



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Gov. Beshear Announces Extensions of I-69 and I-169 to Better
Connect Western Kentucky Travelers and Businesses**

Parkway upgrades represent a nearly \$50 million state transportation investment

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 20, 2024) – Gov. Andy Beshear announced today that newly-completed upgrades of the Purchase and Pennyriple parkways mean 55 miles of new Western Kentucky interstate will now provide safer, better connections for families, businesses, and future job growth in our new Kentucky home.

“Team Kentucky is connecting folks across the state like never before,” said Gov. Beshear. “Upgrading a parkway to an interstate that now bears those recognizable shields sends the message to industries that Kentucky’s open for business and ready to move their goods and people safely and efficiently. Travelers also get to enjoy a more modern corridor to get to what matters most.”

Purchase Parkway Converted to Interstate 69

In Graves, Hickman and Fulton counties, a two-year project to upgrade 21 miles of the Julian Carroll-Purchase Parkway to interstate standards is now complete, and the highway has been redesignated Interstate 69 from Mayfield to Fulton. The interstate extension will improve traffic flow and safety for all travelers who use the route.

The \$33.9 million interstate extension included widening culverts, modernizing guardrails and improving drainage as well as reconstructing bridges, overpasses and exits. One of the most significant modernizations was to KY 339’s Exit 14 cloverleaf interchange. Originally designed to accommodate tollbooths, it was converted to a

diamond interchange with extended ramps. The newly implemented design enhances safety for motorists traveling at interstate speeds.

With construction complete, new I-69 signage went up in the final weeks of the project and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has officially added the roadway to the National Highway System.

Once the I-69 Ohio River crossing between Henderson and Evansville, Ind., is complete, the interstate will run continuously from Fulton to the Kentucky-Indiana border at Henderson.

Pennyrile Parkway Converted to Interstate 169

A nearly \$14 million project to upgrade 34 miles of the Edward T. Breathitt-Pennyrile Parkway between the I-69 interchange in Hopkins County and Interstate 24 south of Hopkinsville in Christian County, which began in 2023, is now complete. It added improved bridges, increased bridge clearances, newly designed ramps, rehabilitated road surfaces, and guardrails – meeting standards that allowed FHWA to redesignate the parkway as Interstate 169.

The new I-169 will now serve as a direct interstate link from I-24 to I-69, right through the heart of Western Kentucky. It connects the local communities and also shortens the distance between the Indiana and Tennessee state lines by 44 interstate miles.

“With these parkway to interstate conversions, the Mountain Parkway Expansion in the east, and all the industrial access roads and projects in between, Kentucky is on a roll,” said Transportation Cabinet Secretary Jim Gray. “We’re making roads safer while creating more opportunities for investments in towns and cities across this great Commonwealth.”

Mark Welch, president of the Fulton-Hickman Counties Economic Development Partnership spoke to the benefits Western Kentucky is already seeing: “Transportation infrastructure is critical to our economic development efforts in rural western Kentucky. The city of Fulton, in particular, is already seeing significant private development in anticipation of the completion of upgrades to the Purchase Parkway. We are confident that I-69 branding to exit 1 in Fulton will soon attract additional new investment in Fulton and Hickman Counties.”

Taylor Hayes, president of the Christian County Chamber of Commerce, said interstate connectivity provides more than just safer, better travel.

“I-169 will only enhance this region by helping to bring in much needed economic and tourism dollars,” Hayes said. “Just look at what’s happening now with nearly \$2 billion in investment and investment announcements over the last 20-plus months. It will continue to bring in new business as companies often look at interstate connectivity when researching areas to develop. It will create a wide array of opportunities for import and export freight that needs a north-south connection option.”

“We are excited to see such progress in our transportation infrastructure,” said Hopkins County Regional Chamber of Commerce President Lisa Miller. “While we believe we have a unique community here, we all have times when we need to go to other places or want other people to come here. This will allow safer travel on an updated roadway for our residents, businesses, and the entire region.”

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Editors Note: View photos and video of the Purchase Parkway [here](#).

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