



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

U.S. Department of
Homeland Security

United States
Coast Guard



Commander

Ninth Coast Guard District

PUBLIC NOTICE

Applicant:
Chicago Department of Transportation

Published: June 27, 2025
Expires: July 27, 2025

**Chicago District
Regulatory Permit Application No. LRC-2010-546
Section 408 Permit Application No. 408-LRC-2021-0031
Coast Guard Public Notice No. 09-03-25**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: This Joint Public Notice (JPN) is issued on behalf of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Chicago District and the Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District (USCG), who have each received applications regarding the proposed replacement of the Chicago Avenue Bridge across mile 2.40 of the North Branch of the Chicago River in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

Corps:

The Corps has received an application dated June 20th, 2024, for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1344). The Corps is also evaluating a Section 408 (33 U.S.C. § 408) permission under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 to alter the Chicago River Navigation project.

USCG:

The USCG reviews bridge location and plans under the authority of several acts pertaining to bridges. These acts include, but are not limited to, Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 §§ U.S.C. 401, 502) and the General Bridge Act of 1946 (33 §§ U.S.C. 525-533). The USCG has received application materials, dated January 27, 2023 and July 2, 2024 for approval of the location and plans for replacing the Chicago Avenue Bridge.

The purpose of this public notice is to solicit comments from the public regarding the work described below. In particular, the Corps of Engineers and USCG would appreciate any comments on the potential impacts of a manually-liftable bridge across the North Branch of the Chicago River in terms of commercial and recreational navigation (present and future) in the Federal channel north of Chicago Avenue. The views of mariners, owners of maritime facilities and other businesses, environmental organizations, and other river stakeholders will be especially valuable in assessing this requested action.

APPLICANT: Dr. Soliman Khudeira
Chicago Department of Transportation
2 N. LaSalle Street, Suite 820
Chicago, IL 60602

AGENT: Lynn Stock
T.Y. Lin
200 S Wacker Drive, Suite 1400
Chicago, IL 60606

WATERWAY AND LOCATION: The project would affect the North Branch Chicago River, a navigable water of the United States. The project/review area is located along Chicago Avenue, approximately 0.18 miles east of the intersection of Chicago Avenue and North Halsted Street in the northwest corner of Section 9, 039 Township, 014 Range; at Latitude 41.89646 and Longitude -87.644219; in Chicago, Cook County, Illinois.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The current Chicago Avenue Bridge across the North Branch of the Chicago River is an interim fixed bridge that was constructed in 2018 by CDOT to replace the original bascule bridge. The temporary bridge is designed to carry two lanes of traffic. The east and west approaches to the bridge carry four lanes of traffic which taper abruptly at the bridge. The temporary bridge currently sits on top of the previous bascule bridge abutments. The previous bridge's protection dolphins remain as previously constructed.

The current riverwalk at this location, on both sides of the river, is severed at river level by the existing bridge abutments.

The North Branch Chicago River is navigable. It has an unconsolidated bottom and highly altered banks within and adjacent to the project area. It is currently in use by commercial and recreational navigation.

PROJECT PURPOSE:

Basic: To allow surface transportation across the North Branch Chicago River and pedestrian access along the riverwalk at river level.

Overall: The proposed bridge will be designed to allow four lanes of traffic on the bridge thereby eliminating the bottleneck to traffic due to the existing bridge. A manually liftable bridge is proposed to balance the needs of navigation with the history of infrequent bridge lifts at this location. Pedestrian connectivity at river level is proposed to improve pedestrian access to the river consistent with the City of Chicago Riverwalk ordinance.

PROPOSED WORK: CDOT proposes to replace the existing temporary fixed bridge with a movable bridge. This movable bridge would be constructed without lifting machinery. However, as described below, it would be constructed in a manner that it could be lifted by a sequence of manual jacking and shoring. Alternatively, permanent lifting machinery could be installed if CDOT were directed to do so.

The existing structure is a prefabricated, tri-chord steel, flat truss fixed highway bridge, which was installed in 2018, replaced a previously existing double-leaf, trunnion type

bascule bridge. This existing structure would be removed in its entirety. The applicant proposes to replace the existing structure with a tensioned tied-arch structure. The proposed replacement movable bridge would be designed and constructed in a manner that it would be initially built without lifting machinery. However, the design and construction of the proposed replacement bridge would allow it to be opened manually through a sequence of jacking and shoring with up to 21-day notice by Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District. The Applicant has requested to be able to provide 30-days notice. Both the Corps and USCG prefer 21-days or less of notice and seek the input of mariners as to what notice would meet the reasonable current and prospective needs of navigation. Comments received in response to this public notice, or lack thereof, would aid in making that determination. This jacking and shoring would be conducted by the applicant and contracted personnel utilizing equipment owned or sourced by the contractor. Once lifting equipment and personnel are brought to the bridge, it would take approximately 24-hours to lift or lower the bridge via manual jacking and shoring. Additionally, CDOT would, upon direction by Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District, install permanent lifting machinery and bring the bridge to full operation in coordination with the USCG.

