SUMMER 2016 NEWSLETTER

WINNIPEG RIVER BRIDGE ON PR 313

Manitoba

Previous newsletters have provided information on the history of the bridge, purpose and need for the project, stakeholder input and feedback, bridge design option evaluation, and construction time-lines. These past newsletters can be found on the project website (*http://gov.mb.ca/mit/wms/structures/design.html*).

New Bridge Design

MI has completed an extensive engineering analysis for the bridge repair and has considered several bridge rehabilitation and replacement options. After extensive community consultation, and discussion with local municipalities, the decision was made to construct a new bridge on the current alignment utilizing the existing piers. The decision was based on a detailed analysis of the design options, and provided significant consideration for the affect that a bridge closure would have on the travelling public and other stakeholders. The selected design will allow the new bridge to be constructed in stages, without closing the bridge for the majority of the construction period. (See **'Construction'** for more information). This design will provide a new wider facility that will improve service the region for the next 40 years.

The existing bridge is 6.2m (20 feet) wide, while the new bridge (Figure 1) will be 9.6m (31.5 feet). The new bridge will include a new sidewalk on the north side (same location as the current sidewalk).

Recently, local municipalities have expressed a desire to the modify the bridge design in order to increase the navigational clearance of the bridge to 15ft from the original design of 12.5ft. MI has analyzed the impact that this change will have on the project and have decided to modify the current design to accommodate a 15ft navigation clearance. This change will require additional design time and will affect the overall project budget and schedule. It is anticipated that the redesign will be complete by Christmas 2016 with construction of the re-designed bridge to start in April of 2017.

Construction

The bridge will continue to operate as it is now (one lane controlled with signals) through the entire construction period, with the exception of a short closure period. It will be necessary to close the bridge completely to traffic for approximately three weeks in order to install the navigation span.

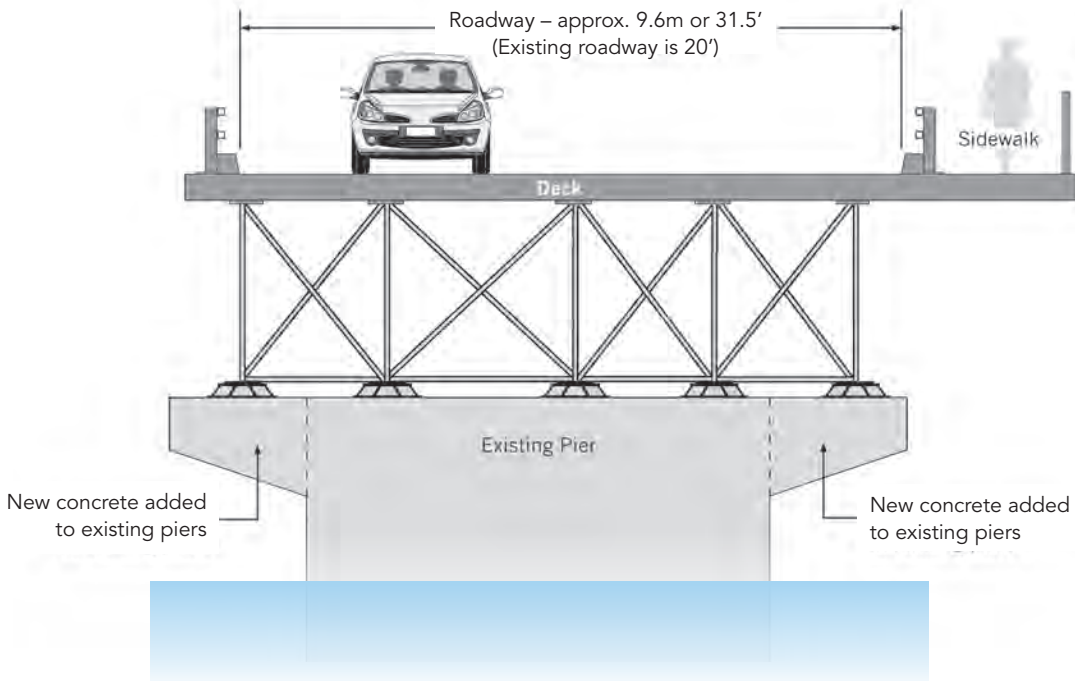

Figure 1: Build New Bridge on Existing Piers

Based on feedback from many stakeholders, the project team determined that the late fall of 2017 will pose the least impact to bridge traffic and will best accommodate the construction schedule and timing of the navigation span replacement. The exact dates of this closure period has yet to be determined.

Current Status

- MI has completed the detailed design of the bridge and will be modifying the design to accommodate the increased navigation clearance.
- PCL Construction crews are modifying the existing piers to accommodate the new deck. It is important to note that the current construction activities are not affected by the design change. MIT is working with Manitoba Hydro, MTS, and others to ensure that minimal disruption of service will take place during construction.
- The current overall project schedule has been delayed due to the design change. The anticipated project completion date is now fall of 2018.
- Please be aware that it is expected that construction activities will NOT continue over the fall/winter 2016/2017. The public and stakeholders should expect to see PCL demobilize from site by September 2016 and not have a Contractor return until April 2017.

More Information

MI is aware that during peak traffic flows on long weekends, wait times at the bridge signals can be extensive. During these periods of high traffic, extended delay times should be expected. Please know that the signals are operating as efficiently as possible and we thank you for your continued patience.

Additional information, including a full consultation report and an updated project status report can be found on the project website at:

www.landmarkplanning.ca/current-projects.php
or
www.gov.mb.ca/mit/wms/structures/design.html

Bridge construction site

Engine # 1 – 1913

PR 313 Bridge History

The study team will be working with the Lac du Bonnet and District Historical Society Inc. to incorporate the history of the bridge into the design of the new bridge. Discussions with the Historical Society have resulted in several concepts including naming of the bridge, a historical plaque, and the preservation of the signage currently located on the bridge. The Historical Society put out a request for feedback in the January 14, 2016 edition of the Lac du Bonnet Clipper asking for locals to provide their thoughts on naming of the bridge. Email your suggestions to *annyhall50@hotmail.com*!

Did you know…

The PR 313 Bridge has a rich history dating back to 1908 when the first bridge accommodated a Winnipeg Hydro Tramway. In 1931 the wooden bridge was replaced with a steel Dominion Bridge structure that was used for both rail and highway traffic. The bridge deck was later raised by four feet in order to accommodate rising water levels created by the McArthur Falls Generating Station. Further modifications and repairs were undertaken over the years including the removal of the rail tracks in 1963.

On July 15, 1870 Manitoba was created by proclamation of the Manitoba Act. The size and shape of province afforded it the nickname "The Postage Stamp Province". Interestingly, the longitude and latitude of the eastern boundary for the Province of Manitoba began at a point 96 degrees west of Greenwich and that point is located on the existing PR 313 Bridge!