



## **KYTC, INDOT APPLY FOR STIMULUS FUNDS TO REPLACE MILTON-MADISON BRIDGE**

*Replacement of bridge superstructure emerging as “most viable option”*

Louisville, Ky. (August 14, 2009) – The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) will apply for federal stimulus funding to replace the deteriorating 80-year-old Milton-Madison Bridge. More than a year of environmental studies and community, state and federal agency input have indicated to KYTC and INDOT that replacement of the existing bridge superstructure would be the fastest and most cost-effective way to connect US 421 between Milton, Ky., and Madison, Ind.

Superstructure replacement would involve removing the existing steel superstructure and replacing it with a new wider truss superstructure, which would look similar to the existing bridge. Public polling has shown a preference for a truss bridge type over an arch bridge; a cable stay bridge would not be possible with the proposed superstructure replacement. Additionally, the road deck would be rebuilt and widened to forty-feet, including two, twelve-foot lanes and emergency lanes. The current bridge is only twenty-feet-wide with two, ten-foot lanes and no shoulder. Existing piers would be reused by bringing them up to modern standards. Minimal changes would be made to the roads approaching the bridge; new approaches would be considered as part of future projects when funding becomes available. While the bridge could remain open during work on the piers, it would be closed from nine to twelve months for the remaining phases of construction.

“We understand the economic impact of this proposal. And if it is decided to replace the existing superstructure, we would examine every opportunity to keep the bridge closure to less than twelve months,” said John Carr of Wilbur Smith Associates, the engineering firm consulting on the Milton-Madison Bridge Project. “No one is taking this proposal lightly. We recognize this would call for a sacrifice on the part of both communities. The payoff is that the people of Milton and Madison would be driving on a safe, new bridge in just over two years.”

If the bridge is closed, a ferry service would be installed to take cars and passengers across the Ohio River, and there would be a plan for emergency services.

### **TIGER Grant**

Replacing the superstructure would cost an estimated \$131 million. To help cover such a cost, KYTC and INDOT are seeking a \$95 million Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)

Grant. The U.S. Department of Transportation is making \$1.5 billion in TIGER grants available to state and local governments under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The deadline to apply for the grant is September 15. Winners of the grant are expected to be named by the U.S. Department of Transportation in January 2010.

“We have followed the environmental (NEPA\*) process, and it has become increasingly clear that superstructure replacement may be our best option, regardless of the availability of the TIGER Grant.” said KYTC project manager Gary Valentine. “But because the grant is available, we have positioned ourselves to take advantage of it at a time when highway dollars are becoming scarce.”

Pursuing the TIGER Grant presents the opportunity for a rapid replacement of the Milton-Madison Bridge. “In addition to being the most feasible, responsible alternative, the proposed superstructure replacement is the only option that fits TIGER Grant criteria,” added Steve Smith, project manager for INDOT. “Winning this grant would put our project on the fast track.”

Because no properties would be taken, superstructure replacement would eliminate the need for acquiring right of way, which is time-consuming. By comparison, if funding were available, completion of the other bridge alternatives would likely be more than a decade away.

KYTC and INDOT will be competing with projects from across the country for TIGER Grant funding. “We believe we have a good chance,” said Valentine. “This bridge is a critical link between our states. TIGER Grants were created for projects like ours.”

If KYTC and INDOT are awarded the TIGER Grant, construction on a replacement bridge could begin as soon as next summer with completion estimated in early 2012. TIGER Grants give priority to projects that can be completed by February 17, 2012. If KYTC and INDOT are not awarded the grant, both states will continue to pursue traditional funding for the bridge replacement project.

### **Superstructure Replacement**

There are four factors in considering the alternative of superstructure replacement:

- 1) Condition of the existing bridge
- 2) Environmental impacts revealed through the NEPA process
- 3) Affordability
- 4) Timing

“We have to look at the feasibility of all of the alternatives, the property we would need to acquire, affordability, timing and condition of the existing bridge. All of these will have to be factored into our proposal,” said Valentine. Information gathered over the past year through the environmental process played

a critical role in the proposal. It has been determined that superstructure replacement would have the least impact on Madison's National Historic Landmark District and on Milton's two historic districts.

"We will continue to follow the environmental process to its logical conclusion," added Valentine. "But it will take less time because this proposed action will have minimal impacts on the environment and historic properties."

The condition of the existing bridge and timing both became increasingly urgent factors after inspections that heightened concerns about the longevity of the existing bridge, now estimated at reaching the end of its life span in less than ten years.

With an estimated cost of \$131 million, the superstructure replacement option also emerged as the most affordable alternative. By comparison, the two Tiber Creek location alternatives are estimated to cost between \$189 million and \$199 million. The Canip Creek location alternative is estimated at \$219 million.

### **Public Meetings**

Public meetings will be held to keep the community informed about the status of the project. Details will be announced in the local newspaper and on the project Web site, [miltonmadisonbridge.com](http://miltonmadisonbridge.com). Comments about the proposed superstructure replacement can also be made on the project Web site.

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\*National Environmental Policy Act:

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), signed into law in 1970, requires that impact on the human and natural environment be publicly documented and considered in the decision-making process for major federal projects.