



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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CLINE AVENUE BRIDGE CELEBRATES RETURN TO COMMUNITY

East Chicago, Ind., December 23, 2020 – Cline Avenue Bridge, LLC, owned and operated by United Bridge Partners (UBP), proudly announces the opening of the new Cline Avenue Bridge located in East Chicago, Ind. The bridge’s completion is the culmination of over five years of planning and construction, tens of thousands of tons of concrete and steel, and countless hours of skilled labor. On December 23, the company commemorated the occasion with a ribbon cutting and ceremonial first drive attended by dignitaries, stakeholders, members of the public. The event doubled as a fundraiser benefitting Boys & Girls Club of East Chicago and Lake Area United Way.

Serving as the “Gateway of Lake County,” the new Cline Avenue Bridge will spur economic growth, reestablish transport connectivity, and alleviate congestion while serving as an elegant landmark in which the people of Lake County can take pride. The company will further elevate the community by providing ten cents of every collected toll to the city of East Chicago and by partnering with and supporting local non-profit organizations.

The new structure fills the need that was created after the original Cline Avenue Bridge closed in 2009, which forced traffic onto city streets, accelerated wear and increased travel times in surrounding communities. Without government funding to rebuild it, UBP acquired the land and built the new bridge using private funds, thereby renewing a critical transportation link and providing reliable and efficient access to the region’s many attractions. UBP teamed up with Granite Construction as the general contractor, TranSystems as owner’s engineer representative, and Modjeski and Masters as project engineer to complete the bridge.

“What has been severed is now restored through the herculean effort from the state officials, local elected officials, and by a superior workforce,” stated East Chicago Mayor Anthony Copeland.

“Mayor Copeland and the city of East Chicago are exceptional partners to work with,” said United Bridge Partners president and CEO Doug Witt. “We are honored to be an essential part of Northwest Indiana, and together we are paving the way for greater economic growth and prosperity.”

The new Cline Avenue Bridge is a 1.2-mile-long segmental concrete bridge connecting an existing, fully rehabilitated, half-mile steel viaduct at the east end with the existing State Road 912 roadway abutment on the west end. The new structure consists of 29 cast-in-place concrete columns that support 685 post-tensioned concrete single-cell box girder segments which form the bridge's driving deck. Its two lanes support traffic going into Lake County and Chicago and is forecasted to service 10,000 vehicles daily. Its main span across the Indiana Harbor and Ship Canal is its apex, standing at 100 feet to accommodate ship traffic.

The Cline Avenue Bridge uses an electronic system which accepts payment through E-ZPass, I-PASS, and pay by plate to keep traffic flowing smoothly. The tolling gantry is located at the bridge's west abutment near the Riley Road onramp. From the opening date through end of January, the company is offering free passage to allow drivers to test drive the new route. The introductory period continues in February when tolls will be \$1 for E-ZPass and I-PASS users. Beginning March 1, regular fare goes into effect, which is tiered based on number of axles and begins at \$2.50 for two-axle vehicles paying with E-ZPass or I-PASS and \$5.50 for drivers without a pre-paid transponder.

"As an East Chicago native, it's particularly meaningful to be part of this project," shared Terry Velligan, general manager of operations at Cline Avenue Bridge. "Its sheer magnitude and far-reaching benefits set it apart from other infrastructure projects in the nation. We are truly grateful to Mayor Copeland and the skilled tradespeople for their diligence and perseverance that made our dream of a more connected community become reality."

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Cline Avenue Bridge, LLC is owned by United Bridge Partners (UBP), a private infrastructure company that finances, designs, builds, owns, and operates private toll bridges across the United States, meeting the needs of under-funded state and municipal governments to replace failing bridge infrastructure. UBP is funded by a \$1 billion capital commitment from the New American Bridges Fund, an affiliate of American Infrastructure Funds, and uses no local, state, or federal financing to accomplish private bridge projects. The Cine Avenue Bridge reconnects SR 912 to Interstate 90 and serves as "The Gateway of Lake County" while providing the most direct route into Lake County and the most time-saving route to Chicago. For more information, visit clineave.com.