

New St. Charles bridge completes first construction phase

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The initial construction phase on St. Charles' Red Gate Bridge is nearly complete.

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By [James Fuller](#)

All the initial site preparation work for St. Charles' new Red Gate Bridge will be complete by Thanksgiving and cost nearly \$1 million less than planned.

That savings may help alleviate concerns raised by bridge opponents who have repeatedly questioned the city's ability to fund the \$30 million project. To that end, city officials also secured a new \$1.9 million grant from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning to help pay for the bridge. The grant brings the total amount of non-city funding for the bridge to \$14 million. The grants come from a variety of sources:

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- Federal Highway Administration grant: \$1.74 million
- Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program grant: \$696,000
- Kane County grant: \$362,000
- Kane/Kendall Council of Mayors grant: \$2.86 million
- Illinois Department of Transportation grant for Route 25 improvements: \$3 million
- Illinois Department of Transportation grant for Route 31 improvements: \$3 million

- Illinois Department of Transportation Community and System Preservation grant: \$450,000
- CMAP Congestion and Air Quality Improvement Program grant: \$1.9 million

Internally, St. Charles residents pay into a tax levy dedicated to paying for the bridge. That levy nets about \$800,000 a year.

Aldermen will hear a progress report on the bridge during a committee meeting Nov. 28. At that meeting, they'll also be asked to support some increases to the cost of the project.

Longer pillings are needed for the bridge crossing the Fox River than engineers first believed. "Unsuitable materials" have also been discovered and must be removed from the site. Those two changes will add about \$82,000 to the costs. City staff members also want to build a temporary causeway to assist in the construction of a bridge pier that will keep the project on schedule for completion in November 2012. The causeway and the contract chance to oversee it would add \$205,000 in costs.

The next stage of bridge construction will begin in January. Once complete, the bridge will be a two-lane crossing of the Fox River. The bridge will also have a pedestrian walkway that connects a bike trail from St. Charles North High School to the Fox River Trail on the other side of the river, near Pinelands road.