



# I-79 DUAL BRIDGES REHABILITATION PROJECT, CITY OF ERIE, ERIE COUNTY

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the project is to rehabilitate the dual bridges carrying Interstate 79 over CSX & Norfolk Southern Railroads, Irwin Drive, Rudolph Avenue, and West 16th Street in the City of Erie, Erie County.

Each of the 12-span, approximately 1570 feet long, steel plate girder bridges were built in 1983 and are currently rated in fair condition. The bridges each carry three lanes of I-79 (three lanes northbound and three lanes southbound). Approximately 10,000 vehicles use each bridge daily, of which 7% is truck traffic.

The project includes replacement of the existing concrete deck and barriers, additional bridge rehabilitation and strengthening activities, and pavement reconstruction and resurfacing. Work will be completed using phased construction with a minimum of two lanes in each direction remaining open during construction.

## PROJECT AREA

The bridges are located on I-79 between Exits 182 and 183A in the City of Erie, Erie County.

The work limits also include approximately 2,000 feet of roadway to the north of the structures, ending near the West 12<sup>th</sup> Street Eastbound overpass.

Roadway tie-in work will be necessary on Ramps E (Exit 183A) and FG (I-79 on-ramp from SR 5).





## NRHP ELIGIBLE RAILROAD LINES

Two NRHP eligible railroad lines are mapped as being present under the bridges: NY, Chicago & St. Louis Railroad and Bessemer & Lake Erie Railroad. Both historic railroads share the same alignment (within the current Norfolk Southern RR right of way) but separate just east of the project area. It appears that NY, Chicago & St. Louis RR was the main east-west route; Bessemer & Lake Erie RR occupied portions of the east-west line for its north-south connection between Pittsburgh and the Port of Erie. Temporary construction easements (TCEs) will be acquired for contractor access to the I-79 bridges. Temporary occupancy of the historic railroads will not affect the historic significance of the railroads; following the temporary occupancy, the property will be restored to its original state and the railroads will continue to be eligible for listing in the NRHP. There are no significant engineering features of the historic railroads present within the APE.

## PROPOSED PLAN

The scope of the rehabilitation project includes:

- Replacing the existing concrete deck and barriers with a new concrete deck and 45" F-Shape barriers.
- Install new expansion joints.
- Repaint all existing structural steel.
- Replace all existing bridge bearings.
- Remove the existing de-icing system.
- Install new scuppers and replace all downspouting.
- Replace approach slabs.
- Repair deteriorated concrete and apply protective coating on the existing substructure units.
- Replace the bridge lighting system.
- Install protective fencing.
- Repair deteriorations and retrofit the existing steel plate girders to meet current standards.
- Strengthen the existing steel plate girders to meet current design standards and vehicle loading requirements.
- Repair the bridge mounted sign structures.

The proposed northbound and southbound roadways will match the existing realignment with three 12-foot lanes, a 6-foot left shoulder, and 10-foot right shoulder. Full-depth reconstruction will be done to the roadway immediately adjacent to the bridges (approximately 50 feet on each side). Additionally, approximately 2,000 feet of roadway north of the bridge will be repaved.

The proposed on-ramps on the southbound roadway will also match the existing roadway template, with a 6-foot left shoulder, 15-foot lane from the Bayfront Parkway (Route 4034), a variable width concrete mountable median, two 12-foot lanes from Route 5, and a 10' right shoulder.

## ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE

Construction of the project is expected to begin in spring 2026 and conclude by the end of 2027.



## TRAFFIC IMPACTS

The project will be completed using phased construction to maintain two-lanes remain open in each direction during construction.

## CONSTRUCTION FUNDING

The project construction funds are 100% state funded for an estimated total of \$50 to \$60 million.

## CURRENT PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

The purpose of the public comment period is to introduce the project and receive input regarding any questions or concerns with the project. It is also an opportunity for the public to review and comment on the project's potential effect upon Cultural Resources pursuant to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's 36 CFR Part 800 regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The project documents can be made available in alternative languages or formats if requested.

Comments and questions can be submitted to PennDOT Project Manager Jeanette Uhl, at [juhl@pa.gov](mailto:juhl@pa.gov), 814-678-7084, or 255 Elm Street, Oil City, PA 16301. An online comment form for the I-79 Bridges Rehabilitation Project is also available at [www.penndot.pa.gov/District1](http://www.penndot.pa.gov/District1).

