

Stadium Boulevard Bridges Replacement Project
Legislative Letter
March 2009

The City of Ann Arbor Stadium Boulevard bridges over State Street and over the Ann Arbor Railroad carry vehicular and pedestrian traffic in an east-west direction providing one of the few arterial links between the east and west sides of Ann Arbor. Also, because of the bridges' proximity to northbound and southbound arterial roadways that connect to I-94 and the downtown business district, the bridges are essential to many commuters. Stadium Boulevard is one of the most traveled corridors in the City of Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County.

The Stadium bridges are located less than one-quarter mile from the University of Michigan's 101,701-seat football stadium and the 15,000-seat Crisler Arena. A High School and two Middle Schools are located on or near Stadium Boulevard. In addition, there are two fire stations located within two miles of the Stadium Boulevard Bridges.

Condition of Stadium Bridges

The Stadium Boulevard Bridge over State Street, built in 1917, and the Bridge over the Ann Arbor Railroad tracks, built in 1928 are located only a few hundred feet apart. Both Bridges are structurally deficient and functionally obsolete, i.e. they are beyond minor or major repair conditions and need immediate replacement. The Bridge over State Street has a Federal Sufficiency Rating (FSR) of 2 out of 100 (with 100 being a new bridge). Any bridge with FSR of 50 or below must be considered for total replacement. Both Bridges have inadequate vertical clearance with the bridge columns that are too close to the both the roadway and the railroad tracks beneath presenting a hazard to the travelling public.

In the last several years, the City has reduced the allowable load limits on the Stadium Bridge over State Street several times and prohibited the heavy trucks from using the bridges even though there are major University of Michigan Construction projects on going nearby. In March 2009, the City permanently reduced the traffic lanes on the Bridges from 4-to-2 lanes for the public's safety. The City may be required to close the Stadium Blvd at the bridges, and may have to close the State Street below to all traffic indefinitely without advance warning due to the accelerated rate of the deterioration of the Bridge over State Street. State Street is also a major connection to Interstate 94 for the City of Ann Arbor and closing this facility will cut off a direct connection to the University of Michigan Campus and downtown.

Regional Significance of the Stadium Bridges

The replacement of the two bridges at the Stadium Blvd is essential for maintaining this regional corridor that carries over 25,000 automobiles everyday. East and West Stadium Blvd with their connections to Maple Rd and Washtenaw Avenue form a six-mile long major corridor connecting to US-23 on the east, M-14 on the north and I-94 on the west. The University of Michigan's Facility Operations is located immediately north of Stadium Boulevard and west of the bridges. There are 1,700 University of Michigan permit parking spaces in the adjacent areas. The UM Athletic Department facilities, most notably the football stadium and Crisler Arena, are also located adjacent to the deficient bridges.

Without the Stadium Bridges, the current Stadium Blvd traffic use the nearby residential streets and will impact the City's signalized intersections within more than a mile. Other entities impacted by the possible closure of the bridges and the loss of the existing direct link between the east and the west sides of the City will be the Public Schools buses, the Public Transportation (AATA) buses (22 buses each weekday and buses during football games), the emergency vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians, the traffic traveling to Ann Arbor via I-94, and the adjacent City's and townships. Although the City has not yet performed a detailed analysis, it is estimated that the indirect monetary cost of the no-bridges option at Stadium and the necessary closure of State Street to be in millions of dollars in lost production, increased fuel cost and air pollution.

