



# REFLECTIONS

## BRIDGE PROPOSAL

Of the four remaining options for the Milton-Madison Bridge Project, one is emerging as the fastest and most cost-effective way to get a safe new bridge for the community. While it is not a final decision, a “perfect storm” of circumstances is leading toward building a new bridge on the existing piers, or “superstructure replacement.”

Meantime, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) are applying for federal stimulus funding, called a TIGER Grant, to pay for superstructure replacement, if it is chosen as the selected bridge alternative.

The condition of the existing bridge, impact on historic districts, environmental impacts and affordability are all factors in selecting an alternative.

- 1) **Historic Impact:** Superstructure replacement with minimal approaches is the only one of the remaining alternatives that lies outside Madison's National Landmark District and Milton's two historic districts and does not require relocation of historic homes or businesses. This proposal would not require any property to be taken, which eliminates the need for a right-of-way process that would take several additional years.
- 2) **Condition of Existing Bridge:** The existing bridge has only about 10 years of remaining life, based on recent inspections. The longer the delay, the greater the likelihood that bridge repair will be needed, which would require the bridge to close intermittently for 18-24 months.
- 3) **TIGER Grant:** Superstructure replacement is the only alternative that would allow construction to be completed by February 17, 2012. Projects that can meet that deadline are given preference in awarding TIGER Grants. By comparison, due to the financial condition of both Kentucky and Indiana, it likely would be 10 years or longer before the option of a new bridge at a new location could be considered.

Minimal changes would be made to the roads approaching the bridge under the proposed superstructure replacement. The new bridge would be designed so that it is compatible with any future approach work.

KYTC and INDOT recognize that closing the bridge would require a sacrifice by both communities, but when looking at all of the options available, it is believed this could be the best opportunity to provide a wider, safer bridge in the shortest time possible.

### Public Meeting:

A public meeting to discuss the superstructure replacement proposal will be held September 10 at the new Milton Elementary School, 9542 Hwy. 421 N., from 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

The presentation begins at 7:00 p.m.

Project officials will also answer questions during an online forum on the project Web site, [www.miltonmadisonbridge.com](http://www.miltonmadisonbridge.com), on September 17, from noon–2:00 p.m. and again from 7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.

### What's Next:

KYTC and INDOT find out in January 2010 whether they have been awarded the TIGER Grant.

While awaiting the outcome of the TIGER Grant application, the project's environmental process will continue, with required federal documents completed in February.

The project team will also continue coordinating with Section 106 consulting parties and agency representatives to fulfill all the federal requirements.

While chances of winning the grant are favorable, if the grant is not awarded, KYTC and INDOT will pursue traditional funding for superstructure replacement.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### **When would the bridge be closed and for how long?**

If KYTC and INDOT win stimulus funding, and if superstructure replacement is chosen as the selected alternative, construction on the new bridge could begin as soon as next summer with the new bridge open to traffic in early 2012. The existing bridge would be closed for 9–12 months beginning in early 2011. KYTC and INDOT are considering offering financial incentives to encourage the contractor to shorten the time the bridge would be closed.

### **How will I get across the river?**

If superstructure replacement becomes the selected alternative, a river ferry service would be provided at no cost to travelers, and there would be provisions for emergency services. Since ferries cannot operate during high water and wind, a system will be developed to notify residents when the ferry is closed. During the bridge closing, motorists can use the bridge 26 miles upstream near Vevay, Ind., or 46 miles downstream in Louisville. Every effort would be made to reduce the length of time the bridge would be closed.

### **What is superstructure replacement?**

Superstructure replacement means building a new bridge in the same location as the current bridge, using the existing piers. It involves removing the existing steel superstructure, replacing it with a new wider truss superstructure and modernizing the piers. The road deck would be rebuilt and widened to 40 feet, including two 12-foot lanes, 8-foot shoulders and a sidewalk. The current bridge is only 20-feet-wide with two 10-foot lanes and no shoulder or sidewalk. Only minimal changes would be made to the roads approaching the bridge. Testing has shown that the concrete in the existing piers is sound and has a remaining life of 80+ years. However, the piers will be modified to allow for the new 40-foot wide structure and to improve the piers for potential barge collisions.

### **What is a TIGER Grant?**

It is federal stimulus money available as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Grants are competitive and sought by communities across the country. KYTC and INDOT are applying jointly for \$95 million toward the estimated \$131 million cost of superstructure replacement with minimal approach work. Both states would split equally the remaining cost.

### **Will our historic districts be impacted?**

Superstructure replacement, with minimal approach work, is the only alternative that lies outside the Madison National Landmark District. It is also the only alternative which would not require relocation of homes or business. Also it will not require the buying of right-of-way from the two Historic Districts in Kentucky. Information gathered over the past year through the environmental process played a critical role in the superstructure replacement proposal.

### **How much would it cost to build a new bridge at a new location?**

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. Superstructure replacement with fully redesigned approaches to SR 56 and Milton Hill would cost \$167 million.

### **What will the new bridge look like?**

The new bridge will look similar to the existing bridge, except it will be wider. 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.