

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 15, 2026

**City of Bloomington Closes Road Leading to Monroe County's W. Club House Drive Bridge Near Old SR 37 Effective Immediately**

**Bloomington, Ind.** – In response to a County inspection of Bridge 317 on W. Club House Drive at Old State Road 37 recently shared with the City, and in the interest of public safety, the City of Bloomington is closing the road leading to the County's bridge effective immediately. The closure means no vehicles may use the County's bridge until further notice.

The City is taking immediate public safety action now and will bring the closure before the Board of Public Works for formal action at its next meeting on May 19, 2026.

The City has replaced the existing County signage with new closure signage to notify drivers and other users that the road leading to the bridge is closed.

"Public safety must always be our first priority," said Andrew Cibor, City Engineer. "The City is closing the road in response to the County's notification of its inspection findings. While questions regarding ownership and responsibility for certain bridges remain under review, the City is taking immediate action to protect the public."

While Lower Cascades Park and its amenities remain open, vehicle access to the Sycamore Shelter, Cascades Golf Course, and the Lions Den Shelter at Upper Cascades Park is available only from the west via Kinser Pike to Clubhouse Drive. On May 14, 2026, following recent changes to Indiana Code 8-17-1-46, the Monroe County Commission attempted to place two bridges that are located within Bloomington City limits and more than 20 feet long into the ownership of the City of Bloomington.

The City does not agree that the statutory change or the County resolution transfers ownership or responsibility for these bridges to the City. In a letter to the County dated May 8, 2026, the City noted its position that Indiana law makes it very clear in I.C. 8-17-1-46(c) that any bridge located within corporate city limits of a municipality that has a span length equal to or less than 20 feet and is not part of the state highway system is

the responsibility of a municipality to construct, reconstruct, and maintain. This bridge, like many others within the corporate city limits of the City of Bloomington, does not meet that criteria.

Recent statutory changes to a different section of the law defining county responsibilities have created uncertainty by adding a loophole for long bridges that have not been inspected by a county prior to January 1, 2024, or officially added to the county's formal inventory list by the County executive after December 31, 2024.

However, the statutory changes do not clearly assign ownership or responsibility for all bridges in that scenario. The City's position is that this creates a gap in coverage for bridges that are too long to qualify as City bridges, as long as the County does not produce records of inspections from previous decades of ownership.

Prior to the statutory [changes](#) effective July 1, 2025 ("2025 Statutory Changes"), Bridge 317 fell under Monroe County's responsibility, regardless of documented inspections or formal acceptance into the inventory. Prior to the 2025 statutory changes, counties in Indiana had responsibility for all bridges, even within municipal boundaries. Bridge 317 follows the County naming system using numbers, has County signage posted for weight restrictions, and was inspected earlier this month by the County.

The County previously lowered the weight limit on the bridge to nine (9) tons. To the extent that Bridge 317, which is approximately 58 years old, has deteriorated, that likely occurred during a time period when state law squarely placed responsibility for bridge maintenance solely with counties. Monroe County receives funding for bridge inspection from the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Such funding flows from the federal government to states and then to counties. Monroe County has also, historically, received tax revenues for bridge maintenance throughout the County (including cities and towns) which are deposited into the County's cumulative bridge fund.

The City acknowledges that locating historical records can be difficult and has been in discussion with the County to find a resolution. The City does not concede ownership or responsibility for Bridge 317 by taking immediate public safety action or by bringing the closure of the road leading to the County's bridge before the Board of Public Works.

The City appreciates the public's cooperation and patience with the inconvenience while the bridge's condition and responsibility for the next steps are evaluated. Any concerns about the safety of Bridge 317 or funding for bridge maintenance should be directed to the Monroe County Board of Commissioner