The Huey P. Long is both a railroad and a vehicle bridge and also has two different truss designs:

- **Cantilever truss:** Balanced in the middle, the piers are placed on the bottom and 14 feet wider at the top.
- **Through truss span:** The piers sit atop caisson foundations that extend about 160 feet below the river’s surface to a sand layer strong enough to sit atop caisson foundations.

**EXISTING BRIDGE**

- 18 foot wide roadway, 3 lanes and 2 shoulders
- 31/2-foot-wide shoulders, in each of the westbound and eastbound vehicle lanes
- 9-foot-wide lanes for traffic and two 531 feet 529 feet 790 feet Cofferdam tracks and new bridge truss structure

**AFTER WIDENING PROJECT COMPLETED**

- 40 foot wide roadway, 3 lanes and 3 shoulders
- 9-foot-wide lanes
- 24-foot wide roadway adds 22 lanes
- 24-foot wide roadway adds 22 lanes

**PROJECT TIMELINE**

- **1989:** Louisiana voters approved a transportation plan to build New Orleans-Metairie freeway.
- **1990-1991:** Preliminary work begins, including the widening project through a combination of tax and sales, worth a total of $4 billion.
- **February 2002:** New Orleans Voters Branch Mental offers to sell the bridge to the state.
- **End of 2012:** Completion date.

**HOW THE BRIDGE WILL BE WIDENED**

- **WIDER SUPPORT:** To add vehicle lanes to both sides of the Huey P. Long, each of the five main piers must be widened to hold up new metal bridge supports.
- **UNDER THE WATER:** A cofferdam placed around the base allows crews to work up to 10 feet below the waterline and widen 10-foot-high sections all around the pier.
- **HALFWAY THERE:** Each pier is widened with concrete and reinforced about halfway up. The finished piers are about 10 foot wider at the bottom and 14 foot wider at the top.
- **HEAVY METAL:** Crosses will install 9’ 9’ 9’ Cofferdam bars and concrete at halfway up the pier.

**HOW TRAFFIC WILL FLOW DURING CONSTRUCTION**

- **EXISTING ROAD**
  - Both structures of the bridge have two narrow lanes, each 9 foot wide with no shoulders.
- **PHASE ONE**
  - When construction begins, traffic will be reduced to one 10-foot-wide lane in each direction for about eight weeks.
- **PHASE TWO**
  - Traffic returns to two 8 foot-wide lanes.
- **PHASE THREE**
  - Traffic remains in two 8 foot-wide lanes.
- **PHASE FOUR**
  - Traffic divert to new road section, striped for two 9-foot-wide lanes.
- **PHASE FIVE**
  - Traffic returns to two 9-foot-wide lanes.

**PROJECTinished:** Late 2012

The new road will have three 11-foot-wide lanes for traffic and two 31/2-foot-wide shoulders, in each direction.

**SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA’S FIRST BRIDGE ACROSS THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER**

- The Huey P. Long is both a railroad and a vehicle bridge and also has two different truss designs.

**MORE ROOM, MORE CARS**

The widening project is expected to increase traffic from 60,000 cars a day to 70,000 cars a day, providing more access to sparsely developed areas of the West Bank of Jefferson Parish.

- **Elmwood Expwy. and Clearview Ave.**
- **Jefferson Hwy.**
- **Huey P. Long, Jefferson Parish and West Bank**
- **Main navigation channel**
- **Secondary channel**
- **Auxiliary truss**

**Source:** Louisiana Transportation Infrastructure Model for Economic Development STAFF GRAPHIC BY D LARRY MCINTYRE II

Completed in 1935, the longest railroad bridge in the United States is notorious for its narrow traffic lanes. But work is underway that will allow for a roomier crossing.