Public Involvement Meeting Handout

WIS 64 Wisconsin River Bridge B-35-0846 Lincoln County

Project ID: 9000-10-03 / 73



5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025 Merrill City Hall, Council Chambers 1004 E. 1st St. Merrill, WI 54452

Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of public involvement is to:

- Present information regarding the current condition and needs of the bridge.
- Provide information on the scope of the proposed improvements, impacts and timeline.
- Receive input and concerns and answer questions.

A local officials meeting was held on Thursday, Jan. 9, 2025.

The format of the meeting will be a presentation of the project information followed by a questionand-answer session.

Project Information

WisDOT is proposing to replace the westernmost bridge that carries WIS 64 over the Wisconsin River in Merrill. Built in 1927, the existing bridge is reaching the end of its service life. To maintain a safe crossing on an important state highway in northern Wisconsin, WisDOT is proposing:

- Replacing the bridge and approach pavement.
 - The proposed new structure will have fewer piers, longer spans and increased clearance over the Wisconsin River.
- Widening WIS 64 to 12-foot lanes, 6-foot sidewalk and 4-foot shoulders in the project limits.
- Installing lighting and pavement markings on new structure.

The environmental study, done in coordination with state and federal agencies, has been approved by WisDOT. This outlines potential impacts to the environment, historical sites, local communities and recreation areas. A plan is then developed to mitigate impacts determined in the study. This could include, for example, developing an erosion control plan to protect the Wisconsin River and surrounding wetland areas from sediment and releases into the water. The archaeological study determined there will be no impact to historical or tribal areas of importance.

Construction currently is scheduled for 2028, but work could be completed in 2027 if funding becomes available.

Proposed Traffic Impacts

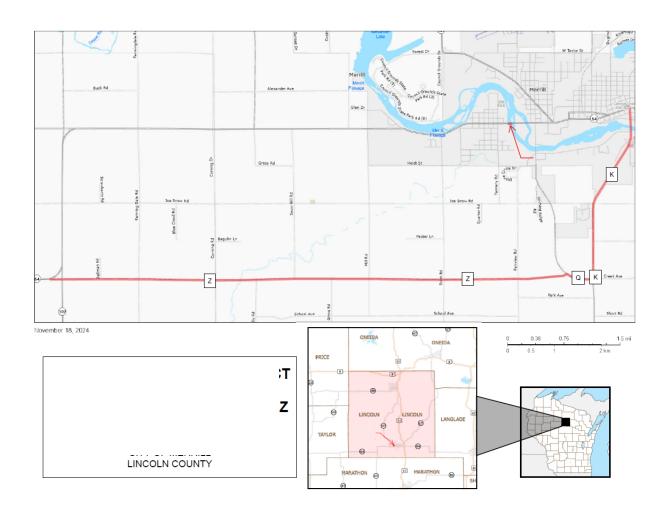
During construction, WIS 64 between the east approach of the bridge and the intersection of Valley Street and WIS 64 on the west end will be closed to through traffic for the duration of the project. Motorists on WIS 64 will be detoured by County K, County Q and County Z. (The route can be seen on the map on the next page.)

In addition, the following will be maintained:

Access to businesses in the project limits.

- Temporary driveway and parking lot closures will be necessary along WIS 64 during parts of the construction process. WisDOT will contact businesses in advance before closing a driveway.
- Navigation of the Wisconsin River through designated areas.

WIS 64 Wisconsin River Bridge Location & Detour Map



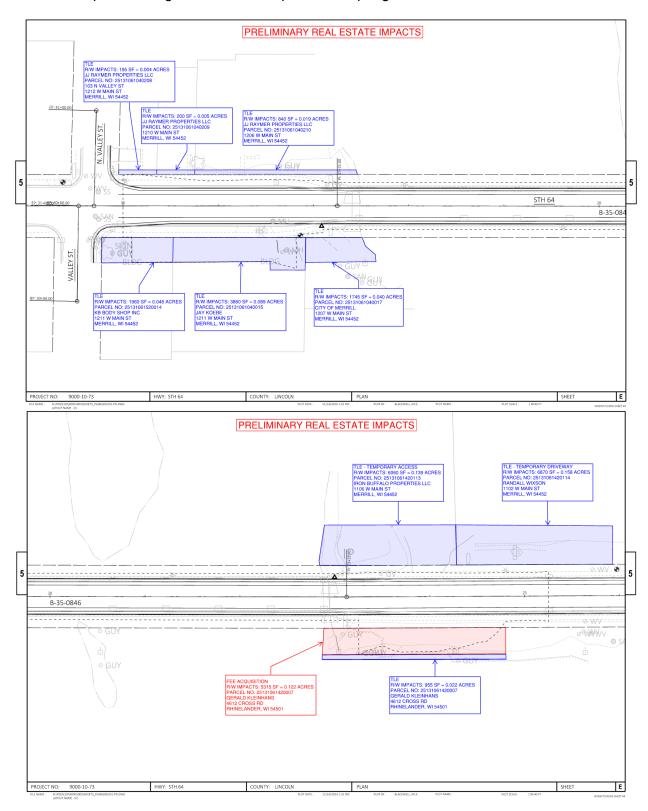
Project Website

Go to the project's design website - https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/nc/default.aspx - for additional information and updates.

Real Estate

Additional right of way will be required for this project. Preliminary right-of-way impacts are depicted in the maps on the next page. Anticipated acquisitions are temporary and necessary for construction design and access.

WisDOT expects to begin real estate acquisition in spring 2025.



In This Together

WisDOT created the In This Together program to help businesses navigate construction projects. For tips, tools and resources, please visit: https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/intogether/default.aspx.





In This Together Program

A quick guide to help your business prepare for road construction



ORGANIZE EARLY



- Learn more about the project and its timeline
- · Develop questions for WisDOT staff
- Check in with neighboring businesses and/or local business organization



- Can you partner on promotions, events or materials?
- Establish a point of contact for the business community?



STAY ENGAGED WITH THE PROJECT



- Attend public involvement meeting(s)
- Make note of contact information for the project team, and voice the unique needs of your business
- Learn more about project resources



- Is there a construction website?
- Is there a mailing list?
- Is there an email distribution?



HELP CUSTOMERS FIND YOU



- Consult with project staff to determine when and where there may be closures or detours
- Ask about temporary signage options
- Consider how best to inform customers



- Maybe a joint communication with neighboring businesses for employees and customers about traffic and parking?
- Maybe a feature article in a customer-facing newsletter?
- Maybe a social media post shared by businesses and local community pages?



Check out case studies at wisconsindot.gov/together

DEVELOP AND

GAME PLAN

ACTIVATE YOUR

- Connect with project contacts to discuss any potential obstacles specific to your business such as deliveries, operational hours, employee parking, etc.
- · Check in with employees



- Is there a consistent message for customers?
- Are there temporary changes to shift times, parking, or deliveries?



END OF CONSTRUCTION



- Stay positive, be flexible and know that WisDOT staff are available to help
- Collect any temporary signage
- Let customers know!



- Consider working with other businesses on a special event?
- Share social media about the project's benefits?
- Ask customers to help spread the word?



Remember, we are In This Together! For more planning ideas, tips and resources: wisconsindot.gov/together

Project update/next steps

Local officials meeting	Jan. 9, 2025	
Public involvement	Jan. 21, 2025	
Preliminary plans	March 2025	
Environmental document	April 2025	
Final plans	Feb. 1, 2026	
Construction currently scheduled	2028 but could occur as early as 2027	

Public input/comments

We encourage you to talk to the project representatives and ask them questions. Attached to this handout is a sheet for your written comments and input regarding the proposed project. Please leave your comments in the comment box tonight or mail them by Friday, Jan. 31, 2025, to the address on the back of the comment form. or leave them in the comment box tonight. You can also e-mail your comments to the contacts listed below.

Your comments assist us in developing a project that will serve the needs of the traveling public as well as the needs of the local community. Your input is welcome and appreciated throughout the design process.

For more information, please contact:

Michelle Guoin, P.E.
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Wisconsin Department of Transportation
510 N Hanson Lake Road
Rhinelander, WI 54501
715-365-5792
michellem.guoin@dot.wi.gov

Public Comment Form

Project ID (9000-10-03)
Wisconsin River Bridge B-35-0846
WIS 64 (West Main Street)
City of Merrill, Lincoln County

January 2025

Please place this form in the comment box tonight or mail it to the address on the back of this sheet **Jan. 31, 2025**. Comments also can also be emailed to michellem.guoin@dot.wi.gov. Your comments assist us in developing a project that will serve the needs of the traveling public as well as the needs of the local community. Your input is welcome and appreciated throughout the design process.

Name:
Address:
Daytime Phone Number (optional):
Email Address (optional):
Please Print Comments (attach additional sheets if necessary):

The information in this document including names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and signatures is not confidential and may be subject to disclosure upon request pursuant to the requirements of the Wisconsin open records law, sections 19.31 - 19.39 of the Wisconsin statutes.

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Wisconsin Department of Transportation
510 Hanson Lake Road
Rhinelander, WI 54501

Attn.: Michelle Guoin

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