

America's River Crossing on I-55 Over the Mississippi River Bridge Replacement FAQs

What is the America's River Crossing on I-55 over the Mississippi River bridge replacement project?

The proposed project will replace the existing 75-year-old bridge providing a critical connector with improved safety, bridge modernization, resiliency and earthquake resistance. The proposed project will improve mobility, remove bottlenecks and address traffic flow and operations for local and regional motorists and travelers in the tri-state area.



Why does the bridge need to be replaced?

The current structure opened to traffic in 1949 and a replacement will allow the bridge to meet current design standards. A replacement is necessary to serve the 64,000 vehicles that travel across it daily by 2050 by improving safety, applying modernizations and supporting its resiliency against various challenges such as earthquakes.

What is the significance of the America's River Crossing?

The existing bridge is a nationally significant freight corridor on the Primary

Highway Freight System (PHFS) and is one of only two Mississippi River crossings in Memphis, Tennessee. It not only serves as a critical connector for residents, workers and freight locally but also serves as a major crossing linking commerce and country from east to west and north to south serving the country's I-40 and I-55 interstate systems.

What benefits will this proposed project bring?

Other project benefits and goals include:

- Reducing future maintenance costs
- Providing a new design that meets modern seismic code (earthquake resistant)
- Enhancing local and regional freight movement
- Enhancing multimodal connectivity with the Big River Crossing
- Improving economic vitality and
- Innovative and timely delivery, pending Large Bridge Investment Program (BIP) grant award

Why not consider renovating the current bridge rather than pursuing a complete replacement?

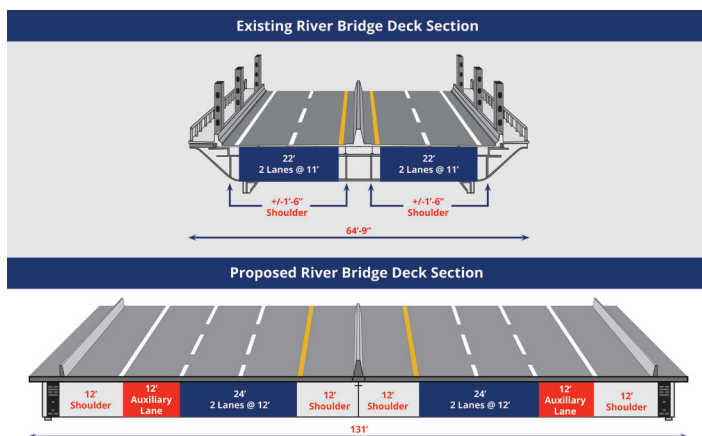
Built in 1949, the current bridge is 75 years old. Because the current bridge pre-dates the Interstate Highway System, the span was not built to interstate standards and the existing structure is not seismically retrofitted to withstand a significant earthquake in the New Madrid Seismic Zone.

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What is the current status of the proposed project?

Environmental studies are currently underway to determine what potential impacts the project development process will need to consider. There will be public meetings on April 18 in Memphis and April 25 in West Memphis. There will be public hearings in August 2024. The proposed typical section may be modified as the roadway and bridge design progresses and stakeholder outreach is conducted.

What would the proposed typical section look like?



How will the new bridge be funded?

A bi-state local match can be leveraged for a U.S. Department of Transportation Bridge Investment Program Large Bridge Grant. This approach will use investments from each state (Tennessee and Arkansas) and other partners to deliver a critical infrastructure project that will future-proof this important freight corridor. Additionally, the Transportation Modernization Act made \$250 million of additional funding possible.

How will this project mitigate environmental impacts?

Every effort is made to avoid and/or minimize environmental impacts. If not possible, mitigation will be provided. TDOT is committed to coordinating and collaborating with the local communities to avoid impacts to affected communities.

Will traffic on the existing I-55 bridge be detoured to other routes during construction?

No. The existing four lanes of I-55 traffic will be maintained through construction. Overnight single lane closures will be used to facilitate the transition from the existing bridge to the new America's River Crossing bridge.

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