Construction FAQs

CLARK FORK RIVER BRIDGE REQUIRES REHABILITATION

The Clark Fork River Bridge, north of Trout Creek requires rehabilitation due to deterioration of the bridge deck and other structural components. The Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) plans to begin the rehabilitation in summer 2020, and is currently working to develop the final bridge design and construction schedule. A key factor in developing the construction schedule is to minimize impacts to the local community and traveling public. As part of the pre-construction work, MDT is coordinating with key community stakeholders, agency partners and property owners to share information and address potential concerns.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PROJECT?

Originally constructed in 1958, the planned rehabilitation will extend the useful service life of the bridge. The proposed work will include replacing the existing concrete deck, painting some of the structural steel, repairing and replacing existing structural elements as necessary, and reconstructing the roadway to match the new bridge deck.

WILL ACCESS ACROSS THE BRIDGE BE COMPLETELY CLOSED DURING CONSTRUCTION?

The bridge and short portions of the roadway on either side of the bridge, will be closed to traffic during bridge deck replacement work. MDT evaluated options for maintaining traffic on the bridge during bridge deck construction, but determined that this is not feasible due to the structural nature of the bridge. Therefore, in the interest of public safety, the bridge will be closed to traffic while the bridge deck is replaced.

WHEN WILL THE BRIDGE BE CLOSED AND FOR HOW LONG?

Construction is scheduled to begin late spring and continue through summer 2020. MDT is evaluating options to complete the construction work while closing the road for a single duration, or complete the work intermittently to allow scheduled timeframes where traffic can cross the structure. The single closure option is estimated to last approximately 6-weeks with some work completed under single lane closures on either end of the 6-week period. The intermittent closure is estimated to take at least 12-weeks with some work completed under single lane closures on either end of the 12-week period. MDT is working with the design and construction team to incorporate accelerated construction methods that minimize impacts to traffic.
HOW WILL CRITICAL SERVICES BE IMPACTED DURING BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION?

MDT has been coordinating with local emergency services, including law enforcement, fire, ambulance, US Forest Service and US Postal Service, to discuss the project and facilitate appropriate coverage and services when the bridge is closed to traffic. Construction is tentatively scheduled to begin after school is out in 2020 and be complete prior to the following school year, depending on the construction alternative chosen.

WHAT IS THE COST OF THIS PROJECT?

Total construction cost of the project is currently estimated at $9.2 million, which is based on closing the bridge for the duration of construction. Intermittent closure to allow for traffic to pass at scheduled timeframes will significantly extend the construction duration and increase construction costs.

HOW WILL TRAFFIC BE DETOURED?

Passenger vehicles and single unit delivery vehicles will be detoured to Blue Slide Road while the bridge is closed to traffic. Larger trucks will be detoured to I-90 and US-2.

HOW WILL RIVER ACCESS BE IMPACTED?

River access and the public boat launch will remain open under the bridge while work is being completed. A temporary work platform will be installed under the structure to provide access for workers and contain debris during demolition, improving safety for both workers and river users.

Prior to, and during construction, MDT will proactively engage the local and traveling public to build awareness, share information and address questions. A project website is being utilized as a main source of information and MDT continues to coordinate with community organizations and property owners to share information. Along with the website, MDT plans to distribute project collateral materials such as a fact sheet and construction alerts to build awareness and provide timely notices.

Stay Informed of Progress!

Project information and updates will be posted to the project website. You can also submit questions and comments via email or through the project website.

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