

I-80 North Fork Bridges Project Video Transcript

The North Fork Bridges, which carry Interstate 80 over the North Fork Redbank Creek and Water Plant Road in Brookville Borough and Pine Creek Township, Jefferson County, were built in 1962. By 2026, these bridges are expected to carry nearly 31,000 vehicles daily, 44 percent of which will be truck traffic.

Both bridges are reaching the end of their serviceable lifespan. Although they were most recently rehabilitated in 2013, the eastbound bridge is in poor condition and the westbound bridge is in fair condition. Many crashes, nearly twice the statewide average, have occurred on this segment of I-80 eastbound due to a substandard curve on the western approach of the eastbound bridge. There's no question that these bridges need to be replaced to improve safety along this critical corridor.

However, as you may have heard, PennDOT is facing an \$8.1 billion-dollar annual deficit in highway and bridge funding. It receives 74 percent of its funding from federal and state gas taxes, and due to the increased fuel efficiency of vehicles and the increased popularity of electric vehicles, this funding continues to decline and shows no signs of stopping.

One immediate funding solution is PennDOT's Major Bridge P3 Initiative, which is designed to raise revenue for the replacement or rehabilitation of nine major bridges across the state through tolling. Tolling means that those who use the bridge pay for the bridge and revenue from the tolls goes back into the project for maintenance and operations, allowing other important transportation projects in the region to move forward.

In Pennsylvania, every \$1 billion invested in bridge replacement or rehabilitation creates 10,493 jobs and generates \$2.2 billion for our state's economy. In fact, paying for all these projects through tolling could free up enough funds to either build 730 miles of new interstate lanes, replace 6,600 miles of guide rail or repave 1,900 miles of highways. To put that into perspective, 1,900 miles is the distance between Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The bottom line is the I-80 North Fork Bridges Project is critical and needs to be completed. Funding this necessary replacement with bridge tolling will allow money that would have been used to pay for it to instead be spent on other important transportation projects in the region.