

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS

Forum Office Park III, 305 North Hurstbourne Parkway, Suite 100, Louisville, KY, 40222 Tel. (502) 394-3840 Fax. (502) 426-9778

MEETING SUMMARY REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

June 15, 2011 - 1:30 p.m.

Trolley Barn

Kentucky Center for African American Heritage
1701 W. Muhammad Ali Blvd.
Louisville, KY 40203

The following Regional Advisory Council Members were in attendance:

- Ann Simms, City of Prospect,
- Lawrence L. Winburn, LIUNA, Greater Louisville Central Labor Council
- David Trotter, Clark County Planning, Zoning & Bldg. Commission
- Ron Schneider, Coalition for the Advancement of Regional Transportation (CART)
- Ted Pullen, Metro Public Works
- Meme Runyon, River Fields
- Bill Hayden, Knob & Valley Audubon Society
- Stan Lampe, Kentuckians for Better Transportation (KBT)
- Rosalind Streeter, River Fields
- Rita Y. Phillips, Kentucky Center for African American Heritage (KCAAH)
- Eric Burse, Kentucky Center for African American Heritage (KCAAH)
- Steven Meyer, Hoosier Environmental Council
- Jim Mims, Louisville Codes and Regulations
- Michelle King, Louisville Metro Air Pollution Control District (APCD)
- Lauren Hardwick, Greater Louisville Inc. (GLI)
- Max Weintraub, River Fields
- Larry Chaney, Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA)
- Jim Keith, Clark-Floyd County Convention and Tourism Bureau

The following Bridges Project representatives were in attendance:

- Kentucky Transportation Cabinet: Gary Valentine, Andy Barber, Chuck Wolfe, Chad Carlton, Ann Gibson
- Indiana Department of Transportation: Paul Boone, Scott Stewart
- Federal Highway Administration: Duane Thomas
- Community Transportation Solutions (CTS): John Sacksteder, Jim Hilton, Phil Banton, Paul Hilton, Cindy Kowalski, Bob Lauder, Kathy Francis, Rachel Feldman
- Section 1 Design Consultant, Kentucky Transportation Associates: Glen Kelly
- Section 2 Design Consultant, Michael Baker Corporation, J.B. Williams
- Section 3 Design Consultant, Butler, Fairman & Seufert: Ben Zobrist, Mike Matel, Dan Isaacs
- Section 4 Design Consultant, HW Lochner Inc, Jerry Leslie, Mark Litkenhus (Stantec)
- Section 5 Design Consultant, PB Americas, Steve Slade



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- Section 6 Design Consultant, Burgess & Niple, Scott Sondles
- Indiana Ombudsman, Carl Percy
- Kentucky Ombudsman, Lee Douglas Walker
- Bridges Authority Members: Charles Buddeke, Pat Byrne, Jamie Fiepke, Christi Robinson, Ben Richmond, Angela Nichols, Kerry Stemler,

Others in attendance include: Braden Lammers (NAS and Tribune), Vaughan Scott, Maurice Sweeney (AABA), Patty Clare (LDDC), Martina Kunnecke (NPP), Attica Scott (KY JWJ), Daniela Bartley Asenjo (KY JWJ), Mark Scherrens (Bridges Coalition), Holly Weyler (Bridges Coalition), Sheldon Shafer (CJ), Dan Borsch (Say No To Bridge Tolls), Steve Shaw (LEO), Tyler Allen.

Welcome / Introductions

John Sacksteder welcomed the RAC members and the audience to the African American Heritage Center and explained the purpose of the RAC meeting was to provide information on the project developments to the members and give them an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions. He emphasized questions from the audience can be addressed at the upcoming public meetings on June 27th in Indiana and June 28th in Kentucky.

John told everyone that they must sign in, saying we need a record of everyone who attended. The RAC members were provided an agenda and a printout of the PowerPoint presentation.

All attendees introduced themselves. There were RAC members, Bridges project consultants, Bridges Authority members, KYTC representatives, INDOT representatives, newspaper staff and other non-RAC individuals from the community with an interest in the project; for a total of 66 individuals on the registration list.

Project History

John Sacksteder gave an overview of the history of the project from 1998 when the Federal EIS began to 2003 when the Record of Decision (ROD) was published with the selected alternative to include a new Downtown Bridge, a new East End Bridge and a reconstructed Kennedy Interchange.

