



Benefits of Constructing the New Bridge on the Existing Alignment



Provides Shortest Overall Construction Duration

Following the existing bridge alignment will provide the shortest construction duration since crews can work on any portion of the bridge while it's closed to traffic. An offset alignment would require multiple project phases that would result in a longer construction duration.



Eliminates Risk of Construction Near Motorists

Closing the existing bridge during construction improves the safety for construction workers and motorists traveling through the project area and provides more options for construction access.



Minimizes Impacts to Properties and Wetlands

Following the existing bridge alignment minimizes impacts to adjacent wetlands and properties.



Lowest Cost

Building an offset alignment would result in about 10% higher total project costs due to additional right-of-way costs and longer overall construction duration.

Preferred Alternative Selection Process

Since project development began in 2020, many alternatives have been considered against the project purpose and need and evaluation criteria. The process was broken into several steps, documented in technical reports available in Appendix F of the Environment Assessment document on the project website, to allow for public and agency input at key decision points. The table on the right summarizes the alternatives that were considered as part of this process and key findings.

Alternative Studied	Findings
Rehabilitation of existing bridge	It is not reasonably feasible to extend the service life of the existing bridge.
Tunnel connection underneath St. Louis River	Maintenance, operational, and security concerns were identified in addition to larger SEE* impacts relative to bridge options.
Bridge concepts along Connors Point	Larger SEE impacts relative to concepts adjacent to or within the existing bridge location.
West alignment	Performed poorly due to higher amount of right-of-way impacts to limited waterfront/slip access properties.
East alignment	
East/existing combination alignment	
West/existing combination alignment - bifurcated	
Low profile bridge (relative to existing bridge)	Conflicts with vehicle mobility and freight navigation needs while offering limited cost or SEE benefit.

*SEE: social, economic, and/or environmental

CONTACTS:

JOHN KRYSIAK
MnDOT Project Manager/Design Manager

✉ john.krysiak@state.mn.us
☎ 218-341-7595

MARC BOWKER
WisDOT NW Region Project Manager

✉ marc.bowker@dot.wi.gov
☎ 715-635-4975

WEBSITES

🌐 mndot.gov/d1/projects/blatnik-bridge

🌐 wisconsindot.gov/Pages/projects/by-region/nw/blatnikbridge