The need to have a movable bridge at this location is based upon the past, present, and future needs of navigation. The Coast Guard issued regulations at 33 C.F.R. 117.391(c) in November 1995 and May 2002 that have allowed the following bridges located on the North Branch near the previous Chicago Avenue bascule bridge and existing temporary structure to not open for the passage of vessels: the Division Street bridge across mile 3.30, the North Avenue bridge across mile 3.81, the Cortland Avenue across mile 4.48, the Webster Avenue bridge across mile 4.85, the North Ashland Avenue bridge across mile 4.90, and the Union Pacific Railroad across mile 5.01. Similarly, the Coast Guard allowed the construction of the existing temporary fixed Chicago Avenue bridge by regulation in June 2019 while the City of Chicago sought application for a replacement movable bridge. There have not been openings for these bridges since approximately 1982. The North Branch of the Chicago River is currently utilized by large commercial tug and barge traffic, passenger vessels, and powered and unpowered recreational vessels. These vessels are able to pass through the existing bridge as well as the other bridges mentioned here without an opening. However, as noted by the Coast Guard during the issuance of these regulations, these movable bridges may be required to be made operational again within a reasonable time if ordered by the Coast Guard in the future. This caveat reflects a recognition of the dynamic needs on the waterway tied to maritime commerce within the Chicago Area as well as on the Great Lakes and globally. The Coast Guard anticipates a future rulemaking that would amend 33 C.F.R. 117.391(c) to include the Chicago Avenue Bridge as one that would not need to open for the passage of vessels, but that could be ordered to open by the Coast Guard upon request to and direction by Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District.

CDOT would close Chicago Avenue between Halstead and Larrabee Streets for the duration of construction. Traffic could cross Chicago Avenue via nearby bridges. During this time, the existing structure would be removed via shore-based cranes.

Upon removal of the existing structure, contractors would construct the pier caissons, main span piers and columns, and the superstructure. Though final means and methods have not been determined, in-water work such as the use of barges or sediment control measures would be utilized. Any sediment control measures would not encroach into the navigation channel. Similarly, any barges used would be operated in a manner that they could clear the navigable channel with advance notice from mariners. CDOT and its contractors would work with the USCG, who will coordinate any construction with mariners in a manner to ensure the continuity of navigation.

Navigational clearances of the existing and proposed permanent replacement structures are described in the NAVIGATIONAL CLEARANCES section below.

Additionally, the requestor proposes to construct a riverwalk path on each side of the river which would not extend riverward of the existing bascule bridge abutment but would require 0.05-acres of fill behind new bulkhead walls for approaches.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION: The applicant has provided the following information in support of efforts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the aquatic environment: "Avoidance of these impacts is not possible since the dockwall extension is necessary to achieve the connectivity of the Riverwalk. The terms and conditions of NWP 14, 15, and 23 will be followed to minimize impacts to waters."

While the project is no longer being reviewed under the referenced nationwide permits, it was still designed to meet the terms and conditions of those permits in order to avoid and minimize impacts to WOTUS to the maximum extent practicable.

LEAD FEDERAL AGENCY: The Federal Highway Administration is the lead Federal agency for satisfying the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FHWA is acting on behalf of the USCG for all environmental control laws. A Categorical Exclusion was issued on dated 26 February 2024, pursuant to NEPA, as amended. The USCG has tentatively determined that the proposed action will not have a significant impact and anticipates issuing a Categorical Exclusion for the purposes of NEPA.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION: The applicant has provided the following explanation why compensatory mitigation should not be required: "No mitigation plan is proposed since there are no wetlands within the vicinity of the project."

CULTURAL RESOURCES: The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) reviewed the project on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). The District Engineer's final eligibility and effect determination will be based upon coordination with IDOT and the State Historic Preservation Office, as appropriate and required, and with full consideration given to the proposed undertaking's potential direct and indirect effects on historic properties within the permit area.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: IDOT reviewed the project on behalf of the FHWA for compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and made the following determinations:

- Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis Septentrionalis*) – No Effect
- Tricolored Bat (*Perymyotis Dubflavus*) – No Effect
- Piping plover (*Charadrius Melodus*) – No Effect
- Rufa Red knot (*Caladris Canutus Rufa*) – No Effect
- Whooping Crane (*Grus Americana*) – No Effect
- Eastern Massasauga (*Sistrurus Catenatus*)- No Effect
- Hine’s Emerald Dragonfly (*Somatochlora Hineana*)- No Effect
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus Plexippus*) – No Effect
- Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid (*Platanthera Leucophaea*)-No Effect
- Leafy Prairie-clover (*Dalea Foliosa*) – No Effect

No additional consultation with the USFWS is requested at this time.

NAVIGATION: The proposed structure or activity would affect the Chicago River Navigation Project, specifically the deep-draft (21 ft. depth) portion authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Acts of 1896, 1899, 1907, & 1919.

