



Planning, Development & Transportation

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Riverside Bridge Replacement Project Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What's the problem with the existing bridge?

The existing bridge is structurally deficient, which means that it is not currently strong enough to support the traffic that is using it. It is failing at performing its primary function. Also, the bridge will flood during a "100-year flood event" which creates a dangerous situation for the public and emergency responders.

2. When will the bridge be replaced and how long will that take?

- The bridge will be replaced in the fall of 2018 with the total construction taking about four months from September–December 2018.
- Within those four months, Riverside Avenue will need to be completely closed for six weeks while the actual bridge structure is removed and replaced.
- The bridge is part of a larger project to repair the Spring Creek flood basin. The City will have continued work within the Spring Creek flood basin realigning Spring Creek and doing streamside habitat restoration through May 2019.

3. How will people get to EPIC during the full closure of Riverside Avenue?

Access to EPIC during the 6-week full closure of Riverside will be via Stuart Street. There is an existing emergency access from Stuart to the EPIC parking lot which will be modified for temporary access during the full closure of the bridge. Access routes (on Welch and Stuart) will be clearly marked.

4. So, ALL the visitors to EPIC will have to use Stuart?

Yes. During the six-week closure, people will need to use Stuart Street to get to EPIC.

5. Is the existing Stuart driveway access wide enough for two-way traffic?

No. The existing emergency access will be widened to 20 feet wide.

6. Will the emergency access stay open to the public after the project?

No. The access from Stuart to the EPIC parking lot will return to emergency access only once the bridge is re-opened. The existing gate will be closed to prevent public access.

7. Does the road really need to be fully closed?

Yes. City staff understands the importance of the EPIC access and the impacts that a detour has on adjacent neighborhoods. The City explored two additional bridge construction options that would have been less impactful to traffic. Unfortunately, these alternatives were determined to have significantly higher cost, longer construction time, greater environmental impacts, and higher risk in terms of safety.

- Building the bridge ½ at a time
Not feasible for the following reasons:
 - The new bridge is 5 feet higher than the old structure which makes it very difficult to maintain traffic during construction
 - Removing/rebuilding a two-lane bridge requires one-way traffic since the old and new structures are not wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic on only half the bridge
 - 2-3 months of additional construction time for two phase construction
 - Significant additional costs
 - Safety concerns for pedestrians, cyclists and wrong-way motor vehicle traffic
- Building a temporary detour bridge
Not feasible for the following reasons:
 - Habitat destruction created by the temporary bridge/roadway and significant additional time/cost related to more floodplain permitting.
 - Additional \$500,000+ in construction cost (20% cost increase)
 - Longer overall construction time (1-2 months additional)

Therefore, the team has worked hard to minimize the duration for the full closure. The City will perform as much work as possible without closing Riverside. The City is also utilizing accelerated bridge construction methods which uses a process where the bridge is built in components offsite and assembled onsite very rapidly. This is a slightly more expensive construction method than typical bridge construction, but the process will remove and reconstruct the Riverside bridge in 6 weeks, whereas traditional construction would take about 4 months.

8. How much traffic does EPIC generate?

The Edora Pool and Ice Center (EPIC) is a major community facility. On average in the fall about 1,100 people per day utilize the facility. This equates to 500-600 vehicles per day.

However, days are rarely 'average' at EPIC since much of the programming is event driven, and traffic varies strongly even throughout the day. Some days are relatively quiet with 200 vehicles all day long, while after a CSU hockey game is complete, there may be 400 vehicles leaving the EPIC in a single hour.

Large events such as regional swim meets occur on the weekends, and CSU hockey occurs in the evening.

9. That seems like a lot of traffic!

There will be an impact on traffic volumes along Welch and Stuart during the six-week closure of Riverside. Stuart and Welch are both classified as collectors on the Master Street Plan. Stuart Road east of Lemay currently has a volume of about 4,000 vehicles per day, while Welch Street has a current daily traffic volume of 2,500 vehicles per day. The City anticipates that the average number of vehicles per day on Stuart and/or Welch will increase by 15-20% during the six-week detour. The impact will be more pronounced at times during larger EPIC events on weekends or in the evenings.

