ANNUAL DBE WORKSHOP & Networking Summit 2025

January 29-30, 2025

Blatnik Bridge Replacement Project

Paul Colin, P.E.
Project Director
WisDOT

Project Background

Partnership – MnDOT and WisDOT

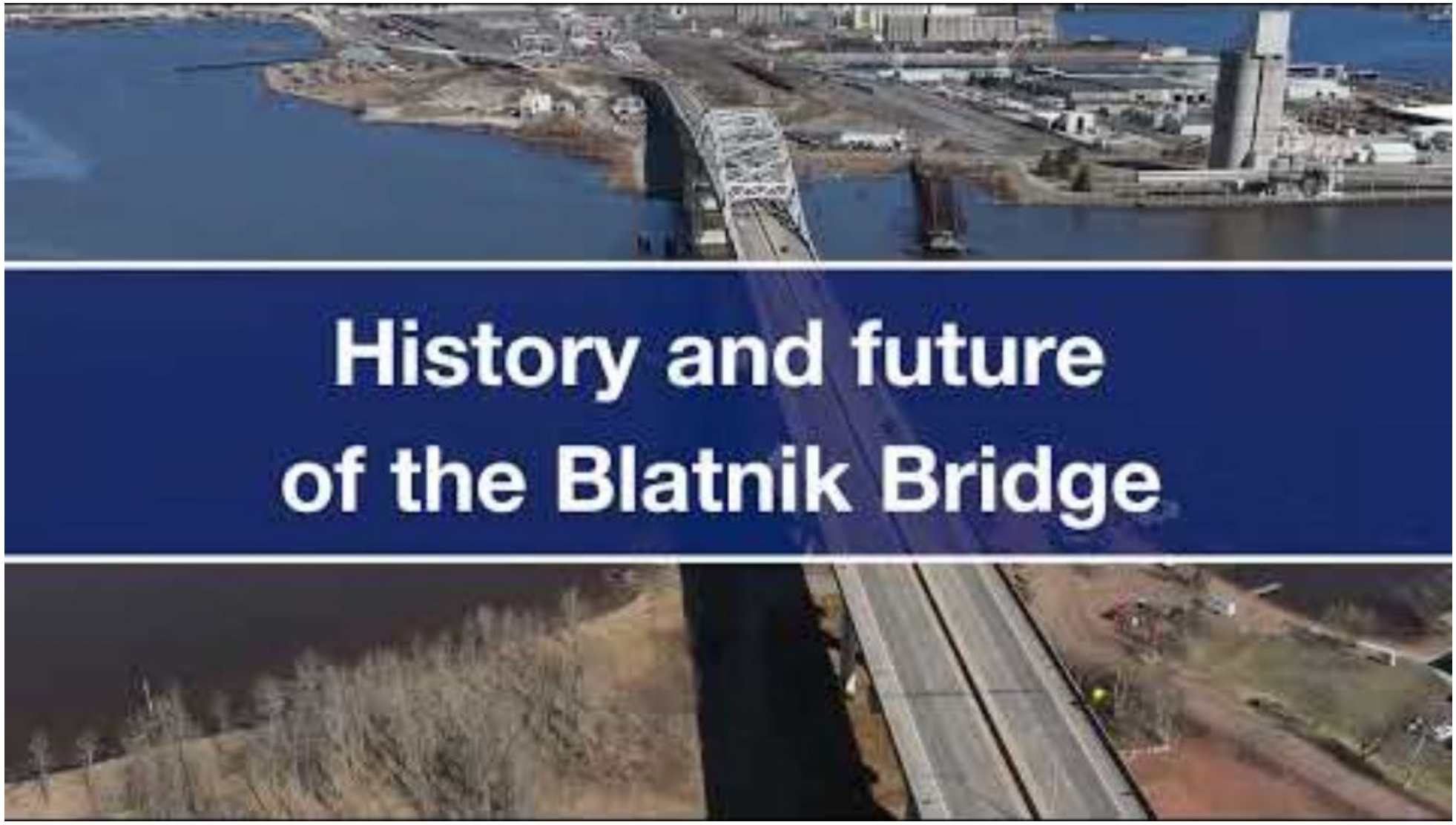
- Two DOTs but one Twin Ports
- Frequent Collaboration
  - Border bridges
  - Maintenance
  - Inspection

Recent examples:

- *Red Wing Bridge (US 63)*
- *St. Croix Crossing (WI 64/MN 36)*
- *Dresbach Bridge (IH 94)*

Top: Eisenhower Bridge of Valor. Bottom: Snooper truck / inspection

History and Future of the Blatnik Bridge



Blatnik Bridge Overview

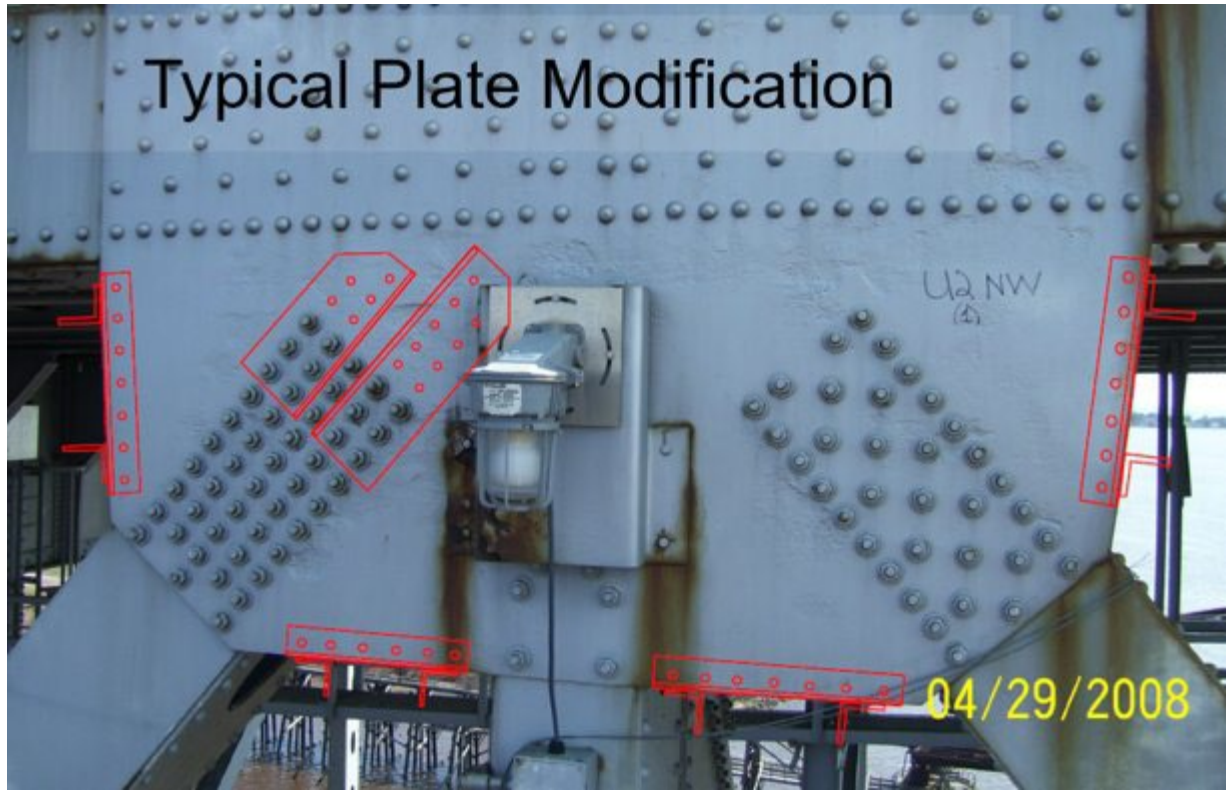
- Opened to traffic in **1961**
- Approximately **8,000** feet long *(1.5 miles)*
- **120-foot** clearance over St. Louis Bay
- Carries **4** traffic lanes *(2 in each direction)*
- Accommodates **33,021** vehicles per day (2019)
- Bridge conditions limit vehicle weight to about **60%** of a standard highway bridge

