longmeadow Parkway Bisect the Brunner Family Forest Preserve?**

Yes. In fact, the acquisition and establishment of the Brunner Family Forest Preserve was made possible through the planning process and project funding for the Longmeadow Parkway right of way.

The property was planned for development, but Kane County Division of Transportation (KDOT) and the Forest Preserve District worked together to set aside both the Forest Preserve open space and county right of way for LMP in accordance with adopted county and municipal plans. The joint cooperation and funding helped make the Brunner Family Forest Preserve a reality.

### **What Does the Federal Government Think About That?**

The FHWA determined the LMP right of way along the Brunner Forest Preserve is not an issue under its Section 4(f). Recent correspondence from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes that the “Brunner Family Forest Preserve was jointly developed with the Longmeadow Parkway” and that “the land was designated for highway purposes before the property was identified or functioned as a forest preserve.” Both the forest preserve and LMP will be a benefit for generations to come, resulting from the coordination and mutual goals between the Forest Preserve District and county long range plans.

### **Why Has It Taken 20 Years for Longmeadow Parkway to Move Forward?**

Federally funded projects of this magnitude take 10 to 20 years to implement. Federal and state agencies require continuing updates for important subjects such as wetlands, trees, noise and threatened and endangered species.

## **BENEFITS**

### **Is LMP Important to Economic Growth?**

Yes. Municipal evaluations demonstrate that significant economic benefits and job creation will be byproducts of the LMP. Local businesses will benefit from greater mobility and accessibility in northern Kane County.

### **Will LMP Improve Safety?**

Yes. LMP will provide a new, direct route across the Fox River for emergency responders and a separated, shared bicycle/pedestrian path along the entire corridor. The speed limits along the LMP will be 40 mph and 45 mph, and there are pedestrian accommodations at all cross streets. Coordination and planning for LMP was done in cooperation with local school districts.

### **Will LMP Add Bicycle and Pedestrian Routes?**

Yes. Trails will be constructed along the entire corridor and over the Fox River. The LMP path will connect to existing paths, creating a larger network and more options for pedestrians and bicyclists.

## PUBLIC SUPPORT

### **Do Other Units of Government Support the Longmeadow Parkway Plan?**

Yes. In fact, local municipalities led LMP efforts by adopting comprehensive plans, setting aside land, constructing portions of the corridor, and requesting county assistance. The units of government that have signed resolutions in support of the plan include the villages of Algonquin, Barrington Hills, Carpentersville, East Dundee, Gilberts, Huntley, Lake in the Hills, Sleepy Hollow, and West Dundee, along with McHenry and Kane counties.

For many years, LMP has received support of all communities within its corridor, along with neighboring communities, through resolutions, referendums and adopted plans.

### **Do Any Units of Local Government NOT Favor the Longmeadow Parkway Plan?**

Yes, the Village of Barrington Hills has since rescinded their support.

## COST

### **What Will It Cost to Build the Longmeadow Parkway?**

The total cost of the project, including construction and construction engineering, is estimated at \$115 million. About \$30 million already has been invested in engineering and land acquisition.

By comparison, the cost of construction and construction engineering is much less than the cost associated with the Stearns Road Bridge Corridor.

### **Where Is That \$115 Million Coming From?**

Funding commitments so far include \$14.5 million from the federal government, \$39.4 million from the state of Illinois, and \$61.1 million local Kane County funds. The local funds are comprised of \$3.5 million from KDOT's programmed development impact fees and \$27.6 million from KDOT's programmed fund sources, with the remaining \$30 million from KDOT's existing fund sources and/or from future bond revenue to be repaid with tolls.

The initial financial plan was approved by the FHWA in September 2015 and will be updated annually.