10. What about all the School traffic? With Riffenburgh and Ridgeview, the roads are very busy.

As with all school in Fort Collins, Riffenburgh and Ridgeview have pronounced peak traffic flows for short periods of time in the morning and again in the mid-afternoon. These peaks tend to last about 20-30 minutes. City staff works actively with the schools on their circulation and other traffic issues.

Fortunately, the peak times of traffic for EPIC do not typically overlap with the school times. Evening activities at EPIC and weekend events will not be impacted by school traffic.

Having said that, we encourage everyone to be aware, cautious, and drive slowly during the closure on the detour routes. Additional Police presence will be utilized.

11. Why didn't the City schedule the closure of Riverside to coincide with the lower summer volumes at EPIC and when schools are out of session?

Bridge replacement and stream restoration must be constructed during the low-flow stream conditions in Spring Creek. These conditions only exist in the fall and winter.

12. How will all that extra traffic be managed?

The Engineering Department is working with the Traffic Operations Department and Police Services to plan for the closure. A traffic management plan is being developed to provide a comprehensive approach for traffic impacts due to the project. There are several areas of focus:

- Minimize the length of the closure through careful planning, efficient work, and financial incentives for the contractor to outperform the City's 6-week closure.
- Provide clear and consistent information and communication to all affected parties including EPIC staff, EPIC users, local schools, and residents.
- Actively manage the detour routes - including variable message boards, clear signage, changes in signal timing, and consideration of other mitigation measures such as radar feedback signs, and temporary speed humps.
- Employ a strong police enforcement presence.

Once the detour begins, it will be important to evaluate how it's working, and make refinements based on observations, resident input, etc. We welcome and encourage ongoing communications during the detour in order to mitigate as much of the impact as possible.

We know this is impactful, and we are working hard to minimize impacts to the degree possible. We ask for and appreciate the community's patience, input, and awareness while using the area during the project.

13. *The all-way stop sign at Stuart / Welch can be hard to see for eastbound vehicles.*

Thank you for letting us know. Traffic Operations staff will review this and meet with property owners to determine if additional measures or precautions should be implemented at the intersection.

14. *What about local access?*

Access to ALL properties, residential, business, school etc. will be maintained at all times.

15. *Will the roadway classification of Stuart change from a collector to an arterial?*

No. Stuart will remain a collector road. This is a temporary situation only during the bridge closure.

16. *Will the trail stay open?*

Yes, prior to the bridge closure, the City will install a permanent Spring Creek Trail detour route (north of the bridge project) and will also permanently widen the sidewalk connection between the Stuart Street cul-de-sac and the Power Trail (southside of EPIC).

17. *What will it look like when the project is finished?*

The Riverside bridge will be constructed with two lanes of traffic, bike lanes, and sidewalks going over Spring Creek. The new bridge will be 5 feet higher than the existing bridge so that future storm events won't overtop the bridge. The increased height will also provide more headroom for the Spring Creek Trail crossing under the bridge while also allowing the trail to be higher to avoid minor flooding. Also, City Parks and City Utilities will reconfigure Spring Creek and make trail connections between the Power Trail and Spring Creek Trail after the bridge work is completed.

18. *What happens next?*

Staff will continue to prepare for the construction project throughout the summer. This includes internal coordination between Engineering, Traffic Operations, and Police Services. It also includes continuing conversations with residents to ensure we understand neighborhood concerns, and can plan appropriate mitigation.

The finalized detour plan and mitigation measures will be available in late August, more than a month before the detour begins. Detailed communication with specifics to EPIC, schools, businesses and residents will occur then.

Once the closure begins, we will monitor the area, and make refinements as needed.

19. *Who do I contact with questions / concerns?*

We welcome continuing information and dialogue. Please Contact Tim Kemp, City of Fort Collins Engineering Dept. at 970-416-2719 or tkemp@fcgov.com