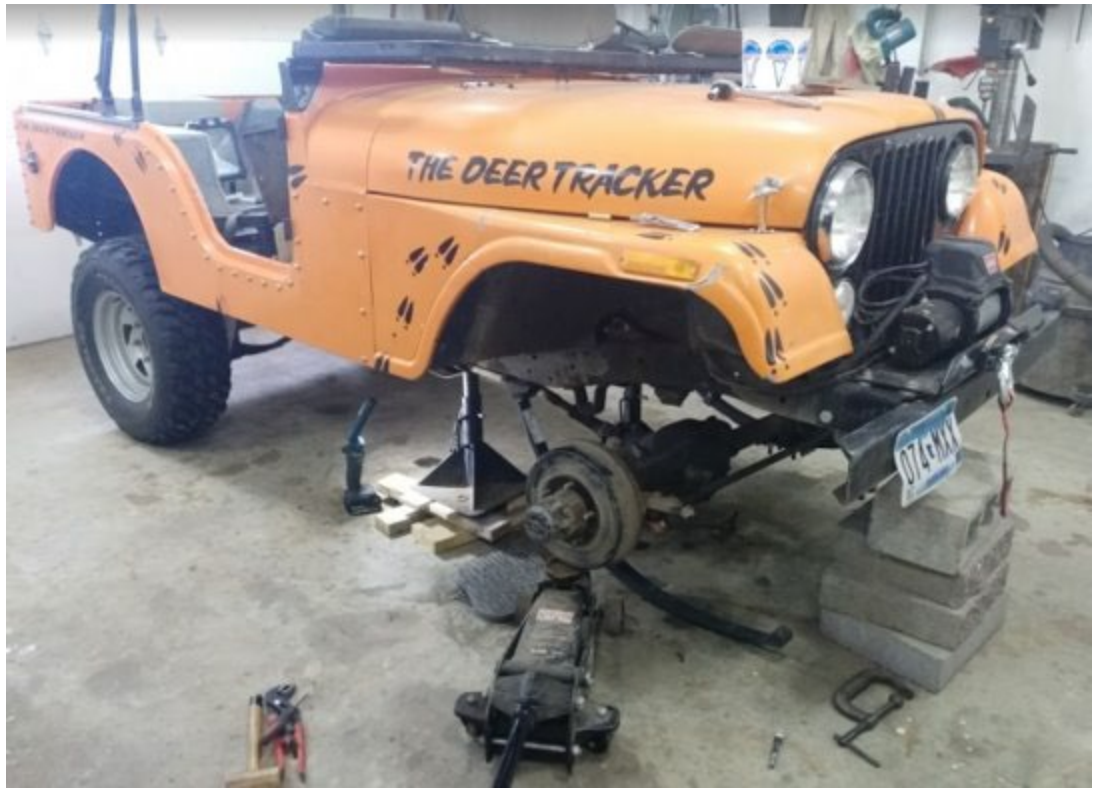
Blatnik Analogy…

Looks good from 50 ft at 50 mph…

Blatnik Analogy…

Looks good from 50 ft at 50 mph…

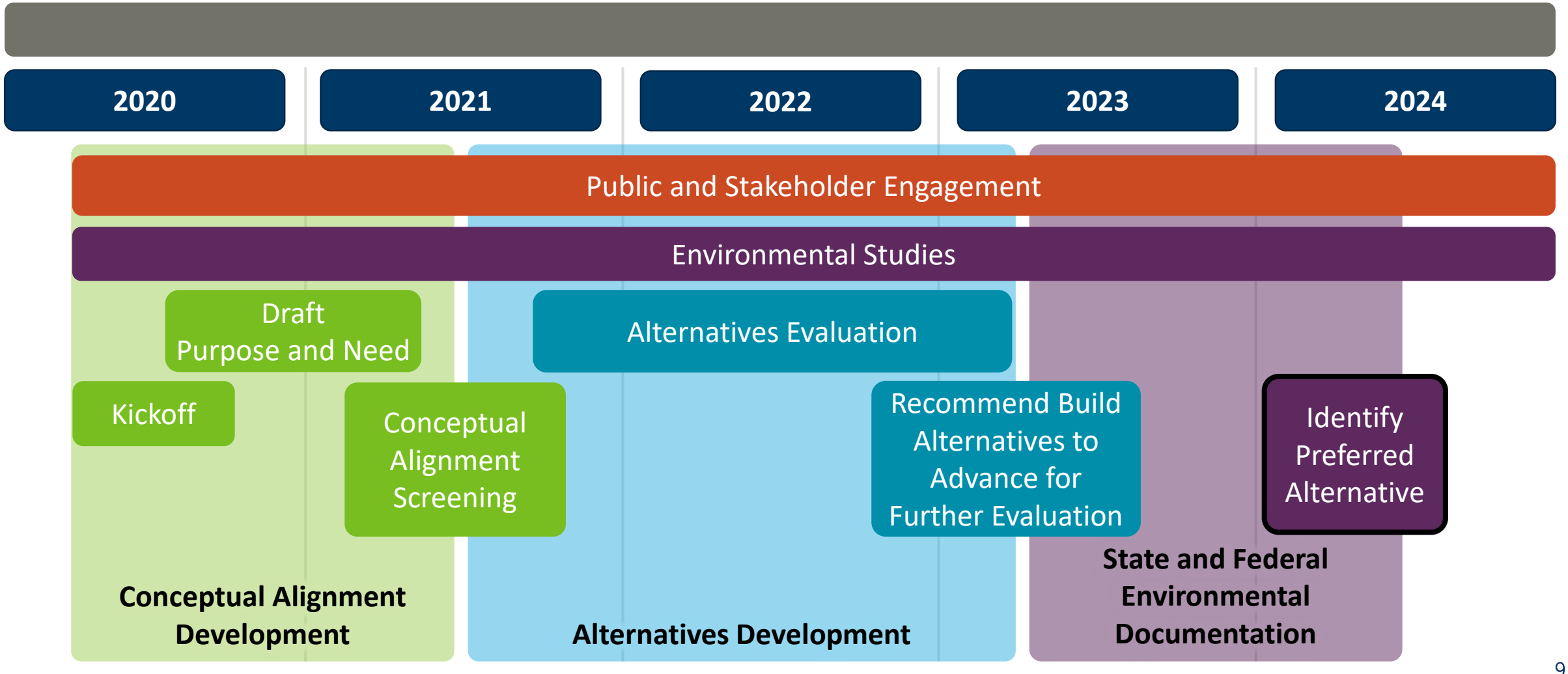




Leading Up to the Project

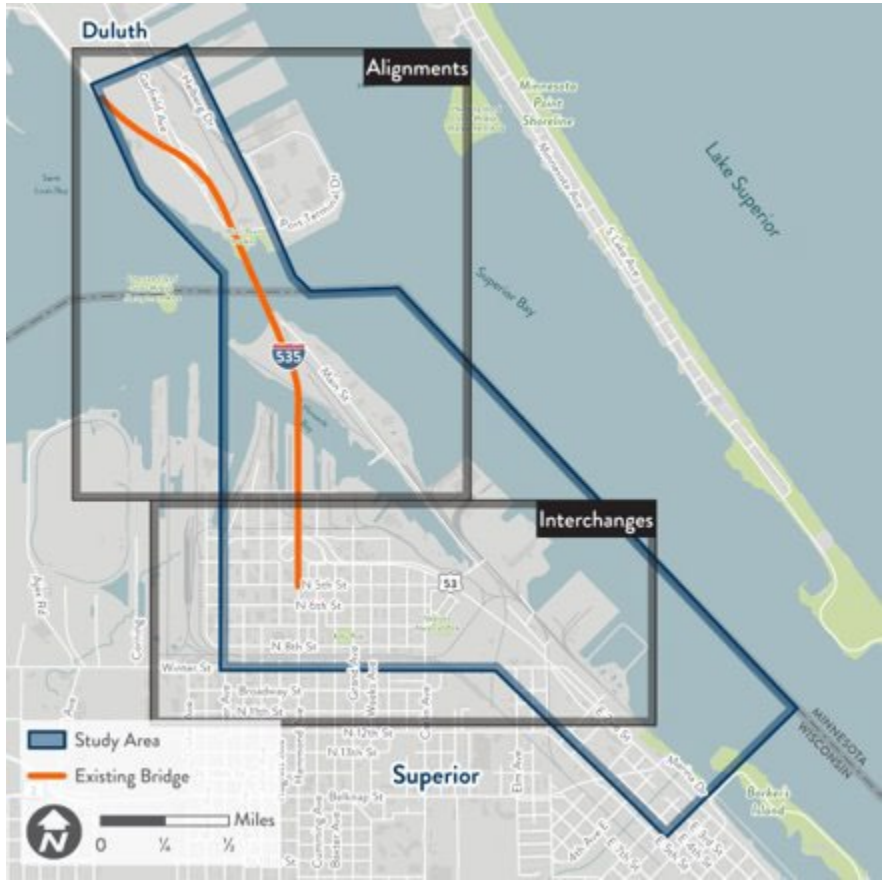
- 2009 memo from MnDOT State Bridge and Maintenance Engineer
  - Recommendation to replace at least the truss spans in 2030 – 2035 timeframe
- 2017 Blatnik Management Study
  - Strategies to maintain the bridge for 15 – 40 years within parameters with life cycle costs
  - Lowest life cycle cost to replace the entire bridge
- 2017 – 2020 Blatnik Technical Studies
  - Filling information gaps/needs identified in the 2017 Management Study
  - Boots on the ground physical testing on the bridge
- August 2020: Joint project team kick-off for environmental and early engineering

Where We Have Been (NEPA Process)



Alternatives Development

Detailed Evaluation



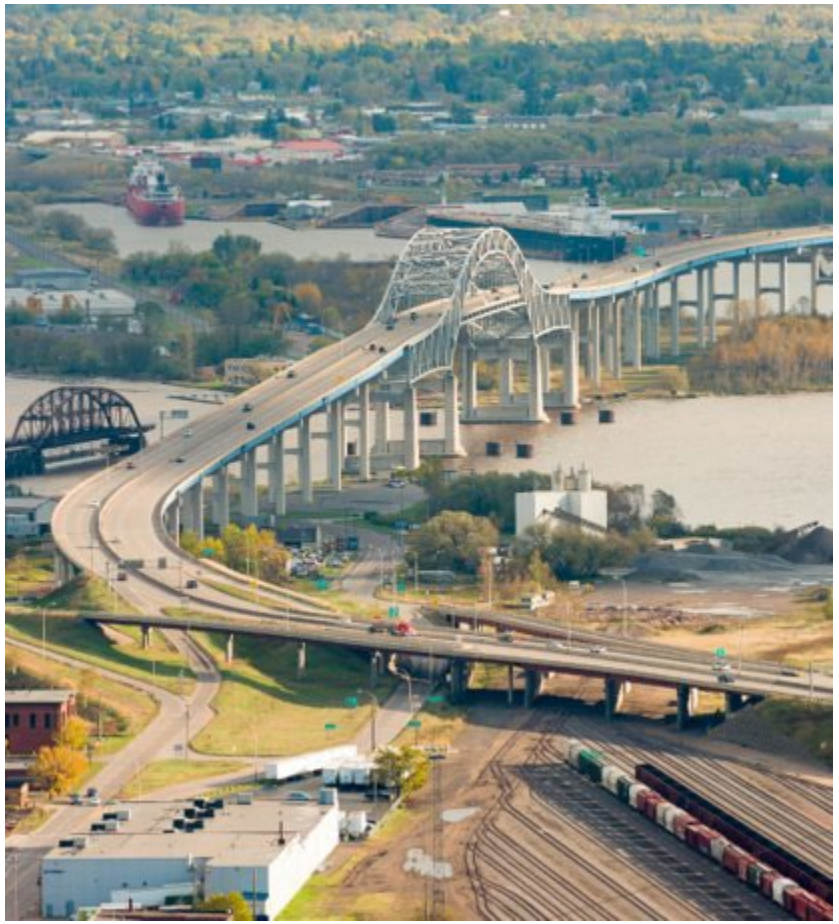
Selecting the Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative:

1. Utilizes existing alignment
2. Provides a direct connection to USH 53 in WI
3. Includes Shared Use Path
4. Provides local road connection via interchange

Why Existing Alignment was Selected

- Minimizes impacts to property and wetlands
- Allows for one phase construction, providing the shortest overall construction duration
- Provides the greatest schedule acceleration opportunity since crews can work on any portion of the project at any time
- Closing the existing bridge eliminates risk of construction next to traveling vehicles
- Provides the lowest cost alternative



