



Andy Beshear
GOVERNOR

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
TRANSPORTATION CABINET
transportation.ky.gov

Rebecca Goodman
SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts: Naitore Djigbenou
502.782.4829
Naitore.Djigbenou@ky.gov

Allen Blair
606.748.3716
Allen.Blair@ky.gov

**Team Kentucky Cuts the Ribbon on Newly Improved U.S. 421 in
Harlan County**

*Recently completed three-lane highway provides safer travel, connectivity in Eastern
Kentucky*

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Oct. 13, 2026) – Today, Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman joined state transportation leaders, local officials and community members in Harlan County to cut the ribbon on a new three-lane section of U.S. 421 that provides safer travel and improved connectivity between southeastern Kentucky and Virginia. The reconstruction was completed ahead of schedule, and is a \$32 million Team Kentucky investment in improved accessibility, safety and opportunity for families and travelers in the region.

“This project has been decades in the making,” said Gov. Beshear. “We’re grateful to everyone who made today a reality and are excited to see this investment bring safer roads, faster travel times and increased economic opportunities to