

**Item #15:**  
**Village Engineering Shrake**  
Robert Parker Coffin Road Covered Bridge - BG Bridge

## David Lothspeich

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**From:** Geoff Perry [gperry@gha-engineers.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 15, 2015 12:00 PM  
**To:** David Lothspeich  
**Cc:** Mike Shrake  
**Subject:** Raupp Boulevard Bridge, Buffalo Grove  
**Attachments:** Pages from Raupp Boulevard Bridge Plan\_Page 21\_Buffalo Grove.pdf

Hi Dave,

We looked into the Raupp Boulevard Bridge that was discussed last night. In summary, the bridge is a 2-lane bridge (with one lane in each direction) and Buffalo Grove received Highway Bridge Funding for the project, with an 80 / 20 split for all phases of the project.

Attached is the plan view of the Raupp Boulevard Bridge for your use / reference.

We will continue to research any funding options for the 1-lane in-place restoration option.

Thanks,  
Geoff

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Geoffrey Perry, P.E.  
Associate / Senior Engineer  
Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc.  
625 Forest Edge Drive  
Vernon Hills, IL 60061  
Direct Line: 847-821-6231  
Office: 847-478-9700  
[www.gha-engineers.com](http://www.gha-engineers.com)



# More discussion, and more options, for Long Grove bridge's future

By **Ronnie Wachter**  
Pioneer Press

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**I**n the best-case scenario, Long Grove gets twice the bridge for half the price.

In the worst-case scenario, the village that uses its current bridge as its trademark gets a bridge that visitors don't like any more, for way more money than officials wanted to pay.

Which scenario actually plays out is, at the moment, anyone's guess.

"Nobody's ever asked for a funding match for a timber-covered bridge," said Geoff Perry, senior engineer at Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc., which is developing information for Long Grove Village Hall about the aging bridge that carries Robert Parker Coffin Road over the Buffalo Creek.

"This is a unique bridge," he said.

The Village Board listened April 14 to a presentation from Perry about the two options they currently have for the span: tear it down and rebuild it with an infusion of federal money, or repair what has already stood for decades with their own funds.

The subject was one of several points that six candidates for three trustee seats debated this winter. The board was not scheduled for any action during the meeting, and did not take any votes.

The decision will involve several layers of financial and symbolic impact. The existing bridge is only one lane wide, with a traditional-looking timber cover that was built too low for modern trucks to squeeze under.

But it is also the symbol that Village Hall uses in its logo. Modernizing it will certainly mean more traffic coming through downtown — but those drivers might be speeding through, using it as a shortcut to avoid traffic. And then there is the question of whether shoppers and festival-goers will lose interest in Long Grove without its quaint, anachronistic covered bridge.

But the trustees agreed that the first layer of information they need will be how much they will have to spend.

Perry reviewed the bridge's physical status, which has been examined previously by the state and Johnson Laskey Architects. Though important parts like the deck — the surface cars drive on — are listed in good condition, most of the substructure show advanced deterioration. Perry estimated that restoring what currently exists would involve everything from little details, replacing the bolts with rivets, to major work including new limestone and steel.

All told, that would probably cost around \$715,000 and last another 50 years.

Long Grove would pay for all of that itself, because the bridge would remain one lane. State inspectors have labeled that design obsolete, and the federal government will not issue any funding for it.

Tearing the current bridge down and building a two-lane span in its place will almost surely mean less expense for Long Grove, but there is no certainty yet for what the final figure would be. Perry said the one-lane bridge could carry only a five-ton load, while the two-lane could handle 20 tons. Trustee John Marshall, who owns a construction firm, said the current covering has a clearance of 12 feet, but the federal option would raise that to 17 feet.

The pedestrian walkway on the side, currently five feet wide, would expand to eight, he said. The total cost should be around \$1.7 million, shared to some degree by the federal government.

In the best-case scenario, Perry said Washington would define 80 percent of the work as its responsibility, and Long Grove would only pay about \$340,000 —less than half the do-it-yourself route, for more bridge and a 75-year life span.

In the worst-case scenario, the feds agree to only about 60 percent of the work, and Long Grove has to find \$687,984 — nearly as much as the do-it-yourself cost, for a bridge that may not be as loved by visitors.

Mike Shrake, the village's engineer, told the board that before Washington will make a decision, it needs to see more information from another study, which will cost Long Grove \$128,000. He noted, though, that if the feds' final decision is in the worst-case area, or if costs rise unexpectedly in the time before construction begins, Long Grove can back out and not suffer a penalty.

Lake County has scheduled the downtown's primary intersection, Old McHenry and Robert Parker Coffin Road, for a widening and stoplight-installation project in 2019. A two-lane Robert Parker Coffin bridge would likely invite more traffic to the new intersection, but village manager Dave Lothspeich wondered if any of it would be shopping there, or braking for pedestrians who are.

"Traffic itself is not a bad thing, it's the speeds at which people come through," he said.

Another issue would be the voluminous new bridge covering's size. Marshall pointed out that while Neumann's Cigars & More, the building immediately to the south, is taller than the two-lane version's 27-foot height, the one-story buildings to the north might look diminutive.

"The question is, 'Will it fit in the space, visually, and not look intrusive?'" Marshall asked.

Outgoing board member Charlie Wachs, who did not attend the April 14 session, had campaigned for preserving the existing one-lane version. Re-elected Stan Borys campaigned for the two-lane version. Borys' two partners, Bill Jacob and Michael Sarlitto, were divided: Sarlitto called the existing bridge an "icon" during a campaign forum, while Jacob called for either a two-lane version that preserved the village's character or making what currently stands pedestrian-only, cutting vehicles coming from the southwest off to downtown.

Lothspeich said he will seek more clarification from the government about what its expectations for funding would be.