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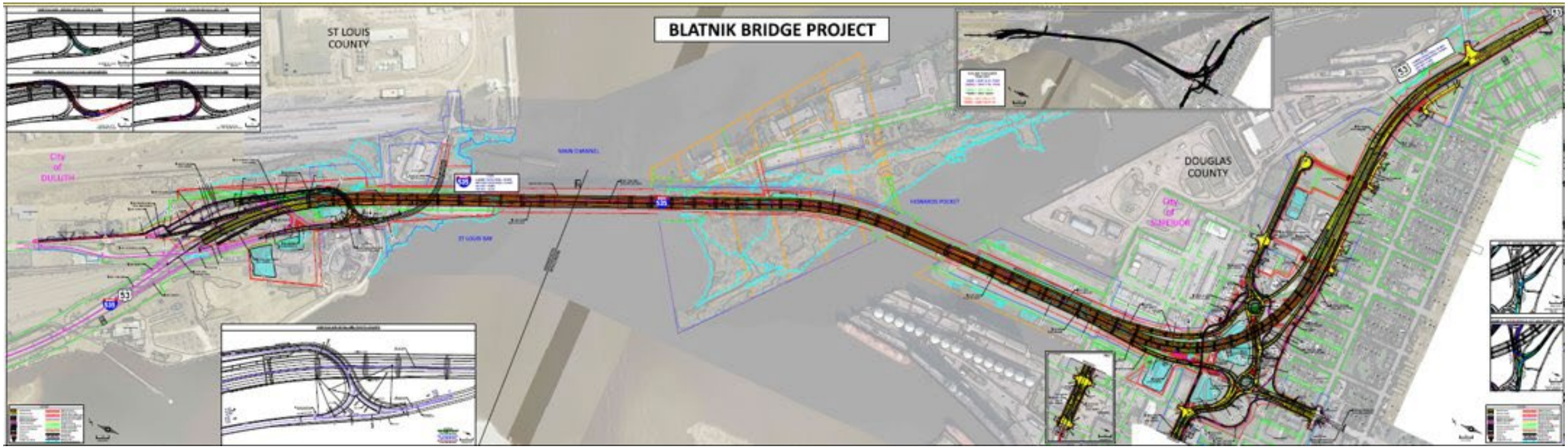
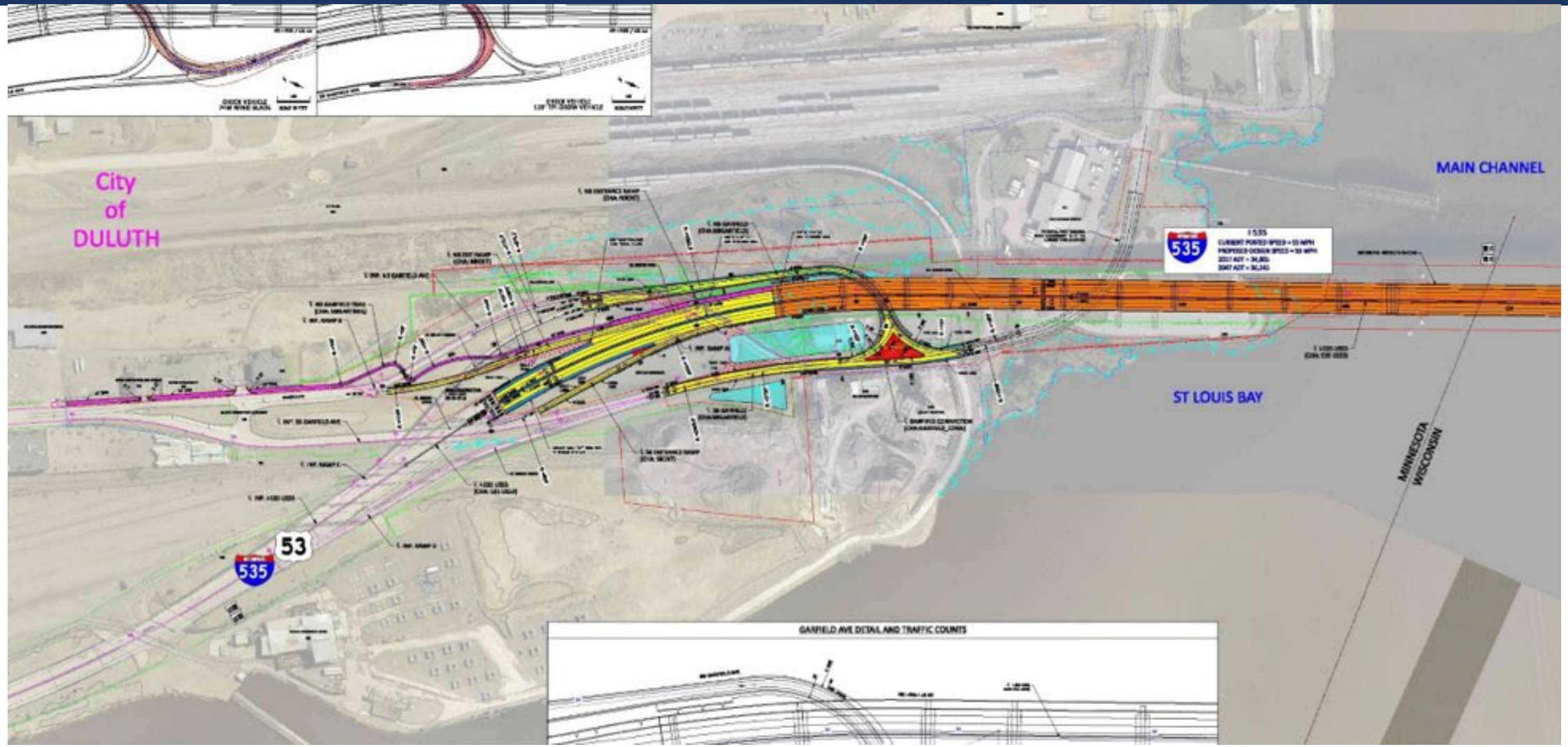
Project Scope and Design

