16th Street Bridge over White River

Department of Public Works

April 7, 2026



History of the bridge

- Built in 1948, replacing the old Emrichsville Bridge
- No major rehabilitations on record – only low-level maintenance in 78 years.

Timeline of the project

- Bridge downgraded to "fair" in 2012 inspection
- Scoping report completed in 2016
- Inspection report from 2017 noted advanced structure deterioration
- Project awarded funding in 2018
- Public meeting held in 2023
- Press conference with DPW, Mayor Hogsett, Councilor Osili held in 2024
- Project delayed to allow for completion of 30th Street Bridge work

Timeline of the project

- Structural tests in 2025 revealed significant thinning of the concrete. Construction staging space constraints for arch ring portion replacement would not provide safe distribution of loads in an unbalanced fill condition.

Engineering & Construction

Work includes:

- Repairs to the arch ring (main & only bridge support)
- Reconstruction of portions of the bridge
- Replacement of the roadway surface
- Installation of new waterproofing

- Lighting to be added to the structure after construction
- Work must preserve as much of the existing bridge as feasible as required by law

Engineering & Construction

- The rehabilitation involves removing and replacing the material inside the bridge arch, requiring full access across the entire bridge width. Maintaining traffic would significantly restrict access and compromise construction quality.
- Removal of the arch fill eliminates a stable surface for vehicles, making it unsafe to maintain traffic during construction.

Engineering & Construction

- Keeping the bridge open during construction would create unsafe conditions for both workers and the traveling public due to confined work zones and active utility conflicts.
- Phased construction with traffic present could negatively impact waterproofing work, structural repairs, and long-term durability of the bridge.

Engineering & Construction

- Multiple options were evaluated to maintain traffic, including phased construction with partial closures, and relocating utilities off the bridge.
- These alternatives were determined to be impractical due to high cost, extended schedule impacts, environmental and permitting challenges, increased construction risk and complexity, and the potential for broader traffic impacts.
- Decisions were made in coordination with project designer and their team. *Engineer of record is GAI Consultants, Inc.*
  - Includes a utility coordinator with 15+ years of industry experience who has worked for INDOT

