



ICC Approves Annual Crossing Safety Improvements to Prevent Rail Crossing Accidents

Chicago, IL – The Illinois Commerce Commission approved its annual five-year [Crossing Safety Improvement Program \(FY 2024-2028\)](#) to implement highway-rail safety projects at local roads across the state. Over \$476 million dollars from the Grade Crossing Protection Fund (GCPF) and Rebuild Illinois (RBI) will help communities and railroads pay for much-needed improvements at 424 crossing locations.

“Upgrading pedestrian crossings, flashing warning devices, and other critical safety infrastructure is a no brainer for keeping Illinoisans safe while they traverse rail tracks,” said **ICC Commissioner Michael Carrigan**. “Over 7,000 miles of track makes our state’s rail system the second largest in the nation, and the Grade Crossing Protection Fund is an essential tool for keeping these railways safe for all who use them.”

The five-year plan proposes GCPF dollars to help cover the cost of 34 new bridge projects, 365 new grade crossing projects, and 15 low-cost emergency or experimental improvements at over 400 crossing locations. Among the projects are updates across Illinois to keep pedestrians, bicyclists, and commuters safe while alongside railroad tracks. The program will also continue to invest in major multi-year projects that will improve overall safety and public convenience. To address inflation and higher cost estimates, it also provides additional funding compared to previous years and aims to better position Illinois projects as communities apply for federal funds.

A few of the new projects in this year’s five-year plan include:

- \$5 million to build a new US Route 14 highway underpass in Barrington to safely separate fast-moving motor vehicle traffic from railroad tracks
- \$2.5 million for White, Hamilton, and Jefferson Counties to install and improve infrastructure to reduce the risk of collisions at 8 crossings
- \$1.3 million for Aurora to install new flashing light signals, improve crossing surfaces, and roadway and pedestrian gates at Old Indian Trail Road and Sullivan Road
- \$3.2 million for Galesburg to eliminate a crossing, upgrade protections at nine crossings, and improve multiple roadway approaches to prevent vehicles from getting stuck on tracks
- \$2.3 million for Rockford to modernize its flashing light signals and roadway gates at six separate Illinois Railway crossings

The ICC prioritizes projects based on several factors including, safety of the existing crossing, collision history, traffic volume, engineering requirements, and geographical location. The ICC also promotes and supports “The Three E’s” of railroad safety: Education through Operation Lifesaver Illinois; Enforcement of existing laws to ensure motorists and pedestrians obey all railroad safety laws; and the Engineering necessary to make crossings as physically and operationally safe as possible.

“The projects in this year’s Crossing Safety Improvement Program reflect the ICC’s commitment to reducing the potential for rail collisions. Improving our state’s existing infrastructure and installing modernized warning signs ahead of tracks are surefire steps to keep people and goods safe as they travel along Illinois’ railways,” said **ICC Chairman Carrie Zalewski**.

To read the ICC Five-Year Crossing Safety Improvement Program along with the full list of projects click [here](#). An interactive map of projects included in the current plan as well as past programs and crossing inventory information can be found [here](#).

About the State of Illinois Grade Crossing Protection Fund (GCPF)

In 1955, the State of Illinois passed legislation creating the GCPF. Since then, Illinois has strengthened its commitment to public highway-rail safety by increasing funding toward projects such as the closure and consolidation of existing public crossings, installation of new warning systems, highway approach improvements, upgrades to existing warning devices and interconnection to nearby traffic signals, construction/reconstruction of grade separation structures and the construction of pedestrian grade separations. The Commission administers the GCPF, which is funded by motor fuel tax money designated for rail safety improvements. The General Assembly appropriates \$42 million annually for the GCPF.

About the Illinois Commerce Commission

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) is a quasi-judicial body made up of five Commissioners. Through its Public Utility Program, the Commission oversees the provision of adequate, reliable, efficient and safe utility services at the least possible cost to Illinois citizens served by electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water and sewer public utility companies. Through its Transportation Regulatory Program, the Commission oversees public safety and consumer protection programs with regard to intrastate commercial motor carriers of general freight, household goods movers, relocation towers, safety towers, personal property warehouses and repossession agencies. The Commission’s Rail Safety Program also inspects and regulates the general safety of railroad tracks, facilities and equipment in the state.

To learn more about the Commission, its offices and bureaus, click [here](#). If you are a consumer who needs help resolving a utility dispute call 800-524-0795 or file an online complaint [here](#). For a complaint related to transportation, call 217-782-6448.

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