NAVIGATIONAL CLEARANCES: The proposed replacement bridge would have clearances as described in the table below. These proposed clearance in the closed position would result in a slight decrease from current minimum vertical navigational clearances over this section of the waterway at or near this mile. The proposed replacement would result in an increased minimum vertical clearance in the open position compared to current vertical navigation clearances. Separately, while proposed protective dolphins to be constructed with the proposed replacement structure would result in a decrease in the overall horizontal clearance compared to the existing structure, it would preserve the existing horizontal navigational clearance of the existing structure.

	Existing (Fixed)	Proposed (Movable)
Vertical (Closed)	20.67-feet at the edge of the navigation channel, 21.78-feet at center	20.58-feet at the edge of the navigation channel, 21.65-feet at center
Vertical (Open)	N/A.	40.00-feet at the edge of the navigation channel, 41.10-feet at center

	Existing (Fixed)	Proposed (Movable)
Horizontal	163.75-feet face-to-face of the piers with the center 135.00-feet as the navigation channel	147.30-feet face-to-face of proposed steel pile dolphins with the center 135.00-feet as the navigation channel

Datum: All elevations referenced to Low Water Datum, elevation 577.50-feet, International Great Lakes Datum of 1985 (IGLD 85).

Map of location and plans are attached.

SECTION 408: The applicant will require permission under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 408) because the activity, in whole or in part, would alter, occupy, or use a Corps Civil Works project.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: Water Quality Certification (WQC) is required from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). The applicant applied for WQC on August 21, 2024 (IEPA log number C-0126-24). The IEPA issued a WQC on 13 December 2024.

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT: The applicant made a determination that the project is consistent with the State of Illinois' coastal management program, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Coastal Management Program (IDNR CMP) concurred with this determination on 22 March 2025.

FLOODPLAINS: The bridge is located in a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Zone A Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) without a base flood elevation (BFE). The 100-year flood elevation as indicated on the plan sheets is 583.11-feet. The elevation of the low member of the navigation span is 598.08-feet. Elevations are referenced to IGLD 85 datum. As presented in the plan sheets, approximately 2,324 cubic yards of fill material will be placed below mean high water level for the construction of the bridge and approaches.

NOTE: This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This information has not been verified or evaluated to ensure compliance with laws and regulation governing the regulatory program. The geographic extent of aquatic resources within the proposed project area that either are, or are presumed to be, within the Corps jurisdiction has been verified by Corps personnel.

CORPS EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected

to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including cumulative impacts thereof; among these are conservation, economics, esthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historical properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food, and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, EPA, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act or the criteria established under authority of Section 102(a) of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. A permit will be granted unless its issuance is found to be contrary to the public interest.

USCG EVALUATION: The USCG will determine whether to issue a permit based upon whether the project will meet the reasonable needs of navigation.

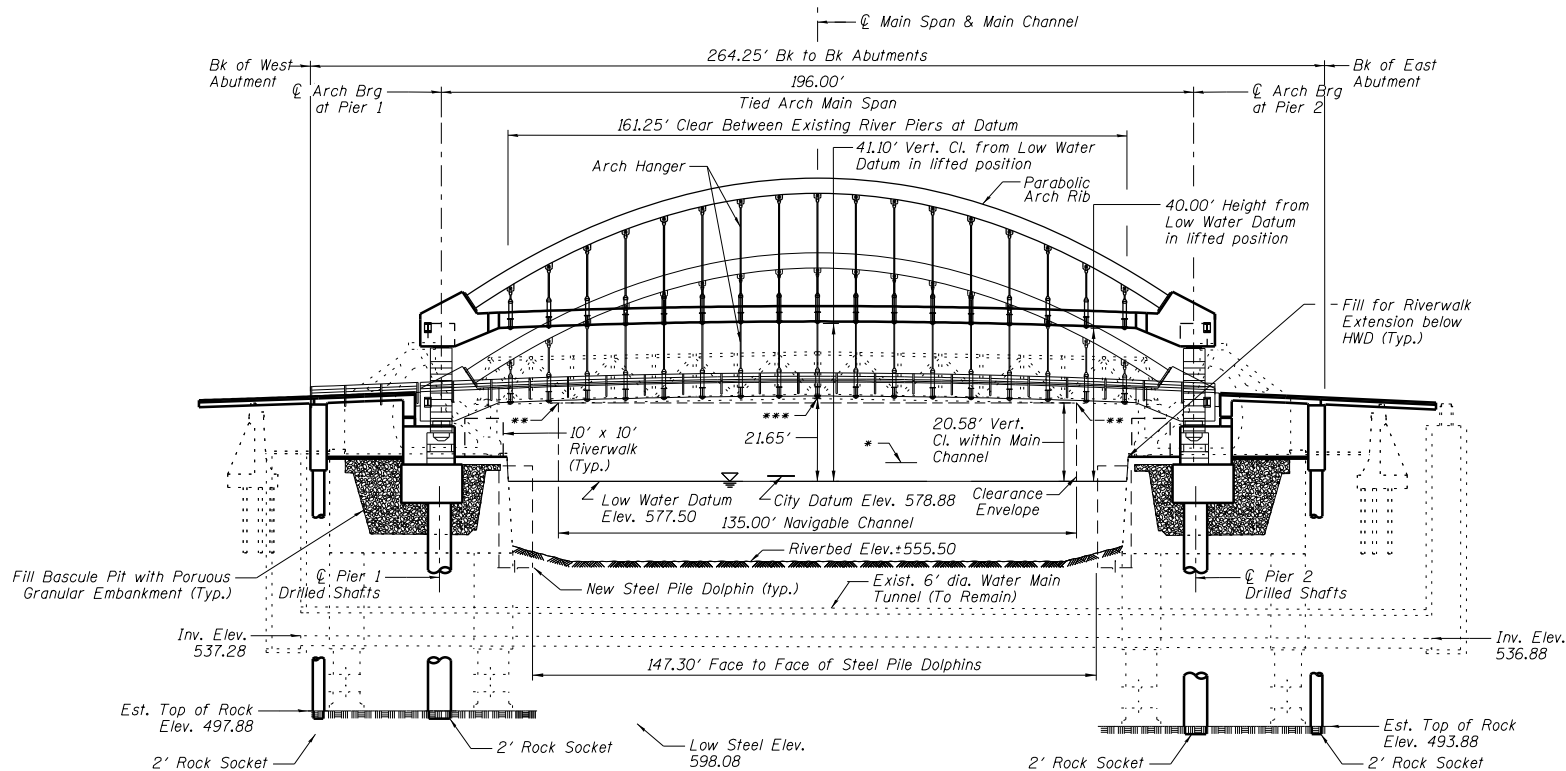
COMMENTS TO CORPS: The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other Interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this determination, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