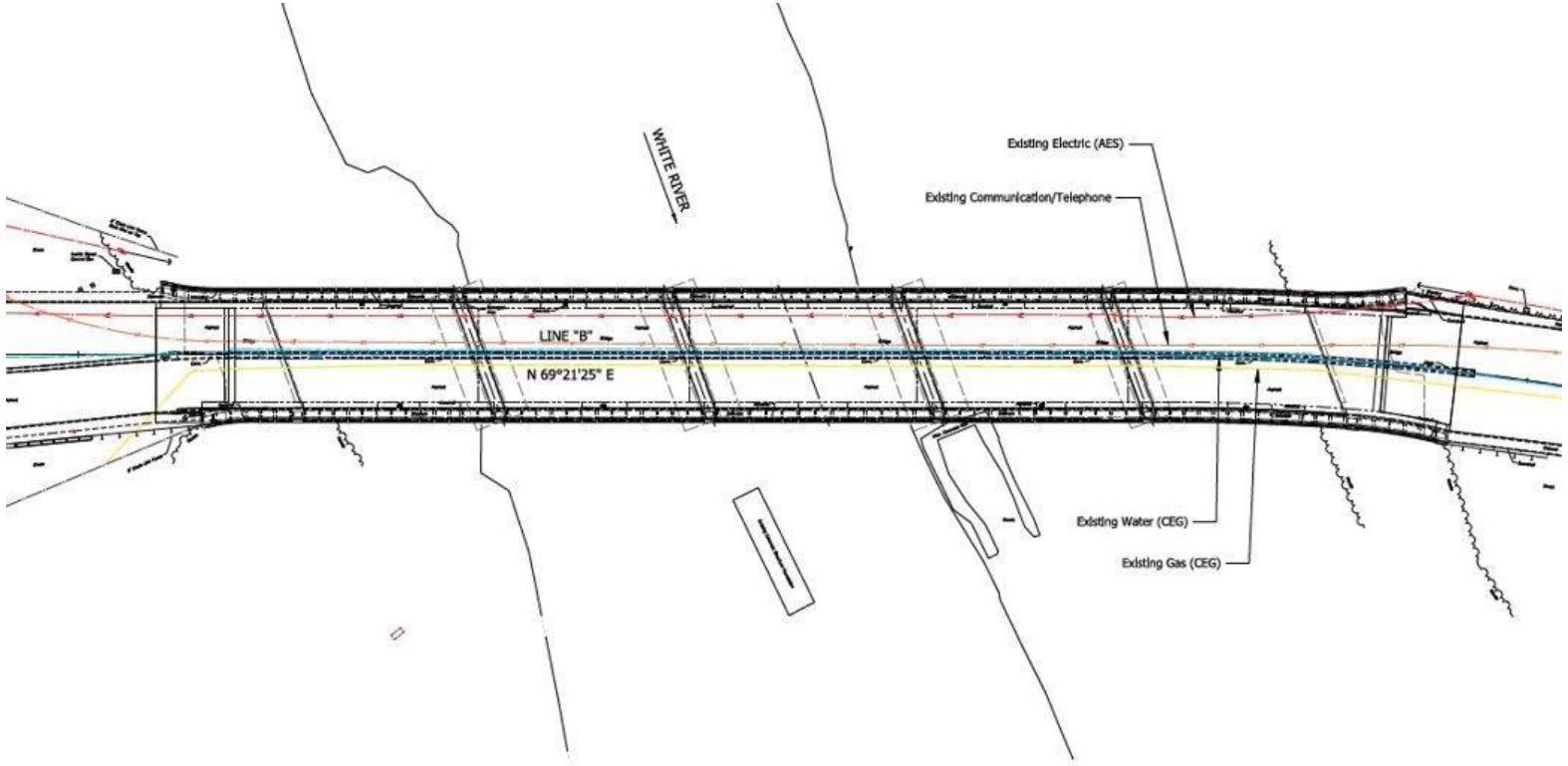
Engineering & Construction

- Traffic patterns will likely worsen if lane(s) are left open to traffic
- Attempting to provide shoring under a live traffic load increase liklihood of compromising the structure's integrity
- Phasing live traffic would lead to a lower quality product and shortening the life span of the rehabilitation work
- Phasing live traffic significantly increases cost and length of the construction project
  - DPW does not want this construction work to last longer than necessary

