

I-83 South Bridge Video Transcript

Did you know that the I-83 South Bridge carries more than 125,000 vehicles over the Susquehanna River every day? That's more vehicles per day than seats in Penn State's Beaver Stadium.

That much traffic wears a bridge down over time – especially one that was built in 1960. Just like the roof on a home wears down over decades and eventually needs to be replaced, so do our roads and bridges. At this point, the bridge is nearing the end of its serviceable lifespan, which means that because of this wear and tear the bridge requires more regular, frequent, and costly repairs. You may have already experienced the impacts of wear and tear on the South Bridge with the recent bridge shutdown earlier this year for repair work.

The South Bridge is a critical part of the interstate system in Harrisburg, carrying both regional and long-distance interstate traffic as well as local commuter traffic. The importance of interstates for our state's commerce and quality of life cannot be overstated. The safety and condition of bridges like the South Bridge is vital in connecting communities and facilitating the movement of goods.

For the South Bridge to remain functional, replacement and widening of the bridge to five lanes is proposed. In addition to replacing the bridge, I-83 on the west shore would be widened and improved to meet area traffic needs. To accommodate this widening on the west shore and to provide better access for bicycles and pedestrians, the 3rd Street Bridge in Lemoyne will also be widened and lengthened to carry two lanes of traffic in each direction, and sidewalks will be added to both sides of the bridge.

Construction of the South Bridge project is estimated to cost between \$500 and \$650 million. This is more than the total annual budget for all roadway projects in the region, and nearly all interstate projects statewide.

So, how will we fund this bridge project?

As you might be aware, PennDOT is facing an \$8.1 billion-dollar annual deficit in highway and bridge funding. Pennsylvania's mobility needs have grown, but the amount of funding available to support our transportation needs has not. We aren't generating enough funds to properly maintain, restore and expand our transportation network, so we're taking action to find reliable sources of funding through the PennDOT Pathways program.

One funding solution we are studying is the potential tolling of major bridges, which means that drivers would pay a fee when crossing over the bridge. The funds from the toll would stay with the bridge to fund its replacement, maintenance, and operation.

PennDOT's Major Bridge P3 Initiative is anticipated to invest \$2.2 billion in the replacement and rehabilitation of nine major bridges across the state, including the South Bridge. Paying for these projects with tolls could free up enough funds to either repave 1,900 miles of highways, build 730 miles of new interstate lanes or replace 6,600 miles of guiderail. To put that into

perspective, 1,900 hundred miles is the distance between Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The bottom line? The I-83 South Bridge project is critical and must be completed. If the South Bridge is funded by bridge tolling, funds will be available for other important and critical regional project work to move forward.

Learn more about the I-83 South Bridge project on our website at <https://www.penndot.gov/i83SouthBridge>.