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## Firm selected to design shoring structure for Keystone Bridge

Submitted by admin on Tue, 05/24/2022 - 11:28

A firm has finally been found to design the shoring structure needed to reopen pedestrian access and allow contractors to work on the entirety of Elkader's Keystone Bridge. (Photo by Willis Patenaude)

**By Willis Patenaude, Times-Register**

The Keystone Bridge rehab enters another week of delays, but a firm has finally been found to design the shoring structure needed to reopen pedestrian access and allow contractors to work on the entirety of the Elkader bridge, not just in designated safe areas.

According to project engineer Nate Miller, the contractor is working with Shive-Hattery to complete the shoring design, and the conceptual design should be completed by mid-June at a cost of \$18,500. At that point, a cost estimate and timeline will be provided to the city council for approval.

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As Miller explained, "A revised project cost and schedule will be provided to the council as soon as the information is available. A change order will then be prepared to incorporate the additional work items into the contract, which will then be submitted to the Iowa DOT for review and approval."

After the change order has been approved, work can begin on the repairs, noted Miller. It will likely start with modifications to the causeway, then installation of the temporary shoring and masonry restoration and repair efforts.

However, there is the continued threat of material shortages, something both Miller and Elkader City Administrator Jennifer Cowsert referenced.

"There are material shortages throughout the construction industry. We don't currently know if these will affect the installation of the repair, but we are working closely with the contractor to accommodate any material substitutions to minimize delays," Miller said.

The delayed timeline and added costs are also having an affect on the project's contingency budget, which started around \$180,000 but currently sits at around \$115,000 in the early stages of the rehab. The cost of the shoring structure will remain unknown until the conceptual design is completed, but Cowsert is hopeful the repair will fit into the remaining contingency budget.

The city has continued to look for shuttle services. Cowsert mentioned reaching out again to EARL about summer availability, but was informed about the lack of drivers. Cowsert has also reached out to a local school that has handicap accessible vehicles, but has not heard back. At the moment, no alternative options remain.

Another issue created by the bridge project is increased traffic on Highway 13, which has prompted a greater police presence, the use of a DOT provided speed feedback trailer and message boards that will be put up during the upcoming holiday weekend. Cowsert indicated there has not been an increase in traffic violations or incidents, just more police presence and calls to lower the speed limit.

The delays mean the project is not likely to be completed this year. While Cowsert and Miller could not definitively state that would be the case, Miller added, "Although the full schedule impact is not yet known, it is unlikely that the construction will be completed this year."

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