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Rosemont heralds new gateway into O'Hare

Balmoral Ave. extension into airport fulfills village's longtime vision

ROSEMONT, IL- The Village of Rosemont today along with partners from the Illinois Department of Transportation, Chicago Department of Aviation and Chicago Department of Transportation cut the ribbon on the newest access point into O'Hare Airport from Balmoral Avenue, giving the airport's 70 million annual passengers a convenient alternative route.

"This extension into the airport is an important economic development project for the village that's 25 years in the making," said Mayor Brad Stephens. "We envisioned long ago that those visiting Rosemont and the surrounding area could save time and avoid traffic congestion when going to and from O'Hare if an eastern access point was opened. Today that vision is fulfilled."

With several million cars now using the Balmoral ramp every year to access Rosemont's entertainment district, MB Financial Park, Rosemont Theatre, Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Fashion Outlets of Chicago, and numerous hotels and restaurants, its expected those traveling to O'Hare will use the Balmoral extension to avoid traffic delays.

"CDOT's contributions to the Balmoral Ave extension is part of an important project to improve access to and from the region's major economic engine -- O'Hare International Airport," CDOT Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld said. "This is another great example of how the city is coming together and 'Building a New Chicago' for the 21st Century."

Once the 4-lane extension is open, those traveling westbound on Balmoral from I-294 can drive over Mannheim Road, under the Airport Transit System (the People Mover) and connect with Bessie Coleman Drive on O'Hare property and near the International Terminal. The \$18 million extension project is being constructed in conjunction with a \$59 million widening of Mannheim from Irving Park Road to I-90 that also provides a new Mannheim/Balmoral interchange.

In 2012, the village and the Illinois Tollway entered into an intergovernmental agreement to fund and construct the Balmoral exit ramp. The unique agreement was a first-of-its-kind for the Tollway and a boon for the village, as usage has exceed expectations over two-fold and provided Rosemont a new front door.

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