

CHARLES BERRY BASCULE BRIDGE FACT SHEET

PID 77464, LOR-6-9.67, ODOT PROJECT 113(08) – Updated 10/21/08

HISTORY

- The Charles Berry Memorial Bridge carries four lanes of U.S. Route 6/Erie Avenue over the Black River at the City of Lorain's port to Lake Erie.
- It was built and opened to traffic in 1940. The bascule span is 333 feet long and the overall structure length is 1,052 feet. The roadway carries an average of 14,720 vehicles per day (2005 traffic count).
- According to the United States Code of Federal Regulations Part 117.850, the Erie Avenue (Charles Berry Memorial) Bridge shall be able to be open at all times necessary, with advanced notice given for the Black River waterway traffic. It cannot remain closed to restrict waterway traffic.
- The Black River waterway is maintained by the U.S. Coast Guard and is a resource for both pleasure watercraft and commercial vessels, including those shipping materials to industries in the City of Lorain along the Black River.
- There are 5 bridges of this type currently operating in Ohio. This is the only one in Lorain County.
- The Ohio Department of Transportation is responsible for construction, reconstruction, major maintenance and repair, and operation of the bridge. It is operated by the Lorain County Board of Commissioners (ODOT reimburses the County for this) through the Lorain Port Authority.
- Approximately every ten years, the bridge has maintenance and/or major repair work done to various items to upgrade the bridge and its control towers. A major renovation was completed in 1988 and involved moving most of the operations to the west control tower. In 1998, a minor renovation was performed.
- By Ohio law, all bridges are required to receive an annual inspection. Due to the complexity involved with inspecting this particular bridge, ODOT contracts this work to a firm on a three-year basis. The firm awarded the contract for 2004-2006 was Barr & Prevost of Columbus, Ohio. It was the 2004 annual inspection that serves as the starting point for construction plans for this project.

BACKGROUND (Award to Construction)

- Project 113(08), for bridge maintenance & repairs, was awarded to Great Lakes Construction Company of Hinckley, Ohio on February 27, 2008 for \$1,741,499.60.
- The project involves technology upgrades, bridge deck and substructure repairs, maintenance to the control towers and machine room, spot painting, pavement repairs on the sidewalks and bridge approach, and various repairs.
- At the Pre-construction Meeting on April 15, a preliminary schedule was presented by the contractor and modifications discussed with ODOT, the Lorain Port Authority, Great Lakes, Barr & Prevost, and the City of Lorain. The estimated start date was April 21, 2008 and estimated completion date is May 31, 2009. An original plan note for an 80-day closure was discussed to ensure all in attendance were on the same page. It included opening the bridge for three City of Lorain/Lorain Port Authority events (the Lorain International Festival, June 26-29; Independence Day Festivities, July 2-6; & the Port Festival, July 17-20). It was noted that these brief openings could extend the closure beyond the 80-day plan note.
- At the discretion of the contractor (Great Lakes) work began in April and lane closures began in May per the guidelines of the contract (9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.). The Bridge closure was originally scheduled for June 5, with an August 28 OR LATER opening. On June 4, the closure was delayed until Monday, June 9 and the opening was delayed until September 2 OR LATER. In both public announcements, it was made clear that the scheduled opening date was not something that could be confirmed based on the complexities involved with the project.

CURRENT SITUATION (Start of Work to the Present)

- The Charles Berry Memorial Bridge/U.S. 6 is closed between Broadway Avenue (State Route 57) and Arkansas Avenue. Traffic is being detoured along State Route 611 and State Route 301. The added length for local traffic to drive between the east and west points of the bridge closure – along Broadway Avenue, Henderson Drive, and Colorado Avenue – is approximately 3.6 miles and a 9-minute drive.
- No definitive date for re-opening the bridge is yet available, but ODOT has dedicated resources to doing whatever is possible to get it open as soon as possible.
- During the maintenance work this summer, additional components needed for the Braking System were identified. These were ordered on September 8 and were expected to arrive within 5 weeks – they are being supplied by a company in Wisconsin. It is estimated they will be installed within two weeks after arrival.
- In August, it was discovered that the newly-installed Drive Controllers were not communicating properly with the existing gauges in the bridge's Consoles. The solution was to order Signal Conditioners to help communicate information in a format that would allow the new Drive Controllers to work with the existing Consoles. The components were ordered on October 9 and are expected to be shipped within 4 weeks. Upon installation of the Conditioners, the Bridge will be tested to determine its operational status.
- The Bridge will be opened when the Contractor approves the operational status and safety of the Bridge.