

## **1. Why is rehabilitation or reconstruction of the eastbound McClugage Bridge necessary?**

Although the eastbound McClugage Bridge (US 150) over the Illinois River has been rehabilitated several times, the basic structure is over 70 years-old and is approaching the end of its serviceable life. The existing structure is not up-to-date with current design standards or safety criteria, plus weather, vehicle use, age, and salt used in snow removal have caused deterioration. The average daily traffic use of over 20,000 eastbound vehicles predicts that the current two-lane bridge will be insufficient for accommodating future traffic needs. Furthermore, the needs of bicycles and pedestrians must be considered since this bridge is a major crossing point over the Illinois River. The additional lane and accommodation considerations could mean the current 30-foot wide bridge could significantly increase in width. The combination of all these factors indicates the need for another rehabilitation, or complete reconstruction, of the eastbound bridge structure.

## **2. Who is sponsoring the project?**

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is sponsoring the project, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). IDOT has contracted with the joint venture project team of T.Y. Lin International and Hanson Professional Services Inc. to complete the McClugage Bridge project preliminary engineering and design, which includes stakeholder and public engagement throughout the process.

## **3. How much will the project cost and how is it being funded?**

The project is estimated to cost approximately \$210 million, including design and rehabilitation or construction of the eastbound McClugage Bridge span. The funding comes from the "Major Bridge Funds" for Illinois; thus, the project is already funded as part of IDOT's current Multi-Year Program (2015-2020). The McClugage Bridge competed with many other structures in the state to obtain this funding. The Illinois legislature found that the Peoria region is at a critical juncture where this bridge needs to be improved.

## **4. How long will the project take to complete?**

The project began in early 2014 with the environmental study process that is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). It is anticipated the project will take six to seven years to study, develop plans and construct.

## **5. How will this project address larger traffic loads and potentially heavier vehicles that may need to use the bridge in the future?**

IDOT will use traffic modeling and the projected growth rate of the region to determine how many vehicles per day the bridge will need to accommodate in the future. A design period of at least 20 years will be considered as the project moves toward design and construction. With regard to the weight of heavy trucks, a safety factor is included in all structures to ensure that these vehicles can cross safely, including the accommodation of some overweight trucks. IDOT continuously updates safety standards for roadways and bridges.

## **6. Will this project accommodate the needs of bicycles and pedestrians, and connect current bike trails?**

Current IDOT policies on bicycle and pedestrian accommodations will be applied to the project. The Peoria region currently has a large network of bicycle and pedestrian trails. Some of the current trails run north and south on both sides of the McClugage bridge, making a trail connection over the river a logical consideration. Also, because this bridge is a major crossing point over the Illinois River, it is important to provide access for many modes of transportation. Adding a bike and pedestrian lane will potentially add another 10 to 12 feet to the width of a new bridge structure. Accommodating this additional width will be considered in the preliminary alignment alternatives.

## **7. If the current structure is replaced, what style of bridge will be built in its place?**

The current eastbound bridge structure is built in a style that is no longer used due to increased steel costs, new safety standards, the high cost of maintenance, and new technology in bridge building. However, the westbound structure has a similar look to the current eastbound bridge, but was built in 1982, meaning it will not need to be rehabilitated or reconstructed for many years to come. With this in mind, the design team will present several bridge options for consideration that will not only meet modern design and safety standards, but also create an aesthetically pleasing view with the existing westbound bridge.

## **8. How will traffic be accommodated during the rehabilitation or construction of the bridge?**

The use of project phasing - or completing one half of the bridge at a time - may be necessary to limit disruption to traffic. Reversible lanes may also be considered on the westbound structure when a large percentage of the traffic moves in one direction during peak periods such as rush hour. Motorists will be alerted of any road construction activities and lane closures by advance informational signs, portable changeable message signs, and press releases provided to local media outlets. IDOT will also work with local law enforcement both prior to, and during, rehabilitation or construction of the bridge to manage traffic flow and ensure the safety of motorists.

## **9. How can the public be involved in this project?**

Recognizing the value that the community brings to the transportation planning process, IDOT will employ several tools to ensure a variety of opportunities for public involvement throughout the project. Public involvement will be guided by both National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements and IDOT's Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) policy. CSS is an approach to project study and planning that helps ensure the recommended alternative of a project "fits" into the surroundings of the area as well as balances costs, safety, commuter needs, environmental impacts and the project's goals. At least one informational meeting will be held to present alternatives and bridge options to the public, and to obtain feedback. A public hearing will also be held to present the preferred alternative. Outreach and informational materials will be available to the public throughout the project, including a website, a fact sheet, and updates on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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