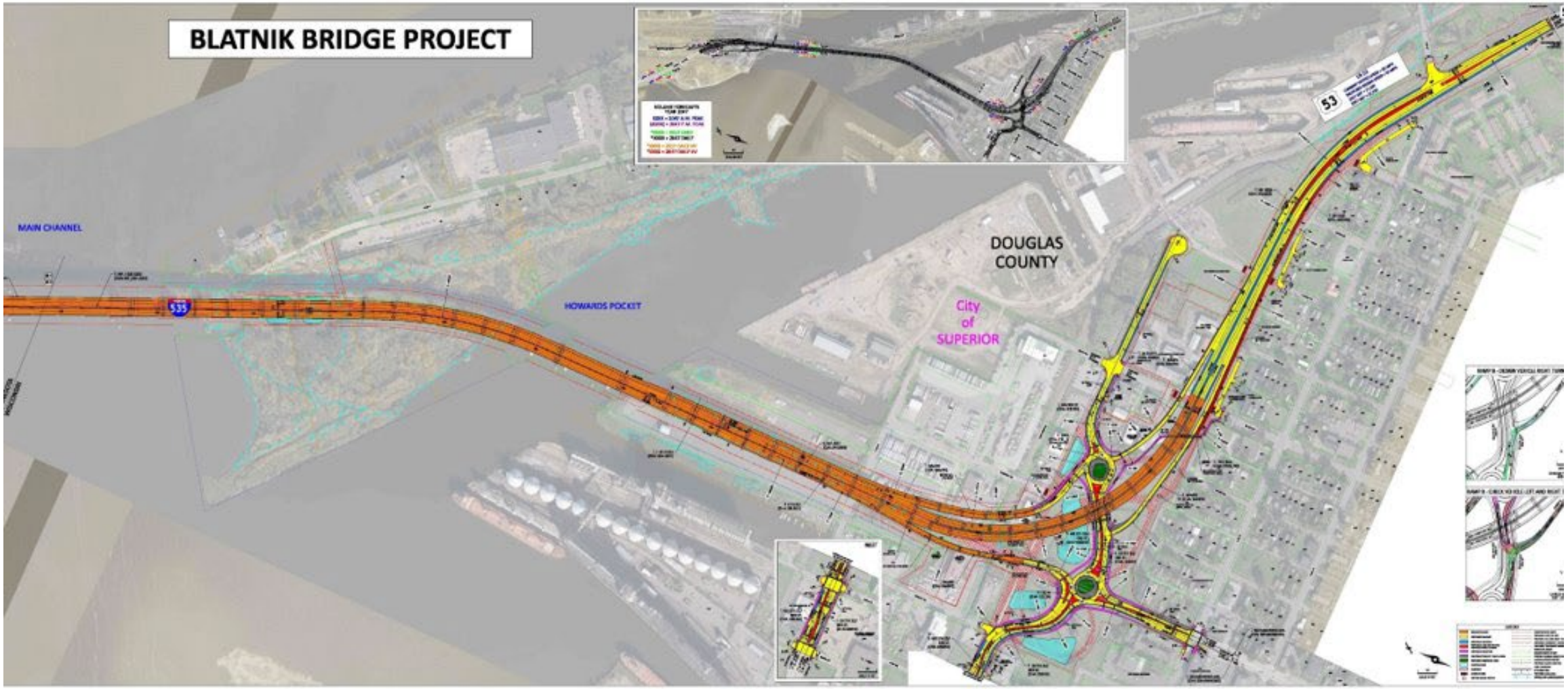
Project Plans – General Layout



Project Plans – Minnesota Approach



Project Plans – Wisconsin Approach



Current Wisconsin Approach

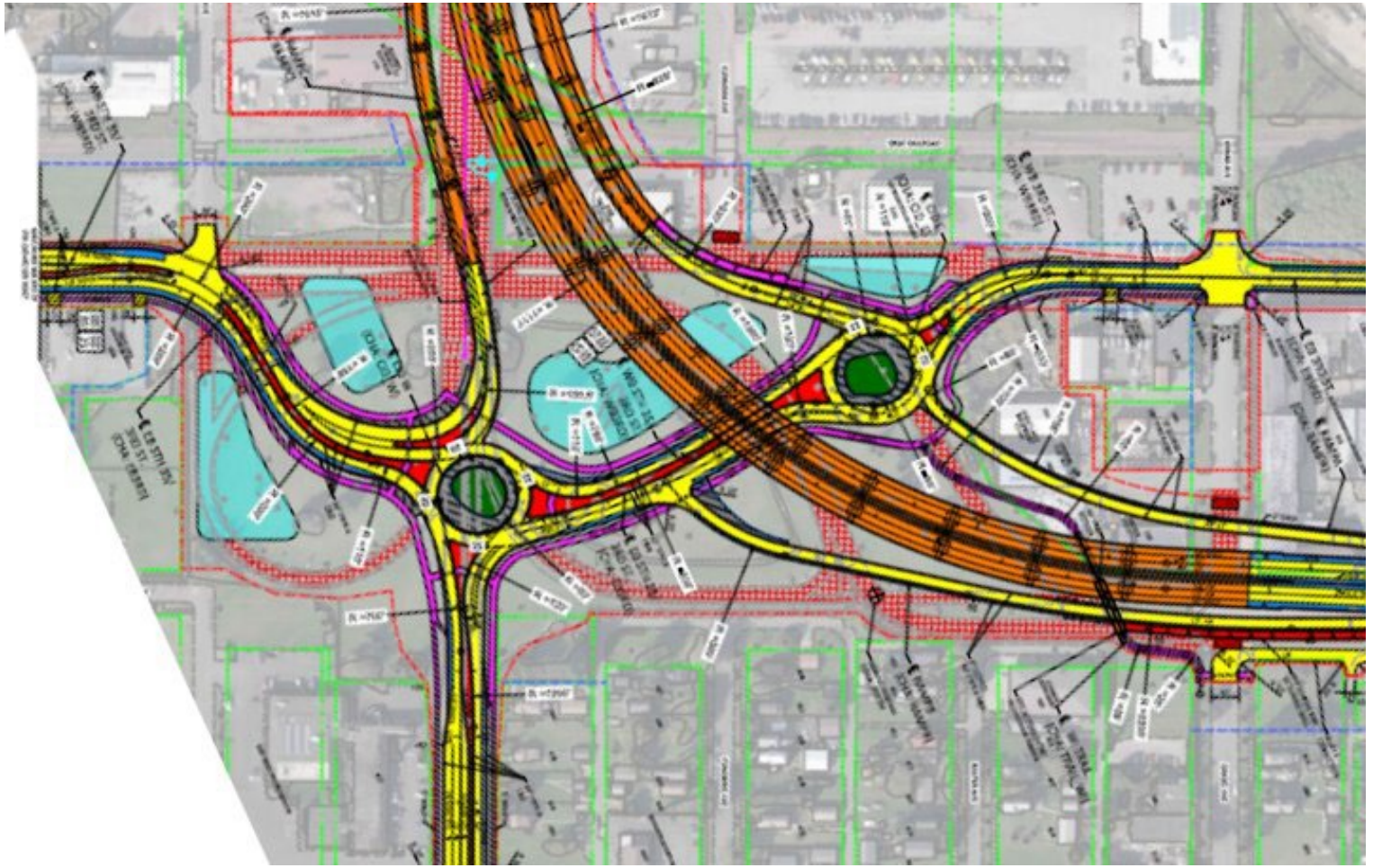
Project Layout

Proposed Wisconsin Interchange

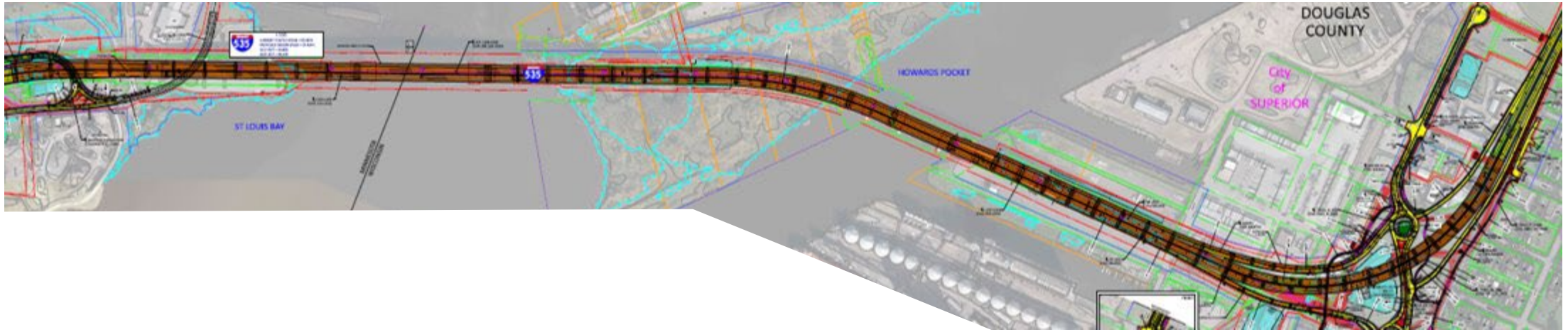
City of Superior

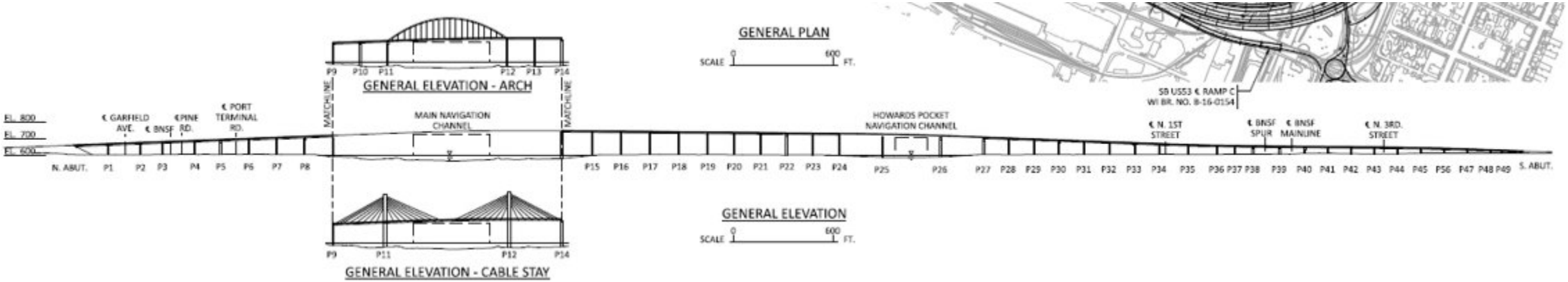