Utilities

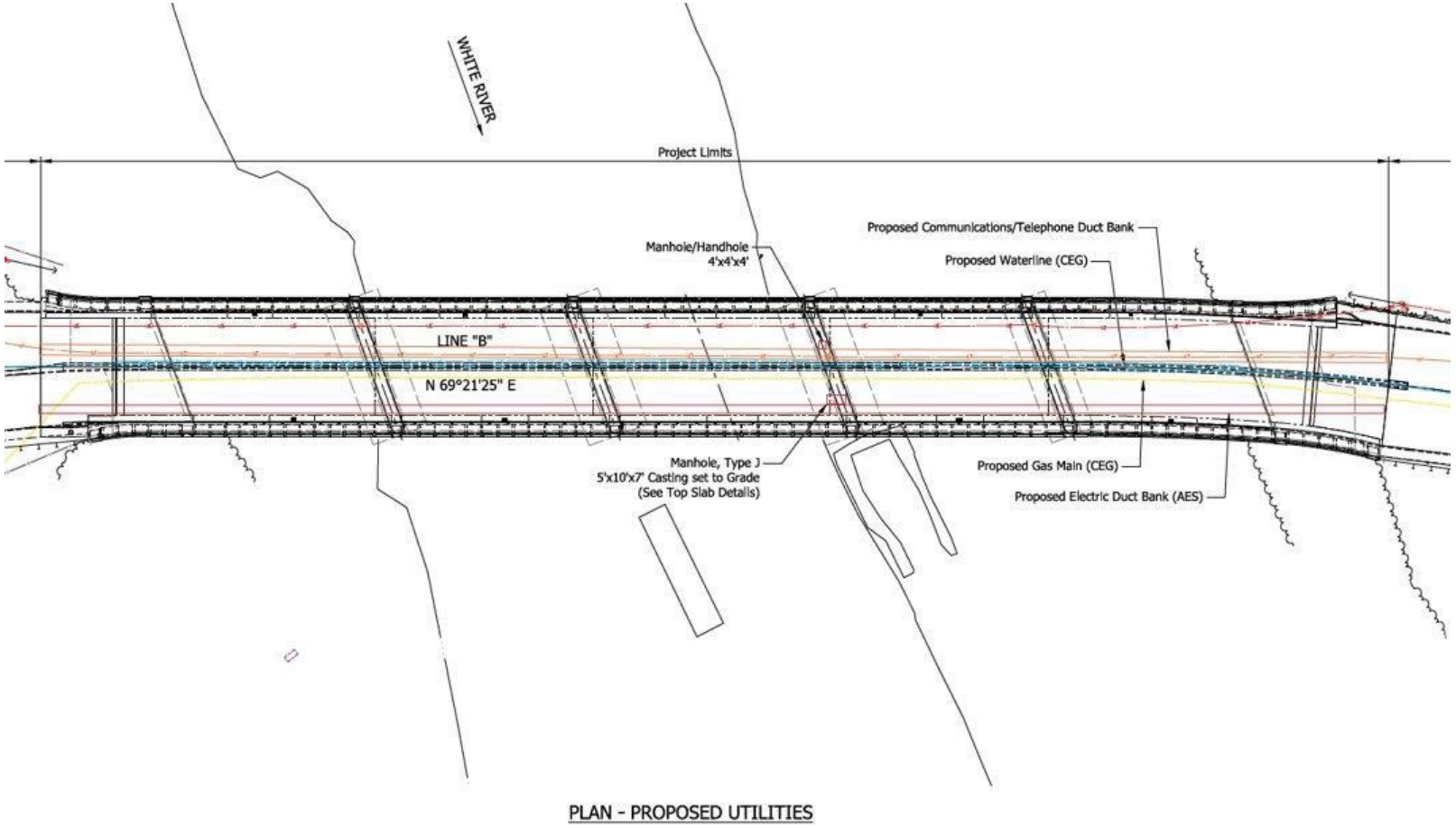
- Six major utility lines are embedded within the bridge structure.
- Five must remain active during construction and require careful staging, temporary support, and phased relocation.
- To keep the west side running during construction, a 16-inch temporary water bypass must be anchored directly to the bridge deck.
- This utility work cannot be safely completed while maintaining traffic.
- Utility work is planned to occur in two coordinated phases during construction. These activities require coordination with multiple utility providers and introduce elements of schedule risk that are outside of DPW's direct control.

Utilities (Current)



PLAN - EXISTING UTILITY

Utilities (Proposed)

