

## Heartland Parkway meetings planned

**State officials seek comments on route alternatives.**

By James Roberts

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Local residents will get their first look at alternate routes for the proposed Heartland Parkway this month.

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet officials will conduct two public meetings, the first in Columbia and the second in Campbellsville. The meeting in Campbellsville is set for Tuesday, March 24 at Taylor County High School's cafeteria from 6 to 8 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting, according to Becky Judson, public information officer for the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet in Elizabethtown, is to share conceptual alternative routes and to seek public comment.

"The goal is to follow KY 55 as much as possible between Columbia and Campbellsville," Judson said. "In order to limit impacts on communities and historic resources, we will be presenting alternative routes that occasionally diverge from the existing roadbed. Also included in the project study is a proposed Campbellsville bypass beginning around the Technology Park and ending east of the airport. We are studying five different routes along the proposed bypass."

The routes are based on preliminary field work and comments received during an earlier round of public meetings. The alternatives represent a first draft, Judson said, and the aim is to narrow the alternatives down to three based on public input.

"Our consultants will then undertake a full range of environmental, economic and engineering studies on these three alternatives," Judson said.

The 60-mile Heartland Parkway will connect the Louie B. Nunn Parkway at Columbia with the Martha Layne Collins Bluegrass Parkway at Springfield by widening the existing KY 55/U.S. 68/KY 555 route to four lanes.

Locally, the project includes widening KY 210 from U.S. 68 to KY 3183 and widening KY 55 to five lanes from KY 1625 to U.S. 68.

The project is still in the preliminary engineering phase, Judson said, the only phase that has been funded thus far.

The preliminary engineering is funded through completion, she said, with the scheduled calling for completion of preliminary engineering in 2012. Future project phases will require additional funding to get the project to completion.

"Currently," Judson said, "only the design phase has been identified in the highway plan."

Motorists will notice some work going on in Campbellsville now with the widening of KY 210, a project that ties in to the proposed parkway.

A portion of KY 210 is being widened to five lanes along with a portion of KY 55 at a cost of \$15 million. The five lanes on KY 210 will begin at KY 3183 across from the Hiestand House and extend to KY 55, stopping at Blue Hole Road.

"The widening is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2010," Judson said. "The conceptual alternatives show the Heartland Parkway leaving KY 55 around the new [Heartland Commerce and Technology Park] and joining U.S. 68 on the east side of Campbellsville and the airport."

The next step in the Heartland Parkway project, Judson said, is to present the public with plans based on the outcome of the upcoming public meetings. It is not known when that meeting might occur.

"As these studies near completion, [the public] will have another opportunity to review the results and provide input on the ultimate location of this portion of the Heartland Parkway at an additional public meeting," Judson said.

A construction start date and estimated timetable for the entire project has not been set.

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