USH 53/IH535 Interchange

- Offset RAB Interchange
- Pedestrian connections
- OSOW Compliant



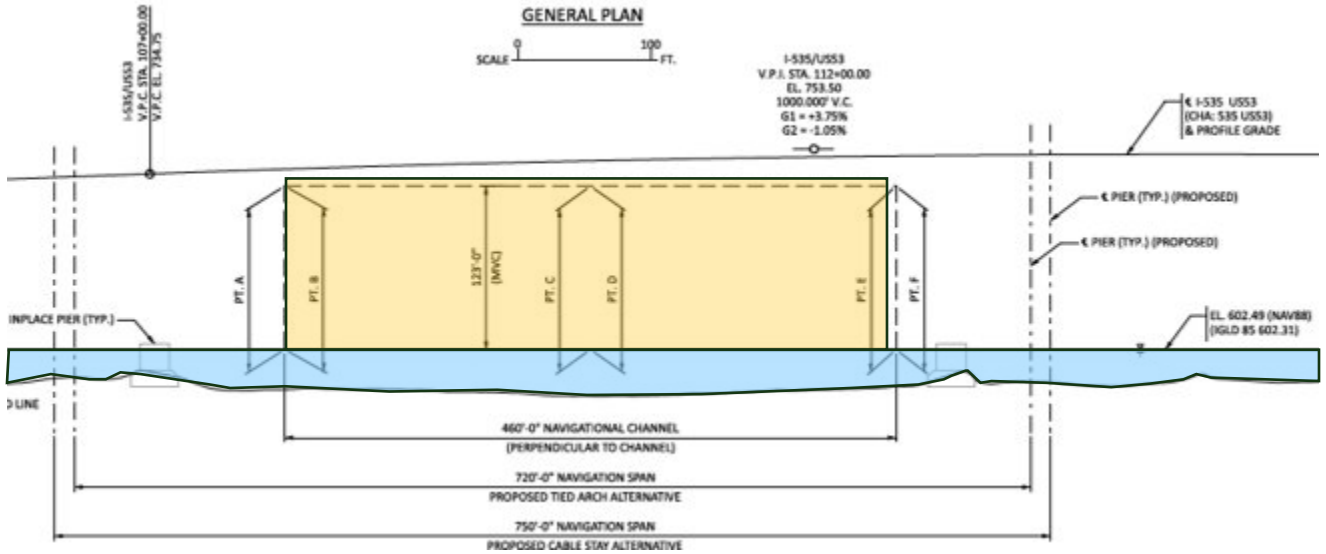
Project Layout – Bridge Profile



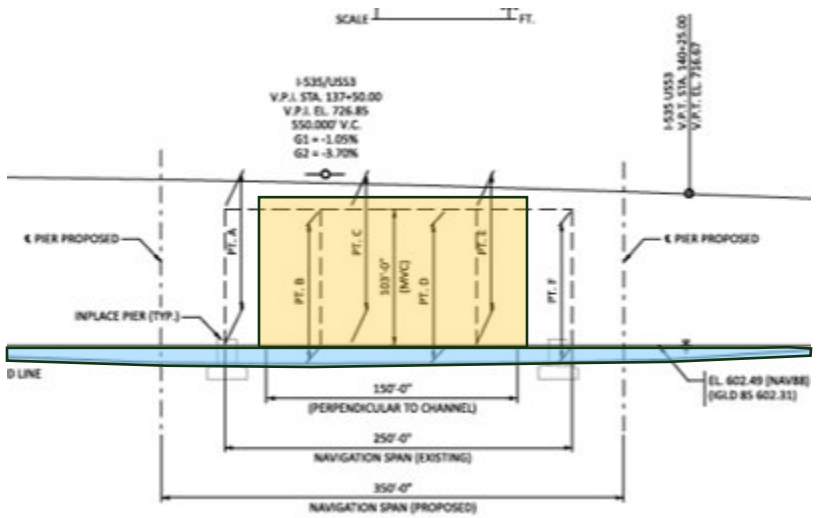


Technical Studies & Preliminary Engineering

- Navigation Openings



MAIN NAVIGATION OPENING



HOWARDS POCKET NAVIGATION OPENING