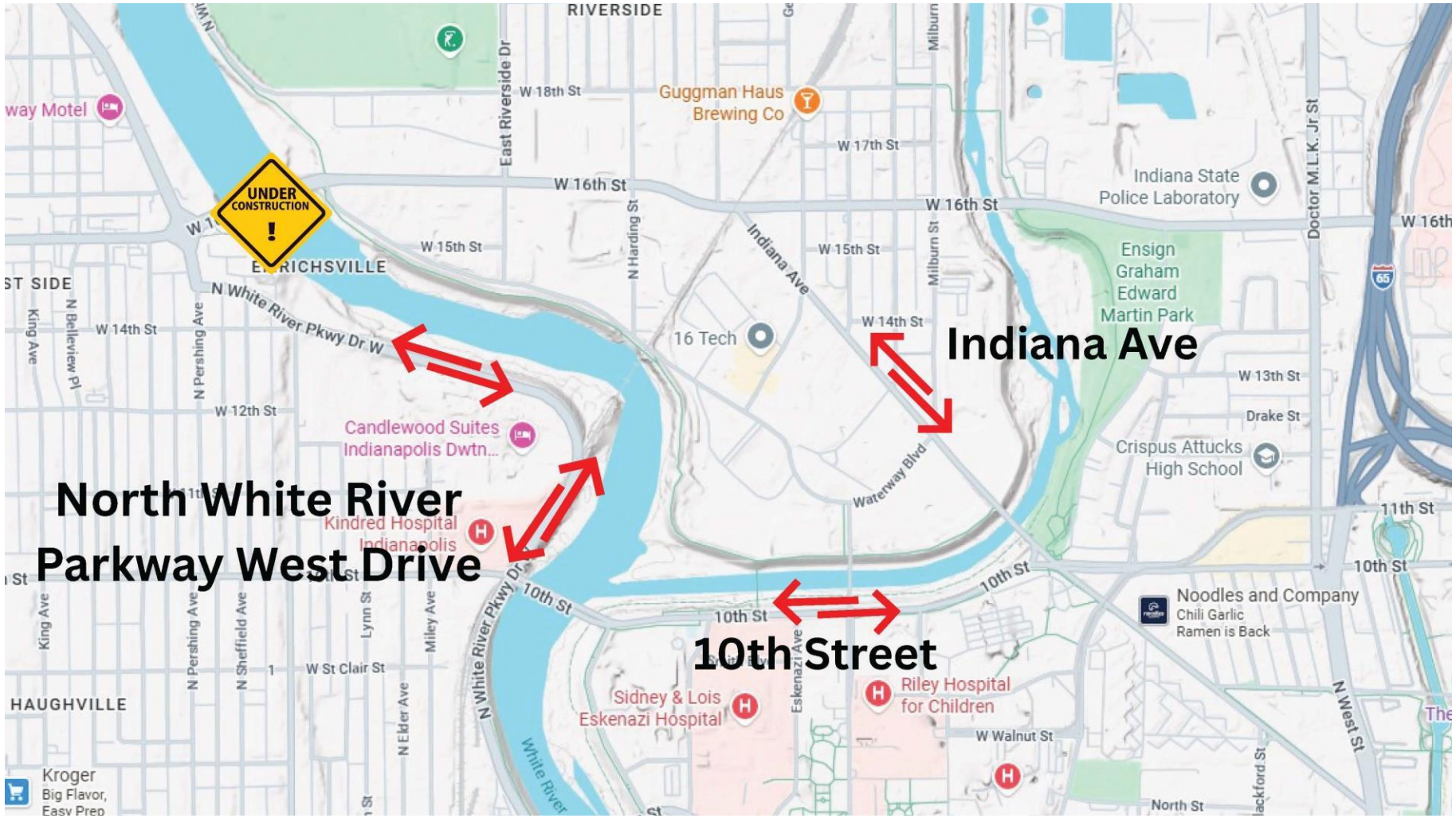


PLAN - PROPOSED UTILITIES

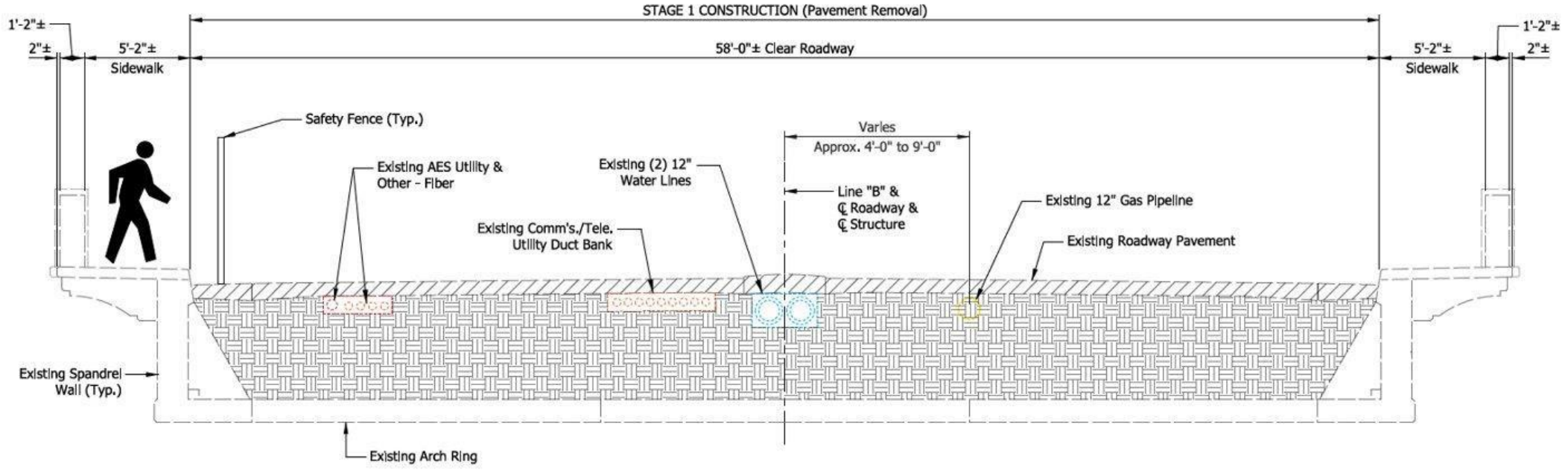
Detour

- Traffic will be detoured along Indiana Avenue to 10th St. to North White River Parkway West Drive
- Road closure signs and barricades will be placed in accordance with the current INDOT standards and the Uniform Traffic Control Manual
- Access will be maintained to all properties during construction
- Pedestrian access will be maintained throughout construction with bridge and sidewalk components constructed in phases

Detour


RIVERSIDE
UNDER CONSTRUCTION
Indiana Ave
North White River Parkway West Drive
10th Street
Guggman Haus Brewing Co
Indiana State Police Laboratory
Ensign Graham Edward Martin Park
16 Tech
Candlewood Suites Indianapolis Dwtn...
Kindred Hospital Indianapolis
Crispus Attucks High School
Noodles and Company
Chili Garlic Ramen is Back
Sidney & Lois Eskenazi Hospital
Riley Hospital for Children
Kroger
Big Flavor, Easy Prep
HAUGHVILLE
E. RICHSVILLE
W 18th St
W 17th St
W 16th St
W 15th St
W 14th St
W 13th St
W 12th St
W St Clair St
W Walnut St
East Riverside Dr
N Harding St
Indiana Ave
Milburn St
Doctor M.L.K. Jr St
N White River Pkwy Dr W
N White River Pkwy Dr
Waterway Blvd
Drake St
11th St
10th St
North St
N West St
N Pershing Ave
N Sheffield Ave
N Elder Ave
Lynn St
Miley Ave
Eskenazi Ave
King Ave
N Belleview Pl

