



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Final Segment of Mountain Parkway Expansion Receives Federal Environmental Approval

Federal Highway Administration signs off on environmental review, approving the alignment of final 13-mile project segment

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 6, 2024) – Gov. Andy Beshear today announced that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has completed its environmental review of the Mountain Parkway Expansion’s final 13-mile segment, which found no significant environmental impacts would result from constructing the new roadway. That determination marks a necessary step toward advancing the project to construction.

In Sept. 2022, Gov. Beshear announced the preferred alignment for the final 13-mile segment from Salyersville to Prestonsburg would be a cross-country route instead of expanding the current Kentucky Highway 114 corridor. This option would cause fewer disruptions and property impacts to homes and businesses.

“The Mountain Parkway expansion isn’t just an investment in a project; it’s an investment in the safety and opportunities for the people of Eastern Kentucky,” said Gov. Beshear. “This federal decision affirms our assessment that ensured progress, people and places were considered as we make great strides to fulfill a commitment decades in the making.”

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) prepared and submitted the required environmental documentation to FHWA last year after completing a thorough evaluation. FHWA approved KYTC’s assessment of the final segment allowing the project team to proceed with detailed design and preconstruction activities.

Environmental process

This environmental evaluation process falls under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). It requires transportation agencies to examine the environmental, social and economic

impacts that could result from the proposed project and weigh those impacts against the public need for transportation to determine which option would be in the best interest of the public.

“We’re excited to move full steam ahead on this transformative and much-needed project for the people of Eastern Kentucky,” said KYTC Secretary Jim Gray. “We’re thankful for public input throughout the process and we look forward to delivering a transportation solution that can energize the economic potential in this part of the state.”

To meet NEPA requirements for the final segment of the parkway, KYTC completed a Supplemental Environmental Assessment in January 2024, provided opportunities for public and agency input and then issued a “Revised Finding of No Significant Impact” (FONSI) in May 2024. The updated analyses were required to evaluate the latest site conditions and review regulatory changes since 2003, when the project’s original NEPA document was approved. The FONSI identifies the cross-country alignment as the selected path for the new road. This is the only segment of six that has not been completed or is under construction.

KYTC recently applied for \$116 million through a federal Multimodal Discretionary Grant Program. Thanks to a historic \$150 million general fund commitment proposed by Gov. Beshear and backed by the Kentucky General Assembly during the 2024 legislative session, this state overmatch provides Kentucky an increased competitive advantage in the grant selection process.

About the Mountain Parkway Expansion

The Mountain Parkway Expansion is a 45-mile transformational transportation project that will create a wider, safer connection between Eastern Kentucky and the rest of the Commonwealth. The project consists of six segments, all of which are currently completed, under construction or under development. Once the project is finished, Kentucky will have 400 continuous miles of four-lane, high speed highway connecting Pikeville to Paducah, creating increased commerce and mobility across the state.

The overall Mountain Parkway Expansion project will widen 32 miles of existing parkway to four lanes, including this final segment which will extend the parkway by 13 miles from Salyersville to Prestonsburg.

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