

**I-64 Interchange and New Connector
Alternatives Planning Study
FINAL REPORT**



New I-64 Interchange

between I-265 (Gene Snyder Freeway) and KY 1848 (Simpsonville)

with a Connector Road

between KY 155/KY 148 (Taylorsville Road) and US 60 (Shelbyville Road)

JEFFERSON and SHELBY COUNTIES, KENTUCKY

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Prepared for:

**KENTUCKY TRANSPORTATION CABINET
DIVISION OF PLANNING**



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Alternatives Planning Study investigates a new I-64 interchange in the vicinity of Gilliland Road in eastern Jefferson County, along with a new or improved north-south connector road between KY 155/KY 148 (Taylorsville Road) and US 60 (Shelbyville Road). The study analyzes the project's feasibility and defines the extent of improvements best suited to meet the current and future needs of this area between I-265 (Gene Snyder Freeway) in Jefferson County to the west and KY 1848 (Simpsonville) in Shelby County to the east. (See Figure S-1.)

The area has experienced significant growth in recent years, rapidly transitioning from rural residential to residential suburban neighborhoods. Continued rapid growth and development are expected in and surrounding the study area.

In light of existing and anticipated growth, local and regional access via the interstate system and local roadway network is gaining importance. At present, I-64 bisects the study area and I-265 is to the west; however, there is no access to I-64 between I-265 and KY 1848, a distance of about 9 miles. This distance creates one of the longer gaps between interchanges on Kentucky's rural interstate system.

The development of the area now accentuates this lack of access. Road users crowd existing highways. Limited access to I-64 has contributed to ever increasing traffic volumes on US 60 and KY 155/KY 148. The existing highways, interchanges, and intersections service a region much larger than the study area, and have met or exceeded their original design capacity.

The Alternatives Planning Study was developed using a project study team approach consisting of representatives from the Transportation Cabinet Central Office and District 5; Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA); and Qk4 (consultant). Public involvement activities included project team meetings, resource agency coordination, key person interviews, public information meetings, and website information.

Project Goals and Issues

The Project Team developed the following project goals:

- 1) Congestion Mitigation
- 2) Connectivity of the Road and Interstate Network
- 3) Future Planning
- 4) Safety Improvements
- 5) Environmental Preservation
- 6) Proactive and Joint Planning



Figure S-1: Study Area

Traffic congestion overshadowed all other issues identified by local officials and citizens, and was regarded as an already serious problem likely to worsen in the future. Closely associated with traffic congestion was the lack of interstate connectivity that results in bottle-necks on the existing road network, especially on US 60 between Eastwood and I-265, the US 60/I-265 interchange, and I-265 between I-64 and US 60.

Within the center of the study area, the road network consists mainly of very narrow two-lane rural roads with no shoulders, winding through rolling terrain, providing few travel options and very limited connectivity. While local citizens expressed a strong desire to preserve the area's rural character and minimize impacts to existing property, they considered the lack of connectivity and interstate access a hindrance to fully accessing destinations, opportunities, and services available in Jefferson and Shelby Counties. Improving connectivity would play an important role in terms of serving the region's future growth and development; projected traffic demands; and access to emergency services, jobs, health care, education, retail, and other travel destinations in the region.

Local officials and the public generally viewed a new I-64 interchange and connector road as needed to add capacity, alleviate congestion, and improve safety for the traveling public. Statistically, both an

interstate and a divided facility (such as the proposed connector) are safer than the rural roads. Therefore, safety would be improved by constructing the connector to shift traffic from the existing rural, substandard roads to the interstate.

Alternative Analysis

In addition to the Do-Nothing Alternative, several Build Alternatives were considered. Transportation System Management (TSM), Operational Improvements, Spot Improvements, and Transit Options were not examined in detail since none would address the goal of improved connectivity with the interstate network. The Build Alternatives include a full interchange with I-64 and a connector road to the north and south.

Many connector road alternative locations were considered and three corridors emerged that contained one or more alternatives: (1) Eastern Corridor containing several alignments near the Shelby County line, (2) Western Corridor containing several alignments linking Eastwood and Fisherville, and (3) Southwest to the Northeast Corridor containing a single alignment crossing diagonally through the study area. Regardless of location, the traffic analysis shows that an ultimate four-lane connector road would be needed to serve existing and future traffic.

Operational Analysis

An operational analysis was conducted to address the eight policy points of an FHWA Interchange Justification Study (IJS). This analysis verifies that a new interchange in eastern Jefferson County would generally satisfy the policy points, provide a benefit to the traveling public, and mitigate conditions at the existing interstate interchanges.

Recommendations

The state's Six-Year Highway Plan FY 2007-2012 includes funding for preliminary engineering and environmental documentation for this project.

This Alternatives Planning Study concludes that a new interchange and connector road would reduce congestion and improve safety on the area highway network, especially on US 60 between Eastwood and I-265 and on I-265 between US 60 and I-64.

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that a new interchange with I-64 in eastern Jefferson County and a north-south connector road be advanced into the preliminary engineering and environmental analysis stage, during which feasible Build Alternatives and the No-Build Alternative would be explored in greater detail.

The location of the connector road should be within the Western Corridor, which links the community of Fisherville in the south and Eastwood in the north. This corridor is recommended because it would serve existing and future travel needs more effectively than a corridor farther east. The exact alignment of the road would be determined after detailed environmental and alternatives analyses.

Regarding the design of the connector road, an urban typical section should be considered north of I-64 and a rural typical section should be considered south of I-64. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities would be an asset to the new road, the local communities, and the visitors to the existing and planned park facilities in the area. Likewise, creative design elements should be considered to allow the road to serve as a gateway to the Floyds Fork Park area and associated community and land use changes north and south of I-64.

Public involvement in this project increased significantly as the project developed. Therefore, it is recommended that an extensive public involvement plan be implemented in future project stages. During the planning process, the following entities have demonstrated a keen interest in being involved: community groups in Eastwood; state and local elected officials; Floyds Fork preservation interest groups; 21st Century Parks (the non-profit group implementing the Floyds Fork Greenway Plan); local government agencies including Metro Parks, Metro Public Works, Metro Planning and Design Services, and KIPDA; and the citizens who live in the area.