The work progress on the project since 2003 involved design engineering, right of way acquisition, development of a financial plan in 2008, update to the financial plan in 2010 and creation of the Bridges Authority in 2010. During this time, environmental mitigation activities occurred included the reconstruction of the Trolley Barn where today's meeting is being held.

Why We Are Here

Gary Valentine described the lack of conventional funding and the reduction in purchasing power from the gasoline tax which have contributed to the need for a workable financing plan.



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The federal gasoline tax, which supports the Highway Trust fund, was set at 18.5 cents per gallon in 1993. The tax was not indexed for inflation; thus the purchasing power is approximately 20% of the 1993 purchasing power. Since 1993, our infrastructure continues to age. Construction costs have risen. Vehicles have become more efficient. All this leaves less to spend on roads. To help compensate, Indiana's *Major Moves* program and Kentucky's *Practical Solutions* program were implemented. Then in 2010, the governors of Indiana and Kentucky and the mayor of Louisville created the Bridges Authority to develop a financial plan for the Bridges project. At the same time, the Metro Transportation plan identified tolls as an additional funding source to fill the funding gap.

In January of 2011, the governors and Mayor Fischer recommended three cost saving changes, estimated to save \$500 million:

- a. Rebuild Kennedy Interchange in place
- b. Reduce East End to four lanes
- c. Move pedestrian experience to Big Four

The cost saving changes were evaluated and additional modifications proposed for a total of \$1.2 billion in potential savings taking the project from \$4.1 billion to \$2.9 billion (see slide 11 for details of cost differences between two alternatives).

A Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is required by federal process to review the proposed changes, effects not previously considered and the impact on tolls. The SEIS will include a Traffic Diversion Analysis with a range of tolls evaluated (see slide 13 for range of tolls); but no decision has been made on toll rates. Toll rates and a tolling policy will be determined by the Bridges Authority through a separate analysis.

The Purpose and Need for the project, unchanged since the 2003 ROD, include: safety problems, traffic congestion, inefficient mobility, inadequate linkage, and planning consistency. The bottom line is to improve cross river mobility. Regarding safety, data shows crash rates in the Kennedy Interchange are above the national average (see slides 15 & 16 for details). A white paper on the Purpose and Need will be available at future meetings.

The three alternates being evaluated in the SEIS include: No Action; 2003 Selected Alternative with tolls; and the 2011 Modified Alternative with tolls.

Section 1 Design

Glen Kelly with Kentucky Transportation Associates presented the highlights of Section 1, Kentucky Approach to Downtown Bridge and Kennedy Interchange.

One recent study showed the existing Kennedy Interchange was the 11th worst bottleneck in the country, with the crash rate twice the state average, lane weaves, merging areas and geometric concerns, such as narrow shoulders and sharp curves that are greater than ASHTO current standards. The current traffic congestion and traffic safety demonstrate the need for action. In the



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No Action alternate, by the year 2030, the average travel speed during rush hour in the Kennedy Interchange is forecasted to be 20 mph with an average total delay of 1,200 hours.

In the 2003 Selected Alternative and in the 2011 Modified Alternative, lane lengths are being added, curves improved and shoulders widened. The average travel speed during peak travel is projected to be 50 mph with an average total delay of 100 hours.

The cost of the 2003 Selected Alternative is \$1.5 billion, including 92 parcels and 72 acres of right of way impacted. Whereas, the cost of the 2011 Modified Alternative is \$0.7 billion with approximately 30 parcels and 13 acres of right of way impacted.

The 2003 Selected Alternative has features and benefits not offered in the 2011 Modified Alternative, such as: a new interchange at Frankfort Avenue; raising the grade of Frankfort Avenue above the 10 year flood level; providing an extension of Witherspoon to Frankfort Avenue; access from the Butchertown area to River Road and the Waterfront; providing I-65 access from 2nd street; eliminating the I-64 pump station; and providing a Mellwood to Story connection. The trade off is a reduction in cost.

The 2011 Modified Alternate eliminates the need to relocate the major LG&E transmission lines.