The Chicago District will receive written comments on the proposed work, as outlined above, until July 27, 2025. Comments should be submitted electronically via the Regulatory Request System (RRS) at <https://rrs.usace.army.mil/rrs> or to Erich Ceisel at Erich.M.Ceisel@usace.army.mil. Alternatively, you may submit comments in writing to the Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District, Attention: Erich Ceisel, 231 South LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60604. Please refer to the permit application number in your comments.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. Requests for a public hearing will be granted, unless the District Engineer determines that the issues raised are insubstantial or there is otherwise no valid interest to be served by a hearing.

COMMENTS TO USCG: Mariners and waterway users – including marine facilities and other interested parties – are requested to comment, in writing, regarding the proposed navigation clearances, the need for clearance gauges, navigational lighting, decorative

lighting, and operating schedules or regulations. Comments should be of sufficient detail to establish a clear understanding of reasons for support or opposition to the proposed project. We will forward comments of an environmental nature such as those regarding wildlife refuges, public parks, historic sites, wetlands, floodplain issues, air, water quality, environmental justice, etc. to the FHWA. Comments to USCG can be electronically submitted to Michael.O.Walker2@uscg.mil. If electronic submittal is not available, commenters should address replies to: Commander, Ninth Coast Guard District (dpb), 1240 E. 9th Street, Cleveland, OH 44199



ELEVATION

(Looking North)

- * HWD = 582.39
HWD (100 yr Flood) = 583.11
- ** Low Steel Elev. 598.08
- *** Low Steel Elev. 599.15

25' 0 50'

SCALE: 1" = 50'



Date:
6/11/2025

Expires 11/30/2026

NOTES:

