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Brent Spence Bridge Emergency Repair Named a ‘Project of the Year’ by American Public Works Association

Exemplifies ‘amazing collaborative efforts to build and rebuild America’s infrastructure’

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Aug. 6, 2021) – Gov. Andy Beshear today announced that the emergency project to quickly repair and reopen the critically important Brent Spence Bridge following a truck crash and fire has been selected as a Public Works Project of the Year by the American Public Works Association (APWA).

The Brent Spence Bridge repair was among a select handful of projects the association singled out as exemplifying “amazing collaborative efforts to build and rebuild America’s infrastructure.” It was named Project of the Year in the category of disaster or emergency construction repair less than \$5 million. APWA will recognize the Brent Spence repair and other Project of the Year Award winners in a video posted to www.apwa.net on Aug. 31.

“This nationally recognized bridge has now earned Kentucky national praise for the great work performed by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and its contractors to turn a crisis into an accomplishment,” Gov. Beshear said. “The expert repairs not only led to the quick reopening of an economically significant corridor during a bustling holiday season, but it preserved the safe condition of a bridge that will remain in service for decades to come.”

APWA CEO Scott D. Grayson said the annual awards recognize the alliance between managing agencies, contractors and consultants.

“The beauty of the Project of the Year Awards is that they highlight the amazing collaborative efforts to build and rebuild America’s infrastructure. Every year, I’m amazed at the innovation and vision the award recipients share to improve quality of life for the public,” Grayson said.

The two-deck Brent Spence Bridge carries 160,000 vehicles a day across the Ohio River between Covington, Kentucky, and Cincinnati on Interstates 71 and 75. It was abruptly closed on Nov. 11, 2020, after two tractor-trailers collided about midway of the bridge's lower deck, causing fire damage to a portion of the bridge. Forty-one days later, on Dec. 22, 2020, the bridge was reopened to traffic, fully restored, under budget and ahead of schedule.

“It would be hard to imagine a more challenging scenario,” said Jim Gray, Secretary of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC). “Abrupt loss of a critical connection on one of the busiest commercial corridors in the eastern United States. A global COVID pandemic. And winter weather. We conquered this combination of factors by quickly assembling a great team, being innovative and then working night and day without letup.”

APWA credited success of the project to “simultaneous efforts on multiple fronts, quick thinking and innovative project development and procurement used by KYTC and the engineering team,” which included the consultant Michael Baker International Inc., and the contractor, Kokosing Construction Co.

APWA, headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, is an international organization of more than 30,000 members involved in the field of public works.

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