Section 2 Design

J.B. Williams with Michael Baker Corporation presented a comparison of the existing I-65 downtown bridge over the Ohio River and the proposed Downtown Bridge over the Ohio River. He also gave an overview of the bridge crossing alignment, navigation requirements, and the bridge type selection process that resulted in the 3 Tower Cable-Stayed design.

The existing I-65 bridge has 3 south-bound lanes and 4 north-bound lanes with no shoulders. The proposed design will provide 6 south-bound and 6 north-bound lanes with full 12' shoulders. The new bridge will be for north-bound only and the existing bridge will be reconfigured to south-bound only by removing the median barrier, replacing the deck and striping for six lanes.

The Coast Guard sets navigational requirements to ensure the primary and secondary channels are unobstructed; thus the new piers need to line up with the existing piers for the I-65 downtown bridge. Also, 71 feet of vertical clearance is required under the bridge.

The 2003 Selected Alternative for the new bridge is 115' wide with 6 lanes, two 12' shoulders and includes a 17' pedestrian walkway/bikeway.

The 2011 Modified Alternative for the new bridge is 99' wide with 6 lanes and two 12' shoulders and no pedestrian walkway/bikeway. A pedestrian walkway/bikeway will be available on the Big Four Pedestrian Bridge project.



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Section 3 Design

Ben Zobrist with Butler, Fairman & Seufert discussed the Indiana approach to the Downtown Bridge, explaining the 2003 Selected Alternative and the 2011 Modified Alternative. While the mainline alignment hasn't changed, the proposed access to the local community has changed.

He compared the access in both alternates at the following I-65 intersections: Court Avenue, 6th/7th Street, 10th Street, and the SB Frontage and Stansifer Access.

The 2003 Selected Alternative provides new and improved access with additional ramps and a fly-over bridge from I-65 north-bound to 10th Street east-bound.

The 2011 Modified Alternative maintains access similar to existing access, eliminating the fly-over bridge, reducing the number of proposed bridge structures and the amount of proposed right of way to be acquired; saving considerable cost. The SB Frontage and Stansifer access does not change.

Section 4 Design

Jerry Leslie with HW Lochner Inc. summarized the proposed modification in the Section 4 Kentucky Approach to the East End Bridge as the same horizontal alignment with a reduced typical section and a revised profile south of the tunnel. The tunnel is still part of the project and does not change.

The 2003 Selected Alternative typical section provides for six lanes and two 8' outside shoulders. The 2011 Modified Alternative typical section provides four lanes with full shoulders saving 16' of roadway width; while maintaining the ability to reconfigure to six lanes in the future with reduced shoulders.

The revised profile decreases the amount of rock cut near the beginning of the project. The 2011 Modified Alternative design also reduces the tunnel diameter by reducing the tunnel typical section from 54' to 40'.

The modified design maintains the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) context sensitive solutions such as a tunnel, reduced blasting, well-head protection and a shared use path.

Section 5 Design

Steve Slade with PB Americas described the bridge site, alignment and bridge type selection process for the Section 5 East End River Bridge. The site is rural and quiet with no existing bridge over the Ohio River. The alignment avoids historic property in Kentucky and the Lime Kilns in Indiana.

The 2003 Selected Alternative is a cable-stay bridge almost ½ mile long with a 1,200 foot center span for a 900' navigational channel. The bridge width is 154.5' with 6 lanes, 12' shoulders and a 17' pedestrian walkway/bikeway. Although the initial design portrayed pile caps above the water level, since then, the design allowed for the caps to be below water.



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The 2011 Modified Alternative reduces the bridge width by 23' to 131.5' with 4 lanes and 12' shoulders initially, but the ability to contain 6 lanes when needed. The 17' pedestrian walkway/bikeway is reduced by 4' to 13'. The reduction in size has allowed for an all concrete structure and the elimination of deck openings. The span lengths are unchanged.

Commitments documented in the 2003 ROD remain the same, such as: bridge type, height of towers, architecture, lighting, and a closed drainage system.

Based on a 100 year bridge design life, the modified changes represent approximately \$80 million in savings.

Section 6 Design

Scott Sondles presented the Section 6 Indiana Approach to East End Bridge and compared the 2003 Selected Alternative with the 2011 Modified Alternative. The primary proposed change with the modified alternative is from a six lane typical to a four lane typical with the ability to accommodate six lanes in the future, if needed. Also, through a value engineering process, some grade was reduced.

