

Mississippi River Bridge at Lansing - January 21, 2026, Update

It's 2026 and it's full steam ahead on construction of the Mississippi River Bridge at Lansing. In this update we'll look at some of the major events that happened in late 2025 and what to look forward to in the next few months.

Bridge Implosion

We had to close the existing bridge permanently on October 20th. Before construction could continue safely, the old bridge needed to be removed. That meant planning and preparing for one of the biggest events of this project-the implosion of the existing bridge. That took place on a very cold and sunny day on December 19th.



December Implosion

The demolition went off safely and effectively as people watched both in person and on several different live streams. While it was a bittersweet moment for many, it also cleared the way for construction of the new bridge to move ahead.

Before new construction could begin, the contractor, Kraemer, had to remove the old bridge from the river. This took several days as crews worked through cold conditions, seven days a week, cutting the bridge into manageable pieces, loading them on to a barge with a crane and bringing them to shore. Once the pieces were on shore they were cut into smaller chunks and hauled away to be recycled. Kraemer pulled 1.6 million pounds of steel from the river. They will use sonar to check the river bottom and make sure all debris is removed.

The west side of the old bridge is still standing. It couldn't be taken down by explosives because it goes over the railroad tracks, city streets and is too close to several houses. Kraemer is currently taking that section of the bridge apart piece by piece. Expect them to finish that part of the demolition sometime in February.

Car Ferry Service



Car Ferry

Back to the October closure of the bridge. As those who use the bridge know, the closure means a detour that adds well over an hour to the trip across the Mississippi River. That's why we brought in a car ferry to get people and their vehicles across the river without taking the long detour. The car ferry went into service on November 3rd, two weeks after the existing bridge closed.

For the next several months, the Cassville, Wisconsin Ferry will be moving people and their vehicles from Lansing to just south of the bridge in Wisconsin. That ferry will have to return to Cassville in the spring for its regular service. We will have another ferry ready to take over when that day comes and stay in service until the new bridge opens in the Spring of 2027. If you want to know more about the car ferry, including the opportunity to look at live video from the landings, check out this link to the car ferry website: <https://iowadot.gov/modes-travel/roads-highways/major-construction-projects/mississippi-river-bridge-lansing/car-ferry>

Building Ferry Landings

Getting the ferry up and running meant work on both sides of the river to build landings for the ferry to load and unload. This, and the ferry service itself, came together because of the cooperation of several different agencies, including:

- Iowa and Wisconsin DOT's and DNR's
- Army Corp of Engineers
- Canadian Pacific/Kansas City Railroad
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Crawford County
- City of Lansing

We thank all of them for working together to make it easier for people to get from one side of the Mississippi to the other as we work to finish the new bridge. The ferry crews have been working through some brutal conditions this winter. While the weather has caused a few delays things have been running pretty smoothly through some high winds, snow and cold temperatures.

Highway Reconstruction

During the approximate two-week period between the bridge closing and the ferry starting, there wasn't any traffic on Wisconsin 82 leading up to the bridge. A short section of the highway needed to be reconstructed to connect to the new bridge. That work was scheduled to take place later in the project, but since the road was already closed, we decided to adjust the contractor's schedule. This meant we could get the road reconstructed without an additional closure in 2026.

New Bridge Progress



Setting Steel

Now to the new bridge, the skeleton on the Iowa side is taking shape! Kraemer has started placing steel in Lansing, giving us an early look at the new bridge, and how much wider it will be. The deck of the old bridge is only 21 feet wide giving vehicles two 10-foot lanes. The new bridge deck is 40 feet wide with two 12-foot lanes as well as two 8-foot shoulders. Also, now that the old bridge is gone Kraemer can safely start setting steel for the new bridge on the Wisconsin side of the river. You can expect to see that starting in the next few weeks as well.

Don't forget, you can get the latest updates and follow the progress of the project at our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/LansingBridge>. You do not have to be a Facebook member to check out the site. And you can get a look at what's happening by viewing the live webcam at the project website at <https://iowadot.gov/modes-travel/roads-highways/major-construction-projects/mississippi-river-bridge-lansing>