

Bishop Road Bridge Project Summary

1 Historic and Cultural Value

- . The need for Bishop Bridge was established by a “Report of Bridge Viewers” and confirmed by Cumberland County Court on September 14, 1897.
- . During this era, metal truss bridges were widely marketed by fabricators.
- . The bridge was erected in 1898 from a “kit” specifically designed and mfg. by the Wrought Iron Bridge Co. for “Bishop’s Fording”.
- . The December 7, 1898 Carlisle Sentinel reported the cost of the bridge at \$5,000 and the County Commissioners had “a most excellent feast” at the Bishop home following inspection of the new bridge.
- . Photos from the 1920’s show a Black & White color scheme and oak decking.
- . The bridge is listed in the Pennsylvania Register of Historic Places and is eligible for the National (Historic) Register for technological significance.
- . Less than 200 such metal truss bridges are now left in Pennsylvania.
- . Pages 3-1 and 3-4 of the 2013 UAT Comprehensive Plan call specifically for protecting Bishop Bridge.
- . Numerous studies show attractive communities generate tourism and higher earned income tax revenue.
- . The bridge can be part of a wider bridge and trail network.

2 Policy Framework

- . PennDOT and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) have various plans and grants to assist in the rehabilitation of historic metal truss bridges.
- . Cumberland and York Co. jointly own Bishop but want to divest themselves of older, low traffic, bridges. The 2019 York County Bridge Plan provides a good explanation of County policy.
- . The counties have previously offered Upper Allen \$275,000 toward the cost of rehabilitating Bishop Bridge for vehicular use.
- . County bridge funding comes mainly from \$5 registration fees and liquid fuel taxes.
- . The Sheepford bridge is presently being rehabilitated under a TASA grant.
- . New legislation such as Senate Bill 1070 is emerging to support bridges.
- . Per prior board discussion; rehabilitating Bishop for vehicular use is considered the best option and provides the most utility.

3 Preserving Bishop Bridge preserves Connectivity, Public Access and Limits Intensive Development.

- . Bishop Road and Bridge are one of the most scenic areas of Upper Allen.
- . Various planning documents call for us to “Protect the best”.

- . It may be possible to connect the northern end of Bishop Road to Simpson Park via a future pedestrian bridge. Simpson Park may also be connected to McCormick Rd. in the future.
- . In October, 1990, Cumberland County Court upheld a special exception for “Grantham Woods”; a 487,000 sq. ft. complex including 367 apartments along Bishop Road proposed by Messiah College. While this plan was not acted upon; it shows the intensity of possible future development.
- . The Counties built a \$360,000 emergency access road to Messiah University that could be used as walking trail connection to Bishop Road and Bridge; however Messiah has “security concerns” about the public using this road/trail.
- . The County demolition plan calls for removal of appx. 450’+ ft. of Bishop Road. The land will be returned to private property owners subject to a future easement.
- . Vacating a road generally requires a public hearing and a determination of public good; however no such hearing will be held in this case.
- . The County plan primarily benefits 7 property owners along Bishop Road
- . The Upper Allen plan would benefit thousands of residents and public.

4 Scope of Work

- . Metal truss bridges were often taken apart and relocated in days gone by.
- . The 1896 Hull Drive bridge near Dillsburg was relocated there in 1917 and was rehabilitated for vehicular traffic in 2019.
- . The historic methods utilize “false work” and do not require the use of cranes, causeways, tree cutting, or penetration of the stream bed. This lessens environmental impact and provides cost savings.
- . Wrought Iron Bridge Works (WIBW) uses the historic method and was the sole responder to a prior RFP seeking rehabilitation of the bridge.
- . Ross Brown of WIBW is here tonight and will explain his approach further.
- . Per the WIBW proposal, Bishop will be taken apart in reverse order of assembly and (shop) restored to the original specs. The process is more like a “nut and bolt” auto restoration than a typical bridge project.
- . The expected weight limit is 12-15 tons.
- . Structural adequacy will be verified and determined by independent engineers after the bridge is disassembled.
- . PennDOT/McCormick Taylor have indicated the proposed scope of work “would be able to be approved for Structural Adequacy if properly analyzed and designed”.
- . The bridge will be repainted to standards higher than required by PennDOT and re-erected using historic methods.
- . Engineering, permitting and abutment repairs are included in the WIBW proposal.
- . A fully restored Bishop Bridge should last another 100 years.

5 Costs

- In May, 2025, WIBW proposed fully rehabilitating the bridge for vehicular use for a fixed price of \$1,050,000. This includes \$400,000 for the disassembly phase of the project.
- WIBW proposed an escrow account instead of bonding; however, bonding can be provided for an additional \$100,000.
- \$50,000 should be added to project costs for contingencies and inspections.
- \$1,200,000 should be the maximum “all in” cost for full rehabilitation.
- Ongoing maintenance costs will consist mainly of cleaning the bridge and are estimated at less than \$10,000 per year.
- The County has said it will continue to cover the cost of inspections.
- By using higher quality paint, the bridge may be able to go 40- 50 years before needing a full repaint.

6 Funding Sources

- Costs are budgeted upfront and will be offset with grants, reimbursement, etc. as [revenue] later. The bridge project will likely fall into two (2) budget years.
- Upper Allen closed 2025 with \$19 million spread over 16 budget funds. This includes appx. \$6.4 million in Capital Reserve and \$550,000 in Liquid Fuels.
- The bridge was previously budgeted (at \$900,000 for pedestrian use) from Capital Reserve and staff continues to recommend using Capital Reserve vs. other sources such as Liquid Fuels. The budget does not have to be reopened using Capital Reserve.
- The \$275,000 previously offered by the county toward the rehabilitation will need to be renegotiated.
- Various programs through PennDOT, PHMC or LSA could provide additional funds or grants.
- Individuals have expressed interest in donating toward the bridge.
- Upper Allen can establish an escrow fund to accept pledges or donations.

7 Current Status

- The County recently had issues with its DEP permit to demolish the bridge and it will now cost the County more time and money to regain this permit.
- This creates a window of opportunity to work with the County and State to see if we can find a better solution than demolishing the bridge.
- Most of us also pay taxes to the County and State - and it is in our collective interest to find the most beneficial solution.
- There is little apparent cost difference between demolishing the bridge vs. carefully disassembling it; i.e., \$275,000 (without engineering) vs. \$400,000 (with engineering).
- The bridge could be disassembled and then stored by the Upper Allen public works department while further options are developed and considered.

8 Upper Allen Project Cost Comparisons

- Upper Allen routinely spends 6 figure amounts on stormwater projects.
- Lancelot Avenue was closed last week pending a pipe replacement that will cost an estimated \$250,000 plus engineering.
- In 2024, Upper Allen paid \$620,144 to re-line one section of stormwater pipe in Meadow View.
- Upper Allen is presently completing a \$1 million project to rehabilitate Grantham Pond. Some might say it wasn't worth it but the pond was dying. Now we have a beautiful NR eligible historic bridge that is dying.
- It is largely a question of priorities.
- Parks have been a high priority for previous Commissioners..
- On November, 19, 2025; the prior board voted to apply for a \$1 million LSA grant to construct trails, elevated boardwalks and observation deck at the 2.87 acre Trout Run park. This is a new park project that few people even know about.
- Upper Allen has spent over \$11 million on capital projects at 4 parks in recent years. The breakdown is:

Friendship	\$ 1,900,632
Generations	2,589,338
Grantham	1,056,502
Winding Hills N&S	5,584,925
Total	\$ 11,131,397