Construction Phasing – Stage 1

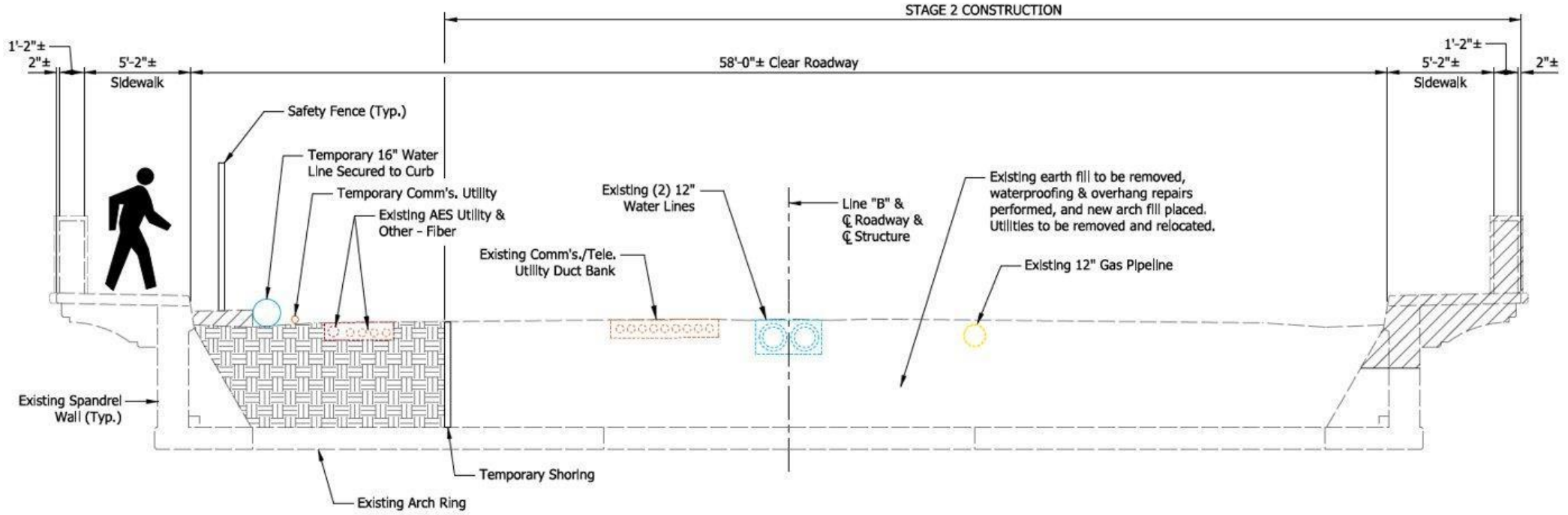


STAGE 1 CONSTRUCTION

Construction Phasing – Stage 1

- Contractor to remove top of pavement surface curb to curb (clear roadway) full length of bridge
- This allows full access to utilities
- Water lines may be insulated with asbestos

Construction Phasing – Stage 2

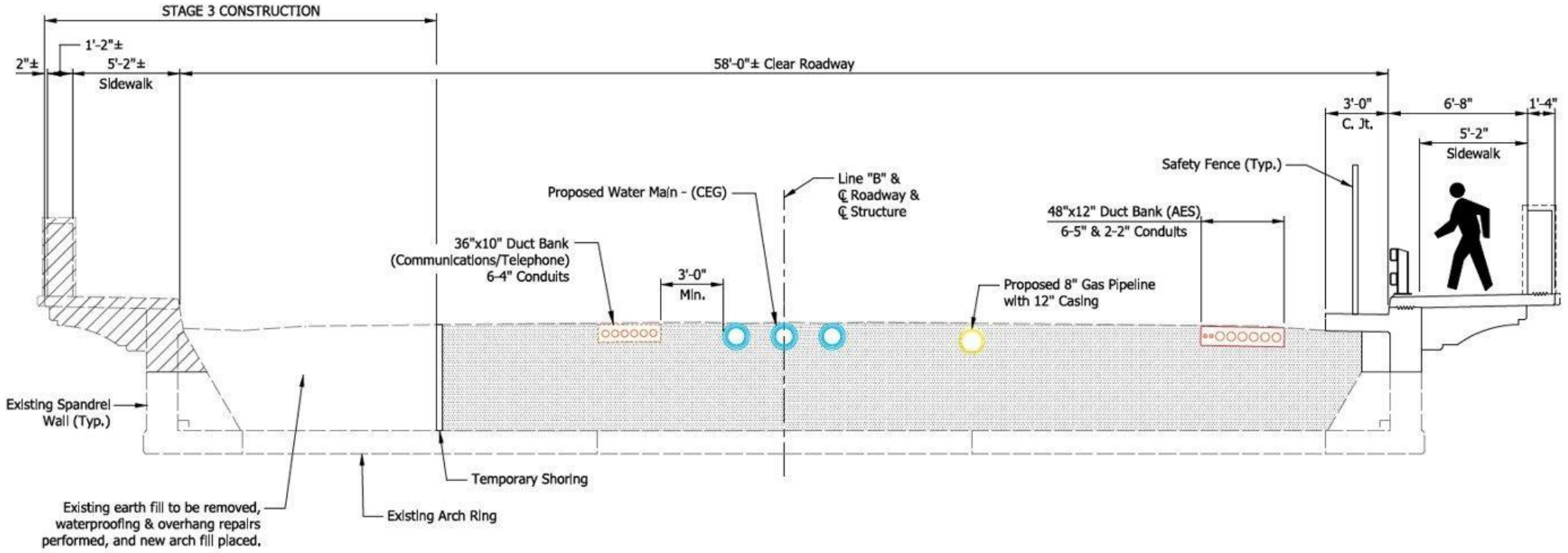


STAGE 2 CONSTRUCTION

Construction Phasing – Stage 2

- Citizens to temporarily relocate water lines to a singular 16" line placed on the north curb
- Gas line will be retired, Contractor to remove
- Communications utilities to maintain temporary fiber line on North curb
- AES line must be protected in place
- This is a main line and the circuit CANNOT have an outage
- While lines are temporarily relocated, the Contractor will remove the fill, perform structural work, waterproof the structure, and place new fill

