



OFFICE OF GOVERNOR ANDY BESHEAR
COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Crystal Staley
502.545.3714
Crystal.Staley@ky.gov

Scottie Ellis
502.330.1722
Scottie.Ellis@ky.gov

Gov. Beshear Announces Contracts for Major Transportation Projects in Eastern Kentucky

Includes access road to Skyview high-ground community in Perry County, final section of new U.S. 460 in Pike County

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 16, 2023) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear, whose Better Kentucky Plan includes making transformational improvements in the commonwealth’s transportation system, announced the awarding of contracts for two milestone projects in Eastern Kentucky.

One is for the construction of an access road to a high-ground site in Perry County, where many families affected by the devastating flooding of 2022 can safely rebuild their homes and their lives. The other is for completion of the final section of the long-awaited reconstruction of U.S. Highway 460 in Pike County.

“We are following through on promises made to the people of Eastern Kentucky,” said Gov. Beshear. “The seven high-ground sites we have announced will allow us to rebuild entire neighborhoods on land safely elevated above the flood plain. All these sites will need roads, utilities and more – and today’s announcement shows we are making progress on getting that infrastructure in place. At the same time, we are pursuing projects that will give Eastern Kentucky new gateways to development for generations to come – projects like the new U.S. 460.”

The contract to build an access road to the Skyview high-ground community near Hazard was awarded to KeeTech Construction Horizontal by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. The company’s bid was \$498,372 for the construction of a roadway six-tenths of a mile long that would connect the community to County Road 2156. The cabinet earlier improved and reinforced a nearby bridge that will be needed for both the road project and housing construction.

Skyview, one of seven identified high-ground sites in Floyd, Knott, Letcher and Perry counties, comprises 50 acres of donated land and is expected to be the site of about 150 homes.

U.S. 460, part of the Appalachian Development Highway System and historically one of the main routes through Eastern Kentucky, is being transformed by the U.S. 460 reconstruction project. In essence, a new road has been cut through the mountains from Pikeville to the Virginia state line that will be safer and faster than the current narrow and winding route.

The new roadway is a modern, four-lane, limited-access highway with 12-foot-wide driving lanes, 12-foot shoulders and a recessed median. It is 16.7 miles long.

The new U.S. 460 is being built in 24 sections, 21 of which have been completed. Two sections are under construction. On Thursday, Mountain Enterprises Inc. was awarded a contract to complete the 24th and final section. The company's bid was \$40,105,612. The work will involve completing the roadbed from Marrowbone Bridge over Kentucky Highway 195 to Russell Fork Bridge near Beaver. It also will include resurfacing of all open and existing sections.

"Modern transportation infrastructure is essential to economic development and job creation," Gov. Beshear said. "It also helps ensure that our most precious cargo – our Kentucky families – are traveling safely. The new U.S. 460 is an investment in Eastern Kentucky that will be paying dividends for generations to come."

The entire \$740 million project was designed by Palmer Engineering of Winchester and will provide a safer, more efficient highway.

Currently, 11.5 miles of the corridor is open to traffic, with the final 5.2 miles set to open in 2026.

The project's features include twin bridges over Pond Creek of Draffin, which will be the highest bridges in Kentucky at 328 feet when completed.

The corridor features five excess material sites, including Wolfpit, Jessie Branch, John Moore Branch, Stonecoal Fork of Beaver and Wolfpen Branch, with a total of 208 developable acres that will be deeded to the Pike County Fiscal Court to use for economic development.

"It's another way the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet aids and supports local government," Transportation Secretary Jim Gray said.

Construction of the new U.S. 460 began in May 2002. The first 8 miles of the project opened in December 2014, followed by 3.5 more miles in November 2020..

###

TEAM
KENTUCKY™



For official news and updates from the Beshear/Coleman administration, visit governor.ky.gov/news.