The alignment from the 2003 Selected Alternative has not changed. The early design process looked at nearly 20 options for the I-265 and I-62 interchange before selecting a diverging diamond interchange.

Scott reviewed the safety advantages of a Diverging Diamond interchange showing fewer conflict points (12 compared to 30 with a traditional diamond), resulting in fewer crashes.

Next Steps

Gary Valentine described the changes and the required SEIS process as an opportunity to stop-look and listen; and to determine are we heading in the right direction. While not going back to the scoping stage, there will be public involvement and meetings. The purpose and need is the same. Although tolling is not a part of the environmental process, the SEIS evaluation process will look at the effects with tolls.

The draft SEIS will be done by the end of the year, followed by a public comment period and development of the new Record of Decision.

Gary concluded the presentation and opened the floor for questions and comments from the RAC members.

Questions / Comments

Q: Right of way acquisition for the Indiana downtown side?

A: Only one parcel on the downtown Indiana side. The treatment plant was acquired as an advance acquisition.

Q: How many right-of-way parcels will be needed for Section 3?



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A: Don't know the exact details yet because Section 3 hasn't gotten that far into the process; the proposed reduction in right of way in Section 3 is significant.

Q: Has the design in Indiana been completed?

A: It has not progressed enough to give right of way numbers; we are in the SEIS process and following direction from the FHWA letter of March 24, 2011 to stop right of way acquisition while in SEIS process unless an offer has been made.

Q: How many offers have been made in Indiana?

A: Most of the offers in Indiana east end (Section 6) have closed. We were about to make a half dozen additional offers, but we were not allowed to progress. There is very little out there that hasn't been closed in section 6; just three in question. In Section 3, downtown Indiana, only two parcels have been bought.

Q: How many on the east end KY side?

A: There are a couple of properties outstanding, but they've made offers on virtually all. There are approximately 30 to go to closing.

Q: What's the potential impact on the visitors' center (downtown Indiana) with the future plan? If eliminating Court Avenue access, how will visitors access the center?

A: Access on North Shore will remain. By providing a reduced section, we've been able to pull away from the visitor's center. Future access is pretty much as the existing condition is today. South is going to have to exit in the modified alternative, similar to today, but not as far north.

Q: Is that convenient for visitors? This is the first I've heard of this. (This question is from the Clark/Floyd Counties Convention and Tourism Bureau)

A: The removal of exit 0 was part of the EIS selected alternative.

Q: What if coming from south-bound?

A: Exit frontage road; take Missouri to Court and then to North Shore

Comment: This is the first I've heard of it. Now you're saying you go north. Maybe it would be better to walk through this afterward.

Response: We will have more information at the Area Advisory Team (AAT) meeting. And we can meet with you.

Q: Will the project be built in phases (i.e. east end first, downtown second)?

A: That will be determined. The Authority is working on the delivery project and that will be available later this fall.

Q: What is the status of land acquisition?

A: If an offer has been made, we can continue to negotiate. Federal money can be used if an offer was already made, but cannot make offers after March 23, 2011 (per directive from FHWA).



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Q: What changed with the Section 6 walkway?

A: It went from 17' in the 2003 Selected Alternative to 13' in the 2011 Modified Alternative.

Q: Do you have the Purpose and Need white paper done?

A: yes, we plan to make it available at a future meeting.

Q: Regarding the time of day model, will that be higher tolls or lower tolls? What about higher during time of day?

A: This is being studied by the Bridges Authority. Congestion pricing does not address purpose and need; it does not improve safety. Congestion pricing does bring the Kennedy Interchange up to AASHTO's pricing guidelines.

Q: If the design speed in the Kennedy Interchange is raised to 50 mph, how is that safer?

A: We eliminate weaves and create better geometry.

Q: Just trying to make traffic faster doesn't seem to make it safer. Will you study if they will have an effect on the quality of public transportation?

A: Quality of public transportation is hard to measure, but both build alternates have enhanced bus service. It's in the 2003 Record of Decision.

Q: Is that part of the actual plan given decreases in public transportation funds? Will it still be in the 2011 Modified?

A: Yes, it may even be increased. What you're referring to is environmental injustice. The SEIS will look at effects to low income; we will work through the process. At the Draft EIS, that will be available.

