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Gov. Beshear: \$85 Million Secured To Fund Somerset Northern Bypass

Crucial project will create new eight-mile, four-lane highway to extend Louie B. Nunn Cumberland Expressway

FRANKFORT Ky. (Sept. 29, 2026) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear announced that his administration has secured \$85 million in federal grant funding for the long-planned Somerset Northern Bypass project, which will extend the Louie B. Nunn Cumberland Expressway east to improve safety, reduce traffic, boost tourism and enhance commerce. The funding was made available through the 2026 Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight and Highway Projects Grant (INFRA), established through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021.

“My administration worked hard to secure this \$85 million in funding because this essential roadway and the people of Somerset are long overdue for an upgrade and Team Kentucky is determined to get it done,” said **Gov. Beshear**. “Thousands of Kentuckians travel this roadway daily, and it also serves as the welcome route to more than 4 million visitors each year traveling to Lake Cumberland. Now we have the funding in place to make this roadway safer while also opening up the area for even more growth. Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible, including the members of our Kentucky delegation who voted for the Infrastructure Act.”

The Somerset Northern Bypass will create a new 8-mile, 70 mph, four-lane, divided highway that is fully access-controlled. The project will complete an east-west corridor across southern Kentucky, creating economic opportunities for communities from Paducah to Pikeville. Initial studies identifying the need for this project date back to early 1990s, but funding constraints have delayed progress.

“This INFRA grant helps us move forward on a vision to improve safety, ease congestion, support the economy, and create better connections in South-Central Kentucky,” said Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Secretary Rebecca Goodman. “We’ve made significant improvements to the surrounding road network, like the KY 461/KY 80 interchange, to pave the way for the

completion of the bypass. We're excited to build on that progress to complete a critical link that will make travel easier."

Projects selected for the INFRA grant had to meet four criteria metrics including safety, economic competitiveness and opportunity, state of good repair and innovation. The Beshear administration submitted the proposal in July 2026, outlining that the project plan would reduce fatalities and serious injuries, support economic growth and commerce, ease congestion and improve travel time and more.

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