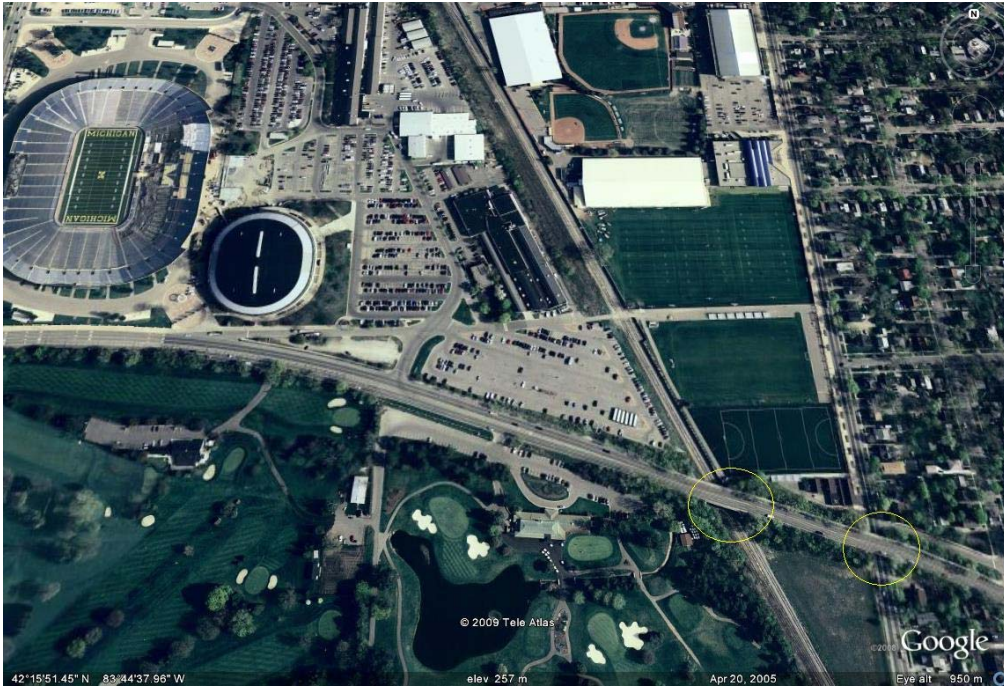
The Stadium Bridges Replacement Status

To comply with the today's standards for under-clearance, the two Stadium Bridges must be raised requiring the reconstruction of both bridges at the same time.

In 2005, the State of Michigan Local Bridge Program approved \$766,000 for the replacement of the Stadium Bridge over State Street even though the estimated cost was more than \$10 million for one bridge only. In 2007, the State of Michigan informed the City of Ann Arbor of its decision to remove the \$766,000 that once approved for the project, due to the City's inability to locate and obligate the other funds to complete the bridges replacement.

Currently, the City of Ann Arbor is preparing the construction plans for the replacement of the two bridges at Stadium Blvd, in anticipation that sufficient Federal and/or State grants will be available for construction of the project in 2010. The preliminary estimate for the total project cost (both bridges) is \$24 million. The City has committed \$1.5 million for the project preliminary design cost, however, there are not other local, state or federal funds obligated for the remaining \$22.5M of the project's estimated cost. The area's federal ARRA funds only totaled \$6.4 million with nearly \$62 million in unfunded improvements identified including the bridges.

Photographs documenting condition of Bridges



On the left, E Stadium Bridge over Ann Arbor Railroad
On the right, E Stadium Bridge over S. State Street



Traffic control on Stadium Bridge over State Street



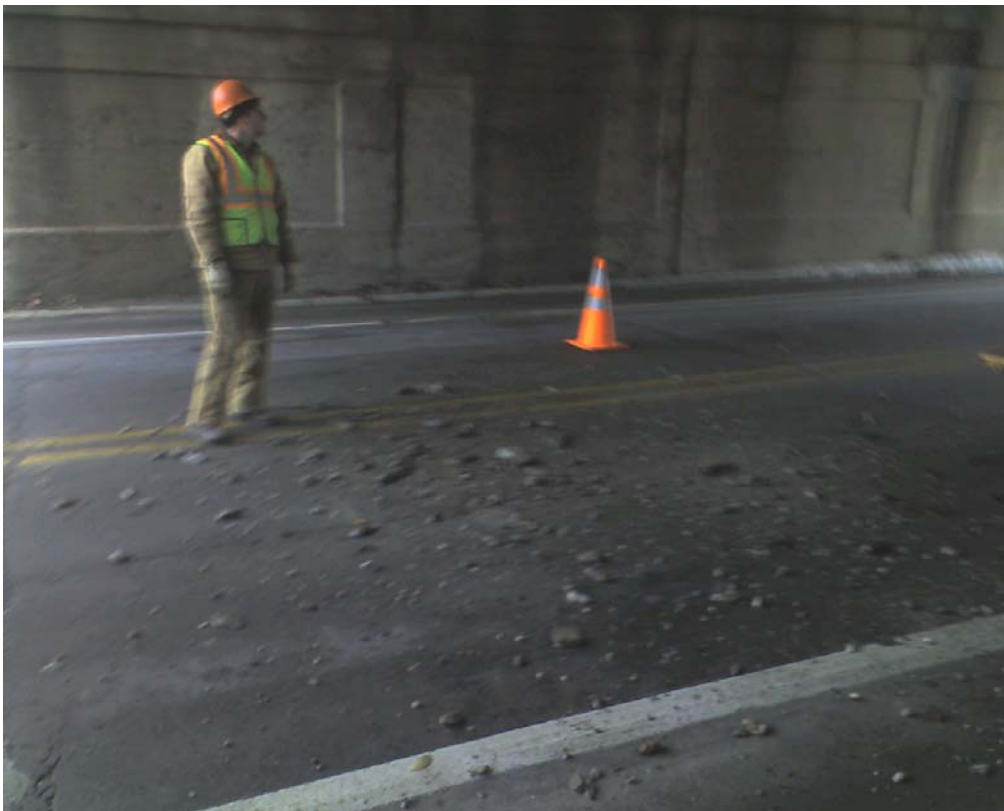
Condition of side walls of Stadium Bridge over State



Stadium Bridge over State Street



The Failing Beam at the Stadium Bridge over State Street



Debris on State Street fallen from the Stadium Bridge above



Bridge over railroad 300 feet west of the State Street Bridge