1. Fill for Riverwalk below HWD = 2,324 CY.
2. Chicago Datum = 578.88' IGLD85

DATE: 06.11.2025
SHEET 3 OF 8

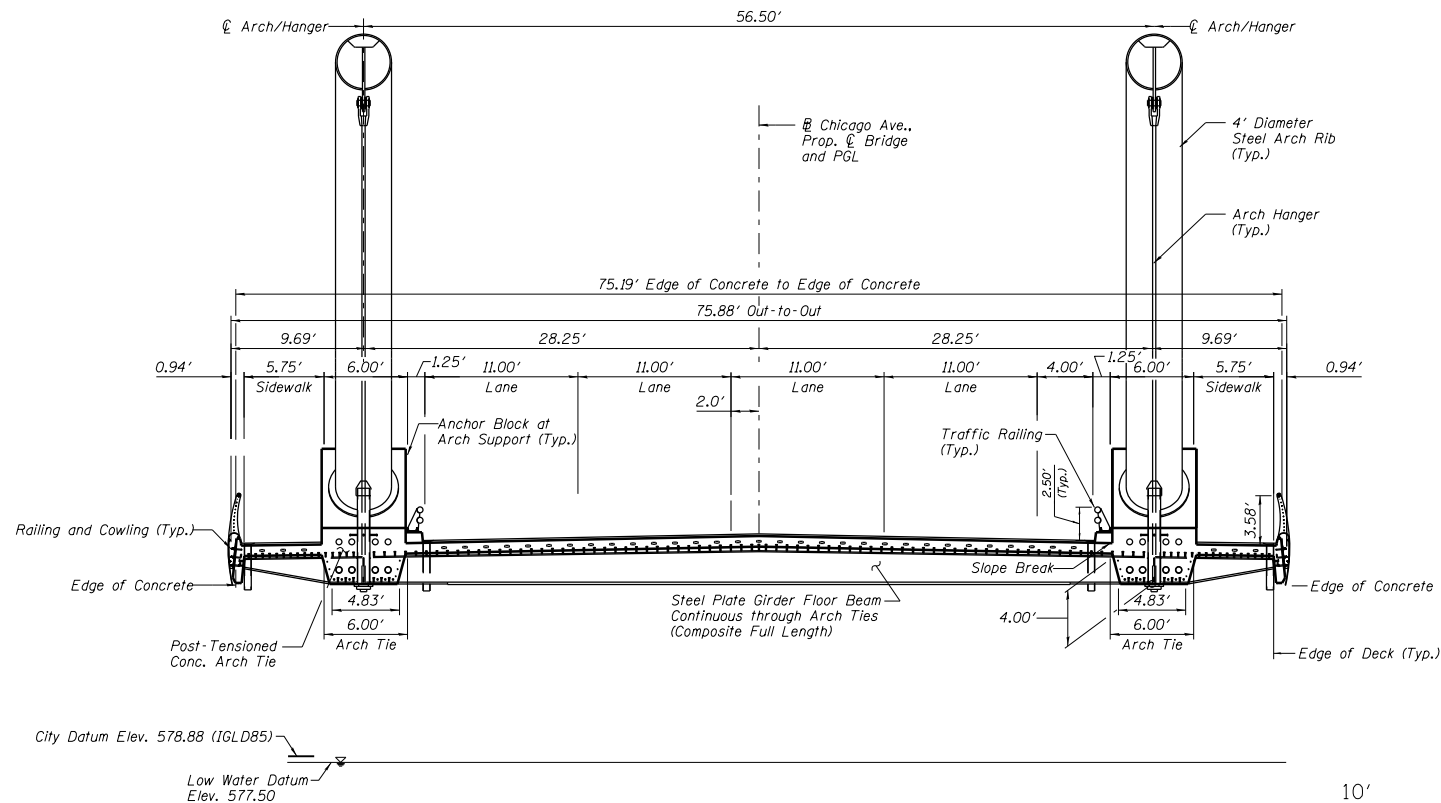
CITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF ENGINEERING

CONSULTANT

TYLin

CHICAGO AVENUE BRIDGE ACROSS
THE NORTH BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER
SN 016-6008 - EXISTING STRUCTURE
SN 016-6208 - PROPOSED STRUCTURE
MILE POST 2.40 (3.86 km)
CITY OF CHICAGO, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

BRIDGE ELEVATION



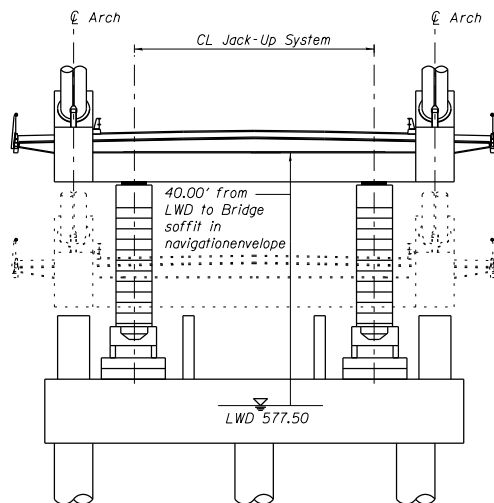
PROPOSED SECTION ARCH SPAN

(Looking East)



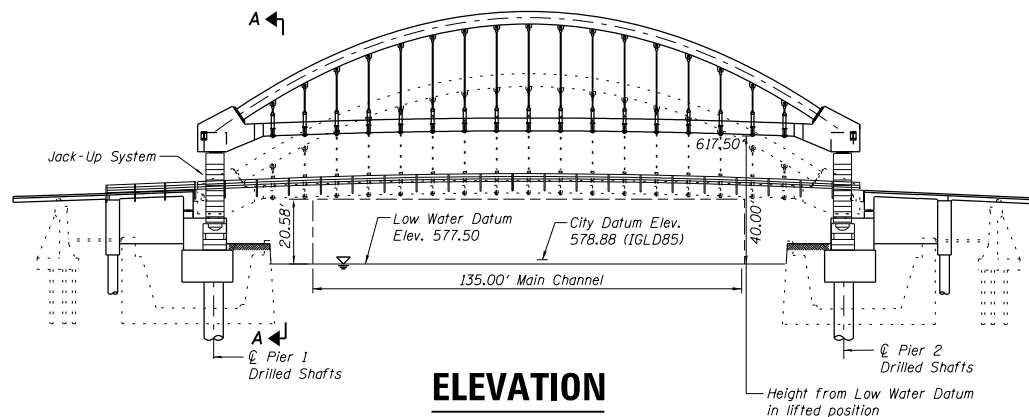
Expires 11/30/2026

DATE: 06.11.2025 SHEET 4 OF 8
CITY OF CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF ENGINEERING
CONSULTANT TYLin
CHICAGO AVENUE BRIDGE ACROSS THE NORTH BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER SN 016-6008 - EXISTING STRUCTURE SN 016-6208 - PROPOSED STRUCTURE MILE POST 2.40 (3.86 km) CITY OF CHICAGO, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
PROPOSED CROSS SECTION ARCH SPAN