Q: How will the public be involved?

A: We have upcoming public meetings.

Q: Gov. Beshear said it's important to know that the SEIS would have been required, but there's no discussion about the evaluation of tolls and how they impact. What are you doing to evaluate the impact of tolls? In the FEIS, one dollar toll dropped the east end bridge to 13k cars, and a \$2 toll dropped it to 300 cars. That would clearly reduce traffic. We also know the Sherman Minton can't be tolled. With 7 to 8 dollars for tractor trailers, traffic will be diverted and that will have traffic impacts. Can you address that in detail? Would that put more traffic on Sherman Minton and east end?

A: We are working with FHWA on traffic evaluations and that will be available at the upcoming public meetings.

Q: Will that be our last opportunity for comment?

A: You will be able to comment on the Draft EIS. The Section 106 is handled separately; consulting parties will be able to review that during the draft EIS process.



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Q: So, RiverFields, as a 106 consulting party will have an opportunity to comment, but what about public?

A: The public will have 45 days to comment.

Comment: The public may not have a reasonable amount of time to comment (cites NEPA)

Response: If FHWA thinks people should comment on their methodologies, they can do that.

Q: We the public want to comment on tolls, we will see the impact of tolls in the Draft EIS, then how long will we get to process the information? Will there be more meetings?

A: 45 days. We'll work with federal highways to see if more public meetings are needed, but if required to have extra meetings then we have to expand the timeline.

Q: Can you get this done by end of year?

A: We think so, but if there are extra meetings, it could be extended.

Comment: A casino funded \$35 million for a bridge between Indiana and Illinois; you may want to look into something like that being pursued. It was done through the Indiana Gaming Commission.

Response: Thank you

Q: Does the Bridges Authority responsibility include a tolling policy?

A: Yes.

Q: Can the east end bridge become a six lane bridge by widening to the middle and restriping?

A: Yes.

Q: Will there be TARC service even though their services have been reduced since 2003?

A: Enhanced bus service will be part of the project.

Q: On whose dime?

A: The project's

Q: As a pedestrian facility, the Big 4 Bridge is not the same. It's a very long walk to it and up the approach. How will this affect pedestrian and bike traffic on 2nd Street Bridge?

A: The intent is to get pedestrian and bike off the 2nd St. Bridge. It is supposed to improve bike and pedestrian usage.

Q: What if you want to walk to Rocky's?

A: The intent is to improve, not take it off.

Comment: We are on a trajectory for tolls that could reduce volume and it could change the purpose and need. We've had a downturn on traffic. Rising gas will continue to reduce traffic. We don't have the same purpose and need.



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Response: We do have the same purpose and need. We've written a white paper. It's the same as 2003 and we will make that white paper available prior to the public meetings.

Q: Is the white paper available today?

A: In draft; we will make it available on the web and send it out to you.

Comment: It would have been better to have it before this meeting.

Comment / Q: I appreciate the description of the changes. Even those of us who pay a lot of attention haven't been able to determine all the impacts of these changes. Can you document these changes in public form for us to review in advance of the public meeting? We want a written analysis as opposed to a PowerPoint.

A: A lot of this information is not available in a chart.

Q: Can you produce one before the public meeting?

A: Yes

Q: The June meetings will be the final meetings until when?

A: Except for the Section 106 meetings, the June meetings will be the final public meetings until the public hearing after the Draft EIS is available; although we may come to the RAC between now and when it's published. We would have to meet with FHWA to determine.

Q: There was a graphic on the level of accidents. It said it's above the national avg. What does that mean? What basis?

A: That is based on a 100 million vehicle miles traveled. That's standard. The fatality rate is also higher than the statewide rate.

Comment: I want to go on the record: The dollars spent on this could be more cost effectively spent on mass transit with light rail and supplementary bus system improvements.

Q: (from audience): How do I get on the RAC?

A: Contact me through the website; explain your group and we'll consider it. We want to be open to all groups.

Comment: The FEIS is not on your website.

Response: Yes it definitely is there. Check the project section, and then click on the History and Documents tab. Let us know if you can't find it. We will provide you a link.

Gary Valentine thanked the audience for their attendance and attention. The meeting ended at 3:37 pm.



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