## ENVIRONMENT

### **What's the Environmental Impact of the Longmeadow Parkway?**

Years of environmental/engineering studies, updates and approvals by local, state and federal environmental protection agencies have determined the LMP alternative will have the least impact when considering homes, air, noise, water, wetlands and wildlife. Of all the options

considered for a bridge crossing, it is the only acceptable alternative for northern Kane County according to the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

In 2004, Kane County prevailed in a federal court lawsuit against the LMP project with the court stating that the FHWA heard all of the objections to the project and considered all of the sensible options before it. The lawsuit resulted in a delay and minimization of federal and state funds as compared to other recently-built bridge corridors.

### **Will Trees Have to Be Removed for the Longmeadow Parkway Construction?**

Yes, more than 5,000 trees will be removed as part of the construction, but about half of the trees being removed are either in poor health and/or poor structure or dead. For every tree removed, two high-quality native trees will be planted, resulting in more than 11,500 new trees to be planted along the corridor and in open space areas such as the Brunner Family Forest Preserve.

### **How Will You Ensure Wetlands Won't Be Impacted?**

Impacts to wetlands will be mitigated via the county's ongoing planning approach of "Avoid-Minimize-Mitigate" and the overall result will be improved wetland status. Best management practices such as native vegetation that filters storm water through bio-swales and vegetated detention basins will be used to protect water quality.

### **Will Wildlife or Endangered Species Be Impacted by Longmeadow Parkway?**

Measures continue to be taken by KDOT, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to avoid or minimize impacts to native mussels, Blanding's turtles, northern long eared bats, bald eagles and smallmouth bass. KDOT will follow all guidelines as specified by the Federal and State resource agencies.

### **Are There Environmental Benefits From a More-Direct Route Across the Fox River?**

Absolutely. The LMP route across the river reduces the number of miles vehicles will have to travel to get from Point A to Point B. Lower traffic congestion also provides environmental benefits and improved mobility. The final EIS compared LMP to alternative corridors and a "no build" option, and each alternative — including "no build" — had more environmental impacts and required traffic to use existing streets through residential neighborhoods.

## **NEIGHBORHOODS**

### **Will There Be Noise From Longmeadow Parkway Traffic?**

Yes, noise is a part of any transportation thoroughfare. LMP noise was evaluated in the EIS, which was approved by FHWA in 2002. Plans call for significant landscaping in residential areas along the corridor. An updated noise study is under way and will be published on the KDOT website once it is completed.

### **How Will Longmeadow Parkway Affect Air Quality?**

Evaluated in the final EIS, the LMP project actually improves area air quality by reducing current/projected traffic congestion and increasing mobility. The project meets federal air quality requirements and received federal funds for congestion mitigation and air quality planned benefits.

### **How Will Longmeadow Parkway Affect Drinking Water Quality?**

Also evaluated in the EIS, LMP uses water-quality best management practices such as native vegetation that filters suspended solids, oil and nutrients. The project includes clay-lined ditches only near shallow groundwater areas and water wells. There will be no stormwater discharged directly to the Fox River without filtering through bio-swales and vegetated detention basins.

### **Will Road Salt Be a Problem for the Environment or Nearby Properties?**

Only 3 percent of salt impact occurs as spray. Separation distance, travel volumes and drainage design reduce the potential impacts. County road maintenance staff proactively reduces the use of salt via computerized spreaders and additives.

### **What Measures Were Taken to Mitigate Impacts on Homes and Neighborhoods?**

LMP impacts the fewest homes when considering all other construction alternatives, including the “no build” Option. Algonquin used extra wide rights of way and informed homeowners about LMP prior to purchase of their homes. There will be positive benefits for most residents, because LMP will increase access and reduce existing and projected congestion impacts in many residential areas.

### **Will There Be Any Visual Screening for LMP?**

Yes! Berms and significant landscaping will be provided along most of the corridor.

### **What Will the Lighting Be Like?**

The majority of the corridor, as well as along the Brunner Family Forest Preserve, will not be illuminated. There will be minimal lighting at intersections and ornamental lighting on the Fox River Bridge. Lighting at the open road toll plaza located east of the Fox River will be provided.