

Press Release
Tuesday, April 9, 2019

Construction Resumes on Delaware County Bridge

After a lengthy delay the construction of Delaware County Bridge #268, which carries 23rd Street over Buck Creek, was restarted on April 1st. Originally this project was designed as a rehabilitation of the existing bridge – a process that would involve replacing the existing deck and superstructure. However, on September 24, 2018 when the contractor began the demolition work, the piers unexpectedly shifted causing the project to be temporarily suspended.

The design engineer, United Consulting, immediately had their engineers evaluate the damage to the piers in order to determine if the project could proceed. Due to the extensive movement of the piers United did not feel that the existing piers could be safely re-used. Because of this, the project went from a rehabilitation project to a complete replacement.

United's engineers had to restart the entire design process because of this change in plans. Typically, this is a 5 to 6-month process that involves design work, environmental permitting, utility relocation and potentially land acquisition. Due to the complications of working to avoid significant land acquisition and utility relocation costs, it took longer than anticipated to determine the most cost efficient and quickest course of action. To the public it appeared that nothing was being done about the bridge, but behind the scenes United was working through the process of redesigning the entire project.

The Delaware County Engineering Department, United Consulting and the contractor, HIS Construction, have been working closely together to look for creative ways to speed up the project. They are conducting conference calls twice a week to insure the project proceeds as quickly as possible and that any potential delays are immediately addressed or avoided.

Commissioner James King has been pushing hard for United and HIS to get this project back on track since the September shutdown. However, the nature of designing and constructing this particular bridge limited the commissioners' ability to speed the project up. King has stated numerous times that the inconvenience to the public caused by the bridge being closed is a major concern for him. As it stands now, it is anticipated that the bridge should be reopened to the public before the end of August. Unexpected weather delays could affect the actual completion date.