

US-23 Cheboygan: Drawbridge Rehabilitation

Context

The US-23/State Street bascule (drawbridge) is located in the city of Cheboygan in Cheboygan County.

Purpose and Description

The National Register listed bridge was completed in December of 1940 and was the last bascule bridge built in Michigan before World War II. The purpose of the project was to maintain the safety of the bridge. Rehabilitation efforts included replacement of concrete and open grid deck, balancing the bascule leaves, sidewalk replacement, and the replacement of the original railings with new units fabricated from the historic railing design, and new lighting. Major rehabilitation of the bridge began in January 2004 and concluded in late June of the same year.



Public Engagement

The project was developed through coordination with numerous agencies and the community. Close coordination with the community and the U.S. Coast Guard was necessary to make it as convenient as possible for motorists and boaters crossing over and under the bridge.

Challenges

The project involved balancing sensitivity to the historic integrity of the bridge while ensuring continued safe and efficient service.

Context Sensitive Solutions Approach

Plans included fabricating new railing to match the original and retro-fitting the structure with a crash-worthy two-tube railing on the traffic sides. Lighting was selected to match the design used throughout downtown Cheboygan (a request from the community); upgrades and repairs to the structural and mechanical elements of the drawbridge were made. Construction activity was focused on the winter months to avoid interference with navigation and was performed on a part-width basis, allowing the bridge to remain open to vehicular traffic.



Outcome

The new bridge was well received by the community for its modern appearance and safety features, including safety barriers, traffic gates, and traffic lights. The project is expected to extend the life of the structure by about 15 years.

Funding

The \$2.1 million bridge rehabilitation was funded through the Build Michigan II program and TEA-21.

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