Construction Phasing – Stage 3

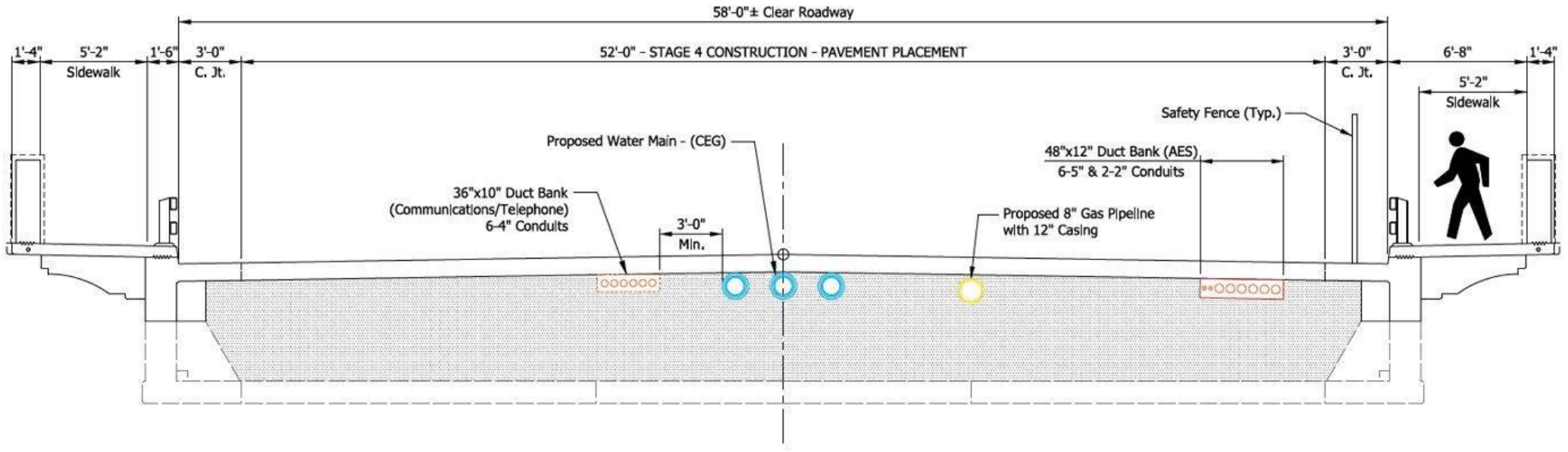


STAGE 3 CONSTRUCTION

Construction Phasing – Stage 3

- AES to install new main line, then retire the old line
- Other utility companies to place proposed permanent lines within the fill
- Contractor to remove fill, perform structural work, waterproof, and place new fill on the north side where the utilities were temporarily relocated

Construction Phasing – Stage 4



STAGE 4 CONSTRUCTION/FINAL

Construction Phasing – Stage 4

- Contractor to place new pavement on the bridge
- Proposed permanent utilities will be located under the pavement in the fill

Commitments

- Accelerating construction as much as possible without compromising safety
  - More crews working each day
  - Crews working on weekends
  - More supervision so there is less downtime on the project
- DPW is ready to partner with the community throughout the duration of this project.
  - Project updates throughout closure
  - Investigating cut-through traffic
  - Deployment of traffic calming measures and temporary infrastructure to ensure safety of all road users

Questions

- What comparable bridge projects are there?
- Who made the call for closure?
- Has the detour been coordinated with first responders?
- What will Indy DPW do to protect neighborhoods from cut-through traffic?







