

Lincolnwood bridge over Touhy Avenue, part of Skokie Valley Trail, set to open late September

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Nearly a year in the making, the [Lincolnwood](#) walking and bicycling bridge over Touhy Avenue is expected to be completed by the end of the month, with installation of the span's last three pieces scheduled for Sunday night.

"By the end of September we're going to have a beautiful pedestrian walk and bridge in place," said Lincolnwood mayor Barry Bass.

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The bridge also will serve as a gateway for drivers entering Lincolnwood.

The new bridge will cross Touhy Avenue just east of Interstate 94 and west of the former Purple Hotel site at Touhy and Lincoln avenues. The \$3.7 million project is paid for largely with a federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality grant, according to the village website. The village contributed \$893,000 to the construction.

The bridge also provides a link to the Skokie Valley Trail. When finished, the trail will stretch more than 22 miles from Devon Avenue in Chicago to Rocklin Road in [Lake Bluff](#), along a former Union Pacific rail line, according to the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.

In Lake Bluff travelers will be able to connect with another trail that stretches north into Wisconsin. In Chicago, cyclists and pedestrians will have a link to the North Branch Trail south into the city.

The new Touhy Avenue walkway in Lincolnwood is a three-span, truss bridge made of Corten steel, according to the village website.

It will feature lighting, landscaping and a "Village of Lincolnwood" sign along the center span.

The first two spans, between the bridge piers and abutments, will be installed during normal working hours. The final piece, the center span, will require a complete closure of Touhy Avenue. That is scheduled to happen in 15-minute intervals overnight from Sunday to Monday, Bass said.

Workers will spend time after that adding lighting, signs, landscaping and pouring concrete for the bridge deck and stairs, Bass said. The contractor is Areatha Construction of Streamwood.

"It's going to be beautiful. It's basically three pieces and then the span will be filled with concrete and lighting and various accessories," Bass said. "By the end of the month it's going to be looking great."

Joe Ebervein, owner of On the Fly Mobile Bicycle Repair, a traveling bike repair service based in Lincolnwood, said he has heard from customers who are looking forward to the new crossing over Touhy.

"I've definitely talked to people who are excited," Ebervein said. "Absolutely."

First and foremost, Ebervein said, cyclists and pedestrians look forward to having a safer route across a very busy street.

Now he hopes that Lincolnwood might improve the crossing at Lincoln and Touhy, where he would like to see flashing lights in addition to the street signs letting drivers know of a trail crossing.

"Lincoln is not as busy as Touhy, but it's close," Ebervein said.

The village will hold a grand opening ceremony for the new bridge on Oct. 11, Bass said.

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