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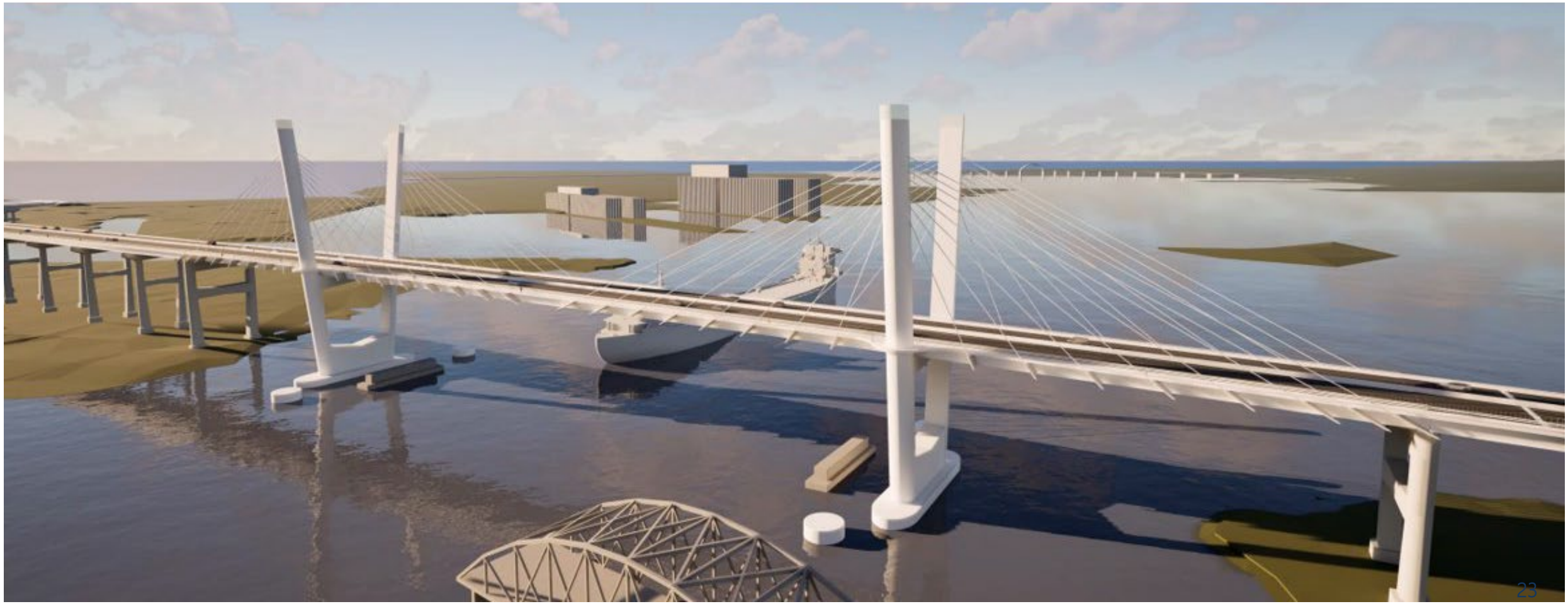
Visual Quality and Impact

Visualizations of Main Span Options

Tied Arch

Visualizations of Main Span Options

Cable Stayed



Blatnik Bridge Replacement Project

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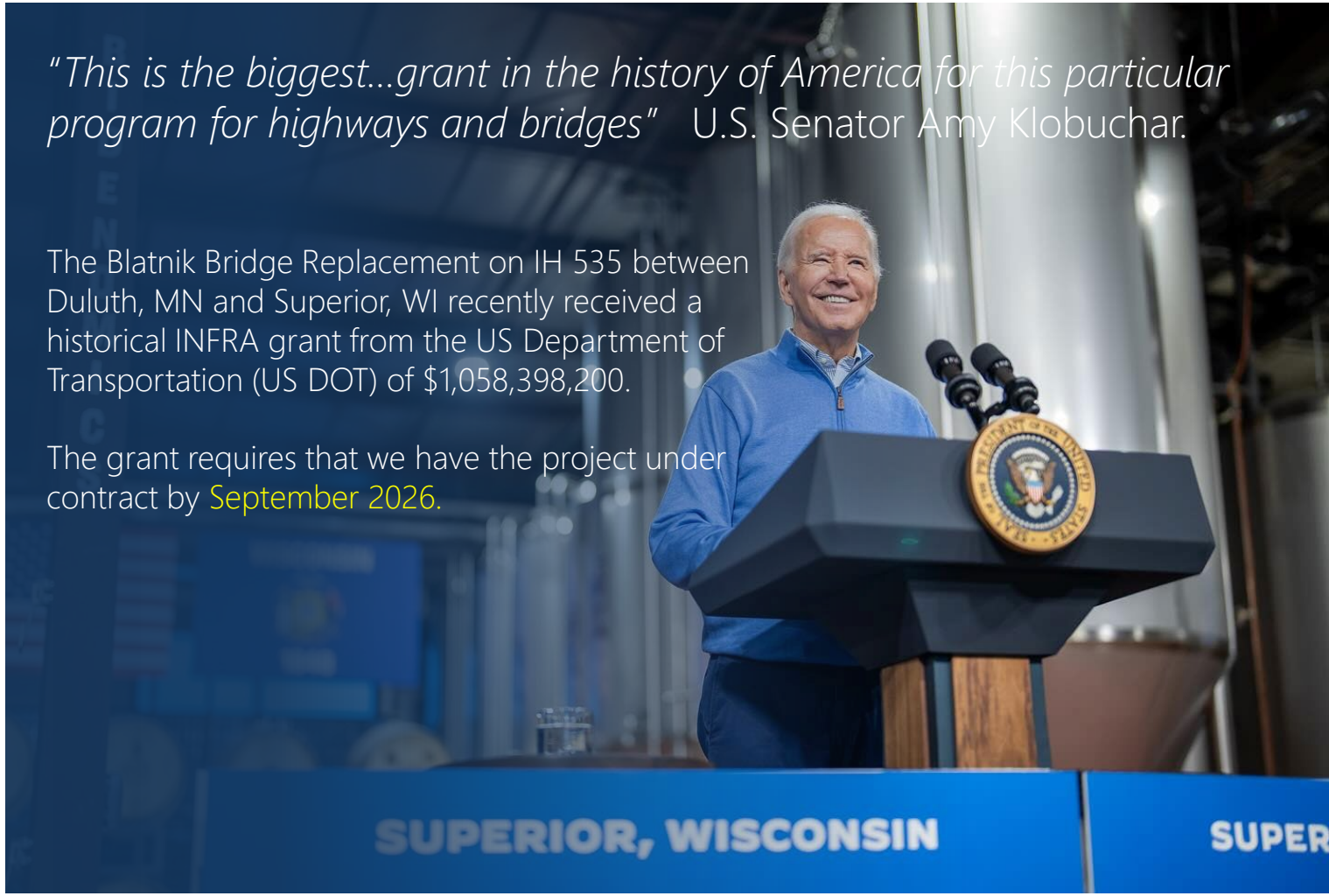
Project Schedule

