

Dear Oconto County Neighbor,

I am contacting you on behalf of Oconto County and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to invite you to a virtual public involvement meeting to discuss the project to rehabilitate or replace the Smyth Rd bridge over the North Branch Oconto River. The bridge is 97 years old and is reaching the end of its useful life, and we are working to maintain a crossing of the river at this location.

The figure on the back of this letter provides an overview of the Smyth Rd bridge alternatives being considered. Some of these alternatives have the potential to impact private property, if only slightly, and I want you to be aware that we are doing everything we can to develop designs that avoid or minimize these impacts. The alternatives still under consideration include:

- **Alternative 2: Rehabilitate the bridge for vehicles while maintaining its historic integrity.** This alternative would have no permanent impact on private property; it would cost approximately \$2.45 million with a service life of approximately 35 years.
- **Alternative 3: Construct a new bridge on the same alignment as the existing bridge.** The existing bridge would be demolished and the new structure built in the same footprint. The proposed bridge would be slightly wider and built to modern standards. It would cost approximately \$1.05 million with a service life of approximately 75 years.
- **Alternative 4A: Construct a new bridge just north of the existing bridge.** This alternative would construct a new bridge approximately 15 feet north of the existing bridge for travel and preserve the existing historic bridge (which would not carry traffic). This alternative would require the acquisition of private property from two parcels to the north. Because of these impacts, this alternative will likely be dismissed from further consideration. It would cost approximately \$3.5 million with a service life of approximately 75 years for the new bridge and 35 years for the rehabilitated bridge.

Finally, the bridge is an important historic resource for your community and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places due to its engineering significance. Depending on the alternative selected, the historic bridge may be altered or removed in order to continue to provide a river crossing at this location. If you have any comments on the historic nature of the Smyth Road bridge, we would be particularly happy to discuss them.

We hope to hear from you at the **Virtual Public Involvement Meeting scheduled for November 4, 2025 from 4:30 to 5:30 PM.** The meeting will include a short presentation on the project and alternatives and will feature open discussion with project designers and local officials.

Please log in to the meeting using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/SmythRoadPIM>

Please feel free to contact me for assistance to attend the virtual meeting, for more information, or with any questions or concerns related to this project. Visit the Oconto County website at <https://www.ocontocountywi.gov/284/Highway-Department> for further details.

Best regards,

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Smyth Road Bridge: Detailed Alternatives