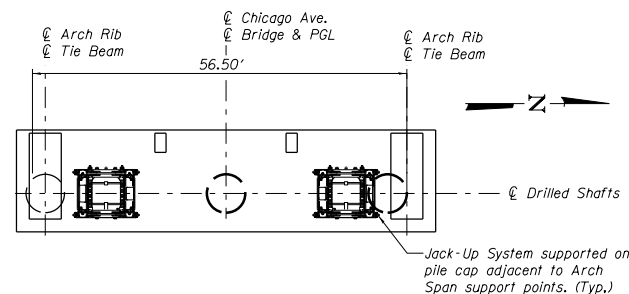


SECTION A-A

(Section at Pier 1 shown, Pier 2 similar)



ELEVATION



PARTIAL PLAN

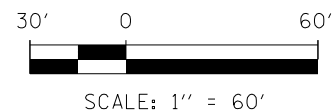
(Pier 1 shown, Pier 2 similar)

NOTES:

1. If directed by the Ninth Coast Guard District Commander, a Jack-Up System will be installed and used to raise the bridge to a 40'-0" vertical clearance above Low Water Datum.
2. Lifting equipment and locations are concept only. The Contractor is responsible for providing structural analysis of the tied arch bridge confirming the bridge elements are adequate for all strength, service, stability, and extreme limit states throughout the jacking procedure.
3. Prior to any jacking procedures and construction work, temporary gates will need to be installed prohibiting vehicular and pedestrian access.
4. For lifting, a Jack-Up System will be positioned adjacent to each Arch Span bearing location underneath the Arch Support Cross Beam.
5. The Jack-Up Systems will be supported on the Arch Span Pile Caps.
6. The enclosure system will be removed to provide access to position the Jack-Up Systems under the Arch Support Cross Beams.

The Riverwalk underneath the Bridge to be made accessible for this operation.

Installation of guy cables may be required to reduce the sensitivity of the Jack-Up Systems to lateral loads.



Date:
6/11/2025

Expires 11/30/2026

DATE: 06.11.2025
SHEET 5 OF 8

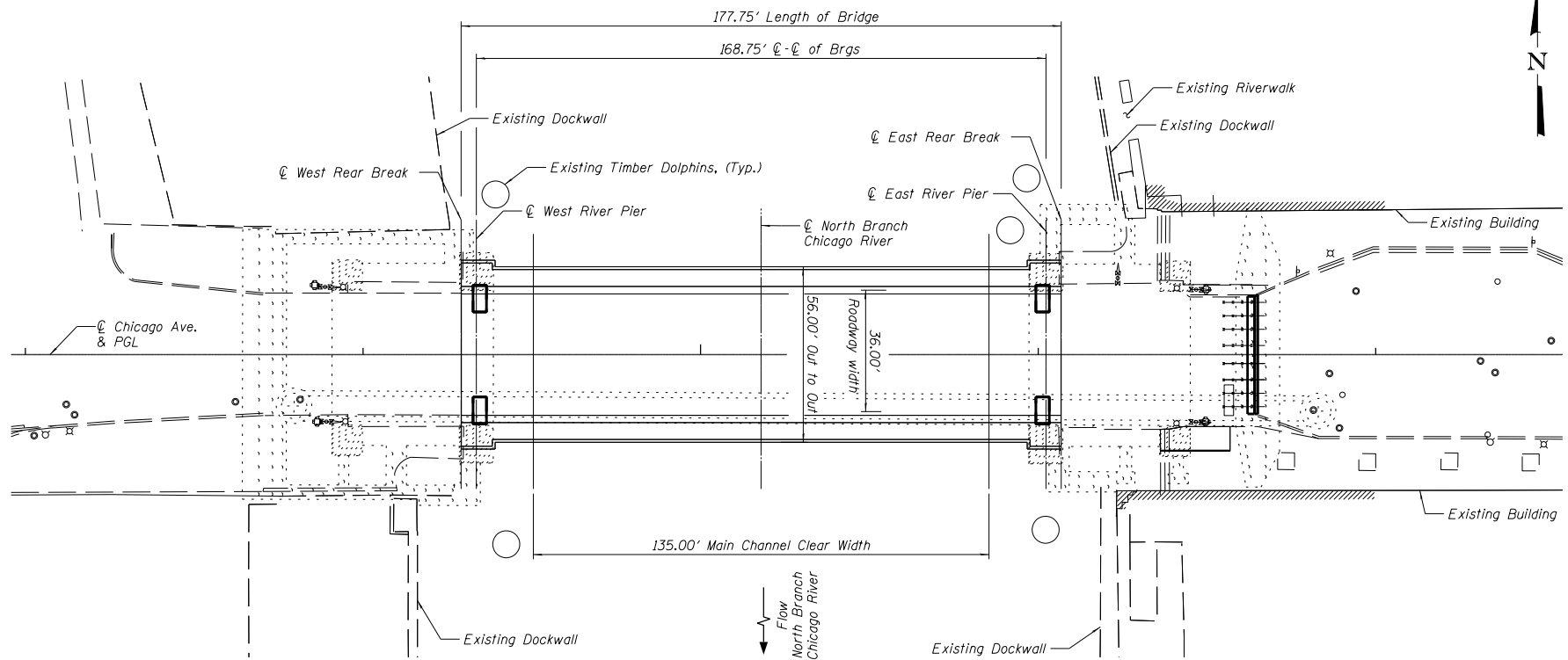
CITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF ENGINEERING

CONSULTANT

TYLin

CHICAGO AVENUE BRIDGE ACROSS
THE NORTH BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER
SN 016-6008 - EXISTING STRUCTURE
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MILE POST 2.40 (3.86 km)
CITY OF CHICAGO, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

ARCH SPAN
LIFTING SCHEMATICS



PLAN



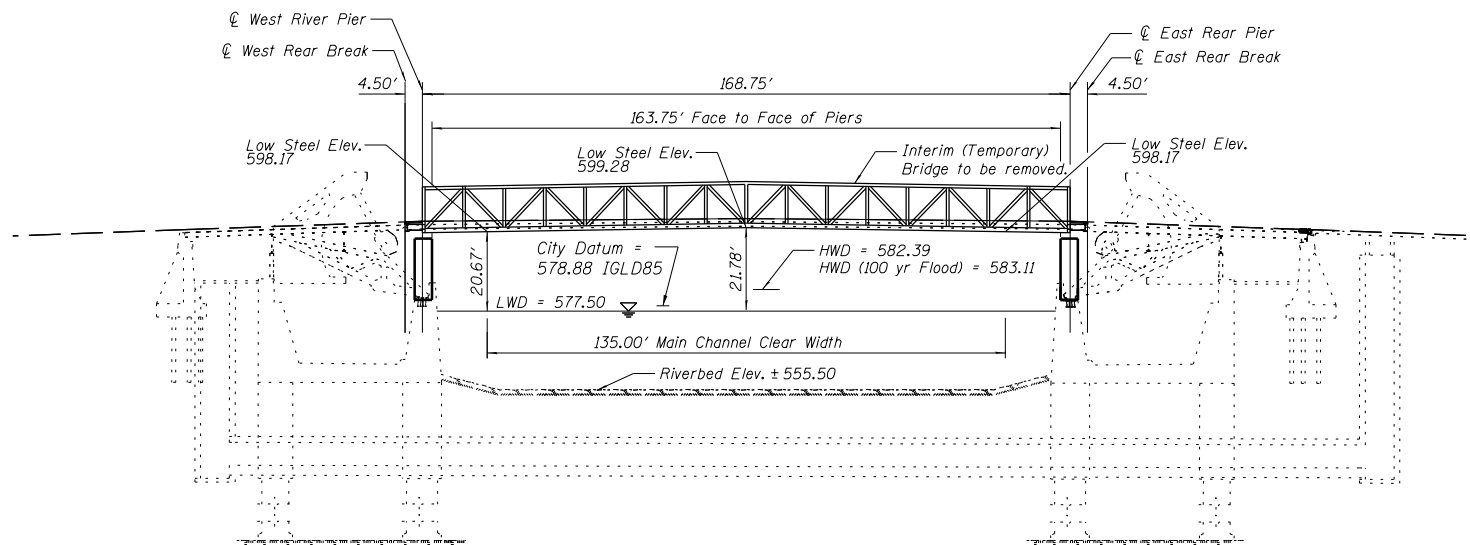
SCALE: 1" = 50'



Date:
6/11/2025

Expires 11/30/2026

DATE: 06.11.2025 SHEET 6 OF 8
CITY OF CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF ENGINEERING
CONSULTANT TYLin
CHICAGO AVENUE BRIDGE ACROSS THE NORTH BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER SN 016-6008 - EXISTING STRUCTURE SN 016-6208 - PROPOSED STRUCTURE MILE POST 2.40 (3.86 km) CITY OF CHICAGO, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
EXISTING INTERIM BRIDGE PLAN



ELEVATION



SCALE: 1" = 50'



Date:
6/11/2025

Expires 11/30/2026

DATE: 06.11.2025
SHEET 7 OF 8

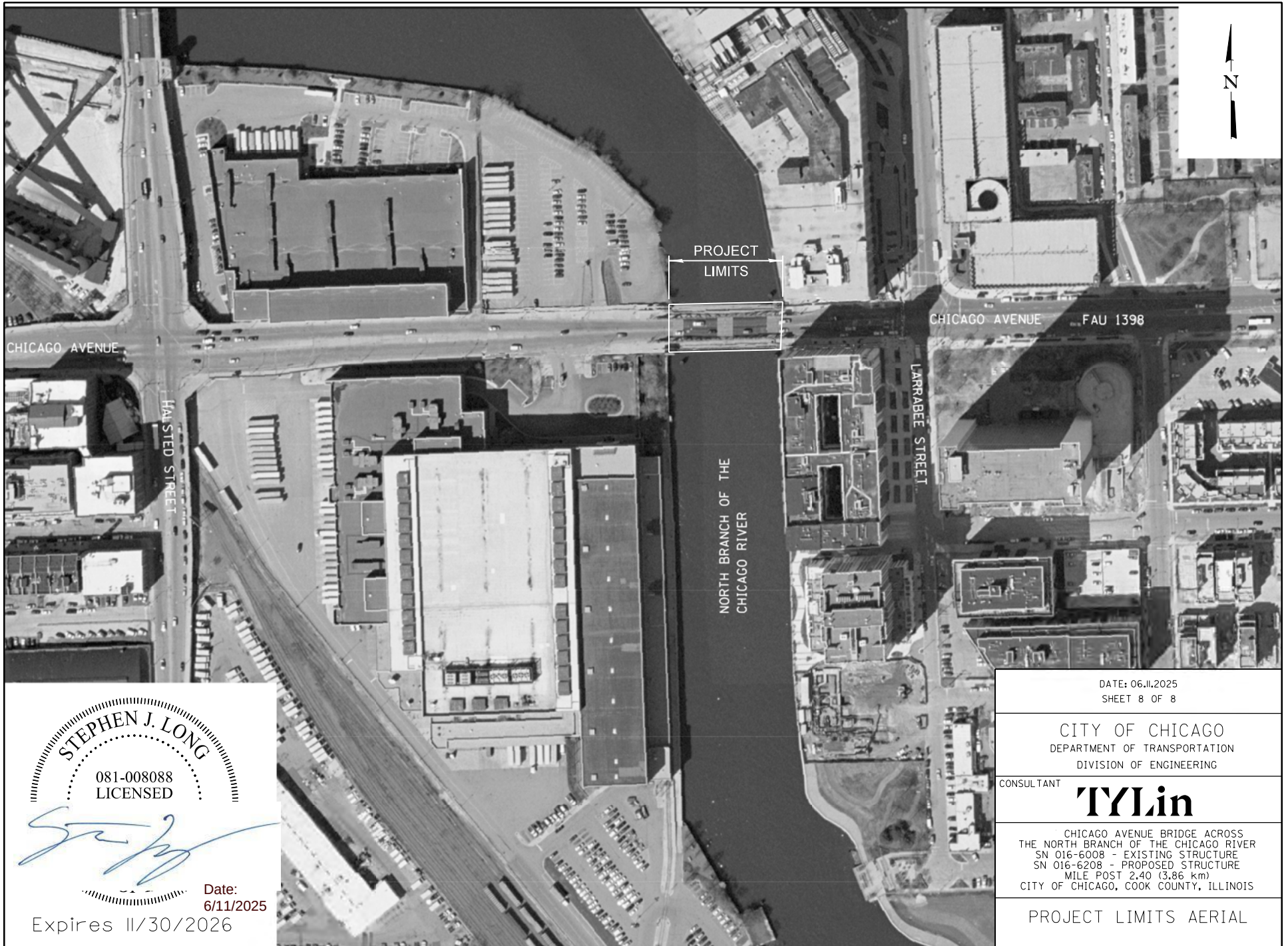
CITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIVISION OF ENGINEERING

CONSULTANT

TYLin

CHICAGO AVENUE BRIDGE ACROSS
THE NORTH BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER
SN 016-6008 - EXISTING STRUCTURE
SN 016-6208 - PROPOSED STRUCTURE
MILE POST 2.40 (3.86 km)
CITY OF CHICAGO, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

EXISTING INTERIM BRIDGE
ELEVATION



STEPHEN J. LONG
081-008088
LICENSED

[Signature]

Date:
6/11/2025

Expires 11/30/2026

DATE: 06.11.2025 SHEET 8 OF 8
CITY OF CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DIVISION OF ENGINEERING
CONSULTANT TYLin
CHICAGO AVENUE BRIDGE ACROSS THE NORTH BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER SN 016-6008 - EXISTING STRUCTURE SN 016-6208 - PROPOSED STRUCTURE MILE POST 2.40 (3.86 km) CITY OF CHICAGO, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS
PROJECT LIMITS AERIAL