Federal Funding Awarded

The project received its full federal funding request **($1.058 Billion)** on the INFRA Grant. Minnesota and Wisconsin have applied for additional grant funding for the project.

Project Procurement and Schedule

- Largest interstate bridge project between MN and WI
- First Joint D-B project between MN and WI
- Requirement to be under contract by September 2026
- WI currently D-B program in pilot stage.



Project Schedule

2024 2025 2026 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032

Preliminary Design/Permitting

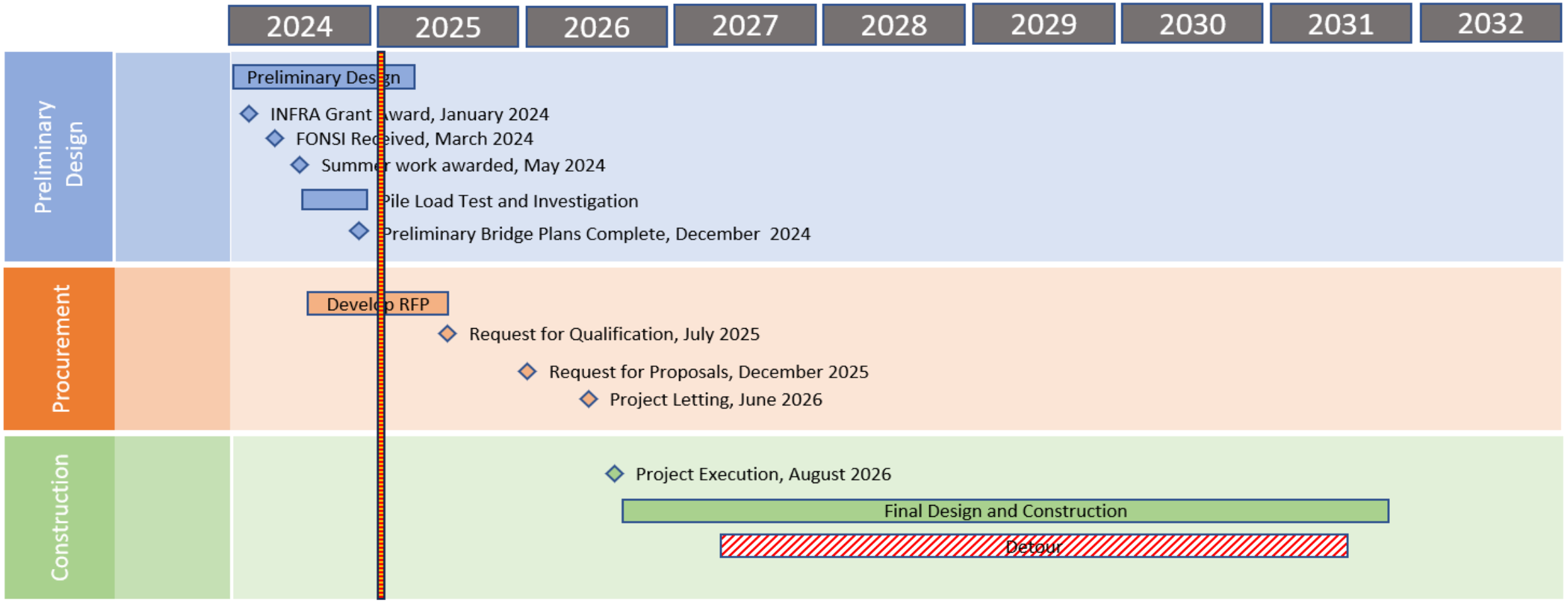
Procurement & Letting

Final Design

Bridge Closure – app 4 yrs.

Construction

Project Schedule



Blatnik Bridge Replacement Project

Design Build

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Design-Build Method

Why was this method chosen for the Blatnik Bridge project?

- Efficient coordination between the design team and the construction team is especially important for the unique portions of the project (large bridge, shipping channel, etc.)
- Design-Build projects typically result in lower cost growth after construction begins, fewer construction claims, and less delays.
- Allows for alternative design and construction innovation.

- Other recent Design-Build projects at major river crossings:
  - I-35W Mississippi River Bridge (St. Anthony Falls)
  - Hastings Bridge Replacement
  - I-35W Minnesota River Bridge

Design-Build Method

DBE/Small Businesses

How are DBEs Required in a Design-Build Contract?

- Percentage set similarly to "normal" Bid-Build prior to letting
- Scope partially known: no quantities
- Open-Ended Performance Plans (OEPPs)
- DBE/Small Business plan/narrative
- Continued coordination for entire life of project

- Best-Value Scoring
  - OEPP narrative
  - Small business/contract criteria? (Example: MN IH 494)
  - Only possibilities: no decisions made

Design-Build Method

DBE/Small Businesses

DBE and Small Business Involvement

- Shortlisting: teams known
- Pairing of contractor and consultant
- RFP Kickoff/DBE Meet and Greet
- Teams highly interested in confidentiality
- May ask high-priority questions during advertisement
- DBEs encouraged to investigate DB subcontract structures

Typical DBE Opportunities

We are a few years away from major construction. At this point, what do you foresee as the biggest DBE opportunities with this project?

While we're a few years away from construction on the bridge, the project team will be looking for opportunities to increase opportunities for DBEs. The project team is currently discussing how to develop the DBE plan for this project. In terms of opportunities during construction, the team is currently identifying the following areas:

