



NEWS RELEASE
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**Bridges Project Begins Final Review Process
With Series of Public Meetings**
States to Study Cost-Saving Options, Tolling Impacts

LOUISVILLE (April 6, 2011) – The Ohio River Bridges Project will host a series of public meetings as part of the year-long federal review process necessary before construction work can begin on two new bridges and rebuilding the downtown Louisville interchange.

Eight meetings will be scheduled in June as part of the federally prescribed process known as a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), which will study changes and environmental effects not considered during the original review, said Bridges Project Manager John Sacksteder.

The update will evaluate a number of cost-saving approaches including those recommended earlier this year by Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear, Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels and Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer:

- Rebuilding the Kennedy Interchange in the existing location rather than move it south
- Reducing the East End bridge, roadway and tunnel from six lanes to four lanes, with the option to add two lanes later if traffic demand warrants
- Removing the proposed pedestrian and bike path from the design of a new downtown I-65 bridge as a result of a separate project to complete the Big Four Bridge pedestrian walkway and bike path

The review will also consider the impact of collecting tolls on the new and improved I-65 bridges downtown and the new East End Bridge.

Public Involvement Process

The meetings will continue the extensive public involvement process that has been a hallmark of the Bridges Project, which is overseen by the Indiana Department of Transportation, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and the Federal Highway Administration.

The meetings will explain the SEIS process, detail the proposed design changes under consideration and invite public input. Dates, times and locations will be announced in the coming weeks, but the schedule calls for the following meetings:

Historic Preservation Consultation Team – Week of June 1

Government agencies and organizations focused on historic preservation will provide input on potential impacts to historic structures, features and landscapes.



Regional Advisory Committee –Week of June 13

The Regional Advisory Committee is a broad-based group of citizens and public officials on both sides of the river that provide a region-wide perspective.

Area Advisory Teams – Week of June 20

The project's four Area Advisory Teams include groups of citizens and public officials focused on local concerns and specific issues in the four main areas of the project – downtown Kentucky, downtown Indiana, East End Kentucky and East End Indiana.

Public Meetings – Week of June 27

Two public meetings – one on each side of the river –will be held to share information with the general public and will include various options for comment and input.

All of the meetings are open to the public to attend. The Historic Preservation Consultation Team, Regional Advisory Committee and Area Advisory Team meetings are held specifically for input from the member representatives. Public comment is invited at the conclusion of business at these meetings.

Project Schedule

The Bridges Project team is launching the coordination plan for the SEIS process this week by contacting dozens of government agencies, organizations and individuals that were involved in the initial Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or have been involved in the project since the Record of Decision in 2003.

The project team will hold an initial meeting with these participants in late May as part of an on-going coordination process during development of the SEIS. During the next few months, the project team will study the proposed design changes, environmental changes and tolling impacts.

A draft SEIS, which will evaluate the options and list the preferred alternative, will be completed later this year. A 45-day comment period will follow the draft's release, which will include two formal public hearings – one in each state.

The final SEIS, which will incorporate public comments and select the best alternative for the project, is expected to be completed in the first half of 2012. The project team anticipates a Record of Decision for the SEIS will be issued by the Federal Highway Administration in 2012, which will allow the states to move ahead with the project.

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