

Recommended Route Chosen for Heartland Parkway

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The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet has completed an alternatives planning study for the proposed Heartland Parkway, and the recommended corridor for the new road calls for existing routes to be widened.

The route recommended in the study for the 63-mile corridor begins at the new KY 61 interchange on the Louie B. Nunn Parkway south of Columbia and extends to the KY 555 interchange on the Martha Layne Collins Bluegrass Parkway in Washington County.

The purpose of the study was to identify and evaluate potential corridors for a new route and/or the reconstruction of existing routes. The project goals are to: Improve regional access for economic development and existing industry, truck access, tourism, higher education, agriculture economy, improve safety, improve highway capacity in certain locations, decrease delays through communities, and improve emergency response times.

Utilizing local input throughout the study process, the report evaluated three building alternatives: A four-lane, fully controlled access facility on new alignment; a four-lane limited access facility along the existing alignment; and a two-lane limited access facility with a one-mile long truck passing lane every three miles along the existing alignment.

The four-lane limited access facility along the existing alignment was the recommended alternative to advance to future project phases as funding becomes available.

The recommended corridor consists of widening the existing KY 55/US 68/KY 555 route to a four-lane partially controlled access facility. It would follow the bypasses currently under design around the west sides of Columbia and Lebanon. Both of these bypasses would be widened to four lanes. This option would provide a four-lane bypass around the southeast side of Campbellsville. This corridor is summarized in eight segments, which describes the work required in upgrading the route to a four-lane roadway.

Major issues and concerns were identified within the study area and addressed in the Alternatives Study. These include: Access to major expressway-type systems in the region (i.e., I-75, I-65 and the proposed I-66 corridor); improving economic development and tourism opportunities in Adair, Green, Taylor, Marion and Washington counties; poor geometrics, including narrow lane widths, narrow shoulders, substandard horizontal/vertical alignments, poor sight distance, no passing lanes, and access type; truck access for existing and future industries; and improving traffic congestion in Adair, Green, Taylor, Marion and Washington counties in certain locations.

Design of the approximately \$390 million roadway is planned to begin when funding is available.

The Final Report can also be found on the Division of Planning's web site under the "Planning Projects" link at: <http://transportation.ky.gov/planning/index2.asp>.