



TRANSPORTATION CABINET

Frankfort, Kentucky 40622
www.transportation.ky.gov/

Steven L. Beshear
Governor

Michael W. Hancock, P.E.
Secretary

Greetings!

After years of discussion, planning and preparation, we are about to begin construction of the Ohio River Bridges Project – two new bridge crossings and a much-improved interchange in downtown Louisville.

Many people have played key roles in transforming this dream into a reality. And I want to make sure you and other leaders are aware of what's ahead as we prepare for construction this summer.

Kentucky and Indiana are partners in the Bridges Project and we have agreed to share responsibilities for construction and procurement of the two major segments. Kentucky is taking the lead on the Downtown Crossing – a new I-65 bridge for northbound traffic, a renovated Kennedy Bridge to carry southbound traffic and the rebuilding of interchange connections on both sides of the river. Indiana is taking the lead on the East End Crossing, a new bridge and highway connections that will complete the eastern loop for the region.

The preparation for construction of both crossings continues with final design work, land acquisition and geotechnical work. The visible signs of what will be one of the largest transportation construction projects in America will increase in the coming weeks.

Downtown Crossing Construction

The Downtown Crossing – the two downtown bridges and interstate connections – will be completed in just over 3 ½ years in December 2016. But we are announcing today that the first new bridge in more than 50 years at the Falls of the Ohio will open to traffic exactly three years from this month.

Through an innovative approach to construction and sequencing, the Walsh Design Build Team will build the new bridge, move most of the existing I-65 traffic from the Kennedy Bridge and then completely overhaul the Kennedy to carry six lanes of southbound I-65 traffic. The new bridge will carry six lanes of northbound traffic.

It's an amazing accomplishment and a testament to the dedication of the combined team that Walsh and KYTC bring to the project.

Work begins this month on staging areas on both sides of the river for construction to begin in July on the new I-65 bridge downtown.



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Starting in mid-April and continuing through June, workers will begin exploratory drilling and constructing a test shaft for the new Downtown bridge. The work will begin on the Indiana shore just east of the Kennedy Bridge.

On the Kentucky side, Walsh Construction will cordon off a safety zone in Waterfront Park beneath the Kennedy Bridge and the area immediately east in preparation for construction. To ensure safety and connectivity for users of Waterfront Park, workers will fence off the area under the Kennedy Bridge but will provide connectivity for pedestrians along the sidewalk on the southern edge of the park along River Road.

Beginning the weekend following the Derby, Walsh crews will make some additional repairs to the Kennedy Bridge, the last significant work necessary until re-decking begins in Spring 2016. Weekend-only lane closures will allow us to avoid major impacts on work commuters.

In July, construction will begin in earnest with crews focusing on widening I-65 South. Two lanes will be open in both directions throughout construction, but we anticipate additional congestion on the interstate and temporary detours on city streets adjacent to I-65 from the river's edge to Muhammad Ali Boulevard.

The start of downtown construction will require the closure of the ramp from I-64 Eastbound to I-65 Southbound, the least used ramp in the downtown interchange. Interstate motorists traveling from the west to the south can take a designated detour route, I-264 from the Sherman Minton Bridge to the I-264/I-65 Southbound interchange.

Project Financing

To pay for the project, both states have funding plans that use a combination of traditional transportation funding and toll revenues. Kentucky and Indiana are sharing toll revenues equally from the East End and Downtown crossings.

The Kentucky Public Transportation Infrastructure Authority (KPTIA), which was created to oversee financing of mega-projects, will meet this month to continue preparations for issuing bonds in late spring or early summer to help finance the construction work for the Downtown Crossing.

In the coming weeks, the project's Joint Board and Tolling Body, bi-state governing groups comprising leaders of the states' transportation and finance agencies, will meet to work on issues related to developing a tolling system.

Our goal is to establish a tolling system that's fair, easy-to-use, provides discounts for frequent commuters who rely most on cross-river travel and rewards motorists who use technology to keep administrative and collection costs low.

Public Information and Involvement

The Bridges Project continues its commitment to public involvement and information with meetings to keep citizens engaged and informed. The project team has met with Area Advisory

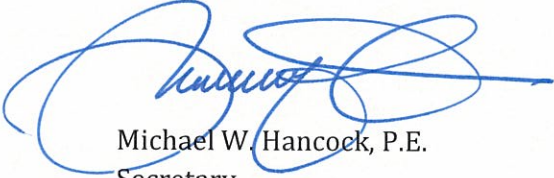
Teams, Historic Preservation Advisory Teams, local government leaders, emergency responders, utilities and other key stakeholders.

KYTC and Walsh Construction will hold a Downtown Crossing open house on **Wednesday, May 8, 2013, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Mellwood Art Center in Louisville**. The meeting will include an overview presentation on the construction plans for the year ahead.

In closing, I want to thank you again for helping to move this once-in-a-lifetime project from the drawing board to the starting line. We know the next several years will be a busy and challenging time as we work to successfully complete one of the nation's largest transportation improvement projects.

As we work through those challenges, please don't hesitate to contact me and my team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael W. Hancock", with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

Michael W. Hancock, P.E.
Secretary