SUBS

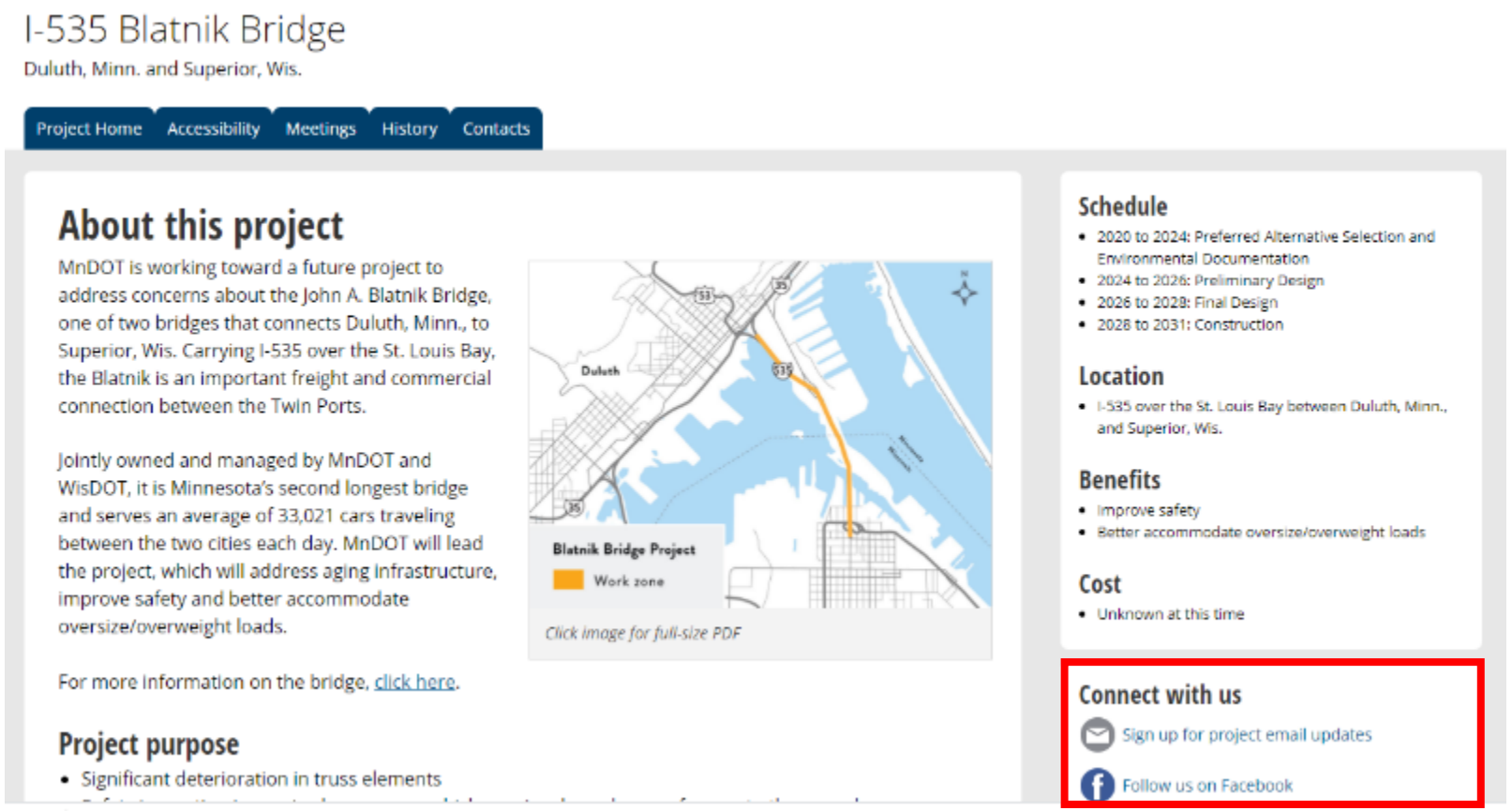
Ironworkers
Concrete Pumping
Erosion Control
Trucking
Electrical
Design

SUPPLIERS

Rebar Supplier
Structural Metals (bearings, railing, expansion joints.)

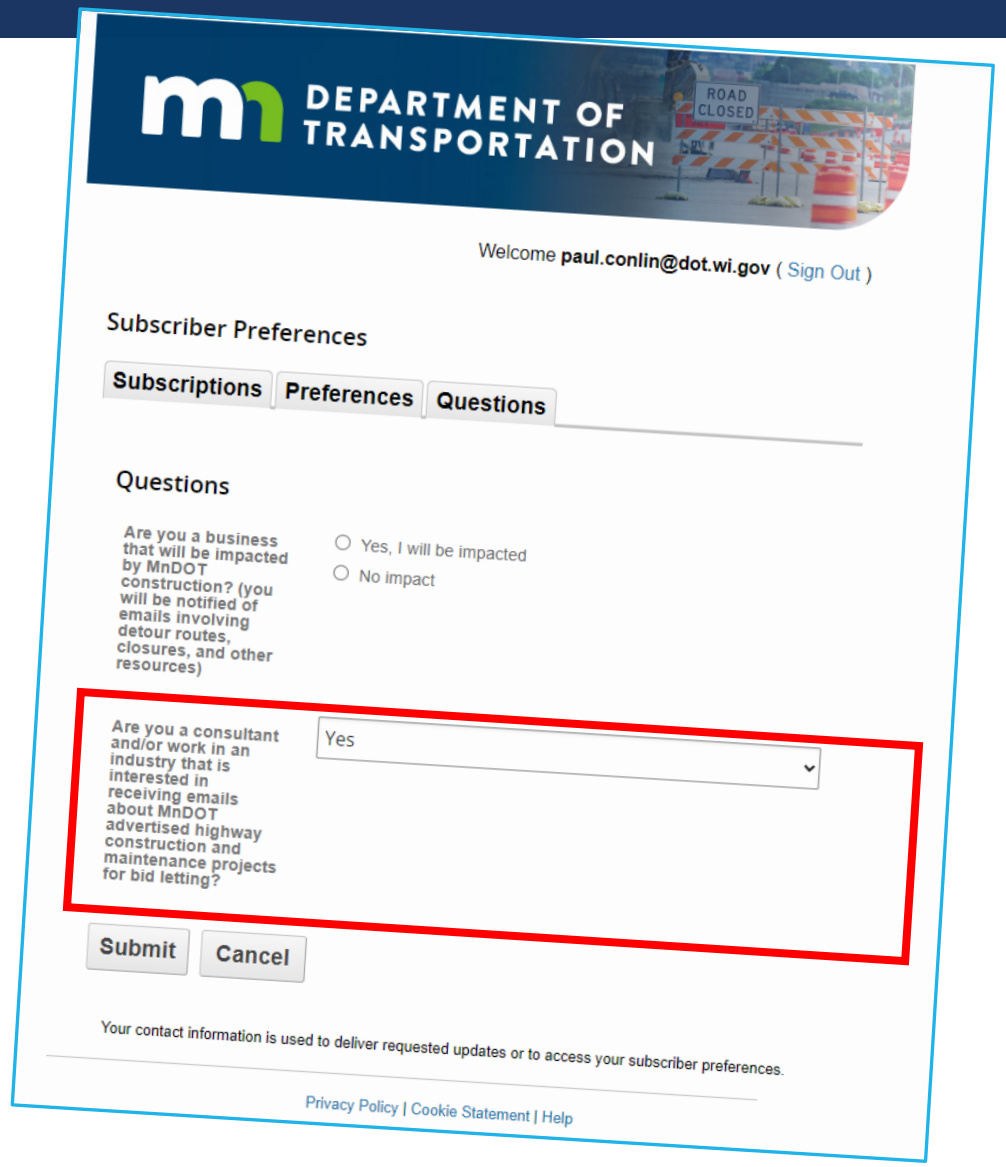
Stay Connected

- Sign up for email updates on the project website
- Click “Sign up for project email updates”



Stay Connected

- Under questions select "Yes" to the "Are you a consultant and/or work in an industry . . . "



Stay Connected

- MnDOT's Design-Build Program webpage:

Here we are!!!

Design-Build

Home | About | Projects | Resources | Contacts

Design-Build project information public site: Ask the Design-Build contact for permanent access.

Projects

Potential future projects

- Blatnik Bridge Project
  SP 6981-26, Letting Summer 2026

Projects currently in procurement

Projects under construction

- Statewide Pedestrian Bridge
  SP 8816-3427, May 8, 2024
- I-494 Airport to Hwy 169
  SP 2785-424, Letting Jan. 18, 2023
- I-90 Unbonded Overlay from Hwy 169 to 22
  SP 2280-143, Letting Oct. 12, 2022

The Hastings Bridge replacement Main Span was constructed off-site and lifted into place from barges in the river.

Thank You!

Blatnik Bridge Replacement Team

Pat Huston, MnDOT, Project Director
Patrick.huston@state.mn.us
(218) 348-9902

Paul Conlin, WisDOT, Project Director
Paul.conlin@dot.wi.gov
(715) 833-5364

Don't forget to fill out the evaluation for this session.

These evaluations help shape future events.

THANK YOU