

FACT SHEET:

Jefferson Avenue Footbridge

During a recent weekly inspection of the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge, Public Works noticed corrosion and steel loss in the north support column of the 114-year-old bridge. Public Works brought in experts from Great River Engineering Thursday, Feb. 25 to evaluate the bridge for safety.

While the bridge is not in imminent danger, it is in the best interest of the public to close it for a minimum of three months starting Tuesday, March 1 to evaluate repair options.



During the closure, engineers from Great River will also take an in-depth look at the bridge's other support columns and develop a larger rehabilitation plan for the entire bridge if needed.

Great River Engineering is a Springfield-based civil engineering firm that has rehabilitated several bridges in the area – Riverside Bridge and Mill Pond Bridge in Ozark, Devil's Elbow Bridge in Pulaski County and the Meramec River U.S. 66 Bridge in Eureka.

History of the bridge

The footbridge was built in 1902 by the American Bridge Co. Its design is cantilevered warren through truss. The engineer in charge of construction was J.W. Hoover. The bridge is on the National Register of Historic Places and is 562 feet. It allows pedestrians to cross 13 sets of railroad tracks. In the 1990s, BNSF sold the Jefferson Avenue Footbridge to the City of Springfield for \$1.

The Jefferson Avenue Footbridge underwent complete restoration in 2002, just in time for its centennial celebration.

As the footbridge approached its 100th anniversary, it became apparent that a major rehabilitation was required to preserve the aging structure.

The City of Springfield partnered with the Commercial Club to obtain federal transportation enhancement grants and Community Development Block Grant funding to save the historic footbridge. In addition to the extensive rehabilitation work on the footbridge, a gathering place plaza was created adjacent to the Commercial Street terminus. The rehabilitation work was conducted in 2001 and 2002 at a cost of just over \$518,000. Nearly 100 years after the original footbridge was constructed, the rehabilitated structure was reopened to pedestrian traffic and rededicated April 17, 2002.



ALTERNATE ROUTES:

North Washington Avenue east of the footbridge and **North Lyon** west of the footbridge offer alternate routes for pedestrians to access the Woodland Heights neighborhood from Commercial Street. Both streets offer pedestrian tunnels under the railroad bridges that allow pedestrians to cross safely.