Maple Rd (Foster) Bridge
Post -Tension (Cable) System Removal

Frequently Asked Questions from Virtual Public Meeting on 9/10/25

When will the Maple Rd (Foster) Bridge reopen?

The WCRC Contractor is scheduled to be onsite during the week of September 15th. The work involved in removing the cable post-tensioning system is expected to take 1-2 weeks. The bridge will then be reopened.

Are there any size restrictions for vehicles?

Any vehicle exceeding 5 Tons is restricted from crossing the bridge. As far as dimensional limitations, the existing bridge is one lane wide (14.5 feet between the barrier railings) and the height is limited by the nature of the through-truss structure (14.5 feet from the deck surface to the bottom of the end portal).

What about ambulances?

The weight of an ambulance and other emergency response vehicles varies. Determining the weight (and therefore the ability of these vehicles to cross a weight restricted bridge) is the responsibility of emergency response agencies.

What penalties will exist for violations of the posted restrictions?

Should a vehicle violate posted restrictions, the driver of the vehicle (and the company, as applicable) can be held liable. Penalties are as prescribed by the Michigan Vehicle Code, Act 300 of 1949, as amended (also refer to MCL – Section 257.724).

What would happen to the bridge if an overweight truck ignored the signs?

The possibility of structural damage, up to and including a collapse of the bridge, does exist. However, the 5 Tons posted weight limit is conservative, as the age of the bridge and various repairs to the truss have been considered.

Additionally, the WCRC will be establishing a “No Thru Truck” route on Maple Rd between Craig Rd (near Skyline High School) and Stein Rd. This will supplement the current “No Thru Truck” route on Huron River Dr. This is intended to draw further attention by operators of large vehicles.

What is the failure rate if an overweight vehicle crosses the bridge?

To the best of WCRC's knowledge there is no "failure rate".

Where is the closest fire department and will they be able to meet current response time standards?

Mutual aid agreements exist between area fire departments, including Scio Township, Ann Arbor Township, and the Dexter Area Fire Dept. The most efficient routing of emergency vehicles is left in the hands of these professionals.

What is the remaining service life for the bridge (once the post tensioning system is removed and the bridge is reopened)?

WCRC cannot give an accurate estimate of the remaining life of the bridge. Typically, modern bridges are designed for a 75-year to 100-year design life. This truss bridge is well beyond a typical design life and was put into service prior to motor vehicles.

What about multiple vehicles crossing the bridge at the same time?

The WCRC is discussing the possible installation of non-standard signage to communicate the need for one vehicle to cross the bridge at a time.

Why is the removal of the broken cable post-tensioning system needed?

Only one of the cables on the west side of the bridge has failed. The reason for this failure is unknown. It is unknown if other cables may fail under continued loading.

As we are unsure of the cause of the cable failure, we are not pursuing repairs of the existing system.

Should a vehicle load be applied to the bridge with a broken cable (but the remainder of the cable system in place), the distribution of this load through the bridge structure would be uneven and potentially lead to further structural damage.

The cost, timeline, and effectiveness of replacing the cable post-tensioning system would require further evaluation. However, in an effort to restore the bridge crossing in a safe and prompt manner, the removal of the cable system has been pursued.

The cable post-tensioning system was designed by Lichtenstein Consulting Engineers. This firm no longer exists, having been acquired by another firm.

Could bollards or height warning bars (like those in a parking structure) be employed to restrict the width and height of vehicles crossing the bridge?

The width of the bridge is already limited to 14.5 feet (between the barrier railing). This is a one-lane bridge. While the width could be narrowed to 11 feet, this would not necessarily be a deterrent to overweight vehicles. The height of a vehicle crossing the bridge is limited to 14.5 feet based on the through-truss structure.

What about non-CDL drivers (e.g., box trucks and landscaping vehicles)?

All licensed drivers in the State of Michigan are required to comply with the law, including weight limits (Michigan Vehicle Code, Act 300 of 1949).

Is there consideration of replacing this bridge with a modern one?

Consideration of replacing the current bridge with a modern bridge took place prior to the 2003 rehabilitation project. The feedback from the community at that time resulted in a decision to forego replacement and instead rehabilitate the existing bridge. No local, state, or federal funding is currently allocated for the replacement or rehabilitation of the existing bridge.

Could a flashing light on the weight limit signs be considered?

WCRC staff will be discussing this possibility to further draw driver attention to the 5 Tons posted weight limit.

Could a weight-scale system be installed in the road, thereby triggering a camera to identify overweight vehicles crossing the bridge?

The WCRC has no experience with such a system. Additionally, the current Michigan Vehicle Code does not support ticketing of overweight vehicles based on camera / video documentation.