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## **Missouri, Illinois announce details for new bridge public debut**

ST. LOUIS – Illinois and Missouri have announced new details for the public debut of the Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge on Saturday, February 8.

The bridge will be open to the public between noon and 4 p.m. so people can walk, run or bike on the new bridge. Access to the bridge that time will be free of charge.

Biking and running enthusiasts may also want to participate in several events before noon that local racing organizations are setting up. Those interested will have to register and pay to participate in these events. Details on bike time trials and a 6K run are available at [bigriverrunning.com/bridgerun](http://bigriverrunning.com/bridgerun). Information on a recreational ride over several local bridges, to include the new bridge, is available at [trailnet.org/new-mississippi-bridge-ride](http://trailnet.org/new-mississippi-bridge-ride). Only those people registered to participate in those events will be allowed on the new Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge before noon.

The current schedule for public events on the bridge are:

8 a.m. – 6K Run. Details on cost, where to meet and registration are available at:  
[bigriverrunning.com/bridgerun](http://bigriverrunning.com/bridgerun).

10 a.m. – Cycling Time Trials. Space is limited. Details on cost, where to meet and registration are available at [bigriverrunning.com/bridgerun](http://bigriverrunning.com/bridgerun). In addition, those interested can participate in the biathlon, which allows them to compete in both the 6K run and the cycling time trials.

Noon – the bridge opens to the public.

2 p.m. – ribbon cutting ceremony.

3 p.m. – Ceremonial first crossing. Participating in the crossing is limited to various military and classic car groups. All available spots for the crossing are filled.

4 p.m. – The bridge closes to the public.

To set up for the event and to open the new bridge to traffic, MoDOT will be closing the ramp from eastbound I-70 to Tucker Boulevard after morning rush on Friday, February 7.

Parking around the bridge is very limited. Here's how the general public can get to the new bridge:

In Missouri, Metro transit has arranged special bus services to take people from selected locations in the downtown area to the new bridge and back from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. If possible, people are encouraged to take Metro transit to arrive downtown. To use the free bridge shuttles, park at any of the free Metro Park-Ride lots along the MetroLink system in Missouri and Illinois and take the train to the Convention Center MetroLink Station. Attendees can also take MetroBus to the Civic Center MetroLink Station and board an eastbound train to the Convention Center MetroLink Station. To ride MetroBus and MetroLink, attendees must have a valid fare. From the Convention Center Station, people can catch one of the free special bridge shuttles at:

- 6<sup>th</sup> Street north of Washington (west side of street)
- Washington and 7<sup>th</sup> Street at the Metro Store (north side of street)
- 9<sup>th</sup> Street between Washington Avenue and Convention Plaza (east side of street)
- 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Cole Street (east side of street)
- 11<sup>th</sup> Street and Cole Street (north side of street)

There are parking garages near all five of these pick up locations, for those who prefer to drive downtown.

Parking rates vary by facility.

In Illinois, the general public will be parking in the old Stockyard area. To get there:

From westbound I-64

- Take exit 4A (Baugh Avenue)
- Continue on Baugh Avenue (approximately 0.6 mile) to 9<sup>th</sup> Street (2<sup>nd</sup> roundabout)
- Go right onto 9<sup>th</sup> Street
- Continue on 9<sup>th</sup> Street to Exchange Avenue (all-way stop)
- Turn left onto Exchange Avenue
- Continue on Exchange Avenue approximately 0.8 miles
- Note the sign directing you to public parking

From westbound I-55/70

- Take exit 3C (Exchange Avenue)
- Turn right onto Exchange Avenue at the stop sign
- Continue on Exchange Avenue approximately 0.6 mile
- Note the sign directing you to public parking

While the bridge is open to the public, MoDOT and IDOT will partner with Operation Food Search for a food drive for needy families on both sides of the river. Attendees are invited to bring canned goods or non-perishable items to donate to the food pantry. Operation Food Search distributes 2.75 million pounds of food monthly to 25 counties in Missouri and Illinois and the city of St. Louis.

Some tips for the day:

- The general public will not be allowed on the bridge until noon, because of the morning's races and event set up.
- Please do not bring pets, large or hard-sided coolers, alcohol or glass bottles.

- Please do not bring skateboards, inline skates, skate shoes, scooters or other wheeled vehicles.
- For bike riders, the bridge may be very crowded, so please give fellow attendees plenty of space.

The new I-70 bridge over the river is set to open to traffic on Sunday, February 9, 2014.

The \$229.5 million Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge is one of 37 projects that make up the \$695 million New Mississippi River Bridge project which moves I-70 off the Congressman William L. Clay Sr. Bridge/Poplar Street Bridge. Construction on the project started in February 2010. The project will help improve safety and reduce congestion on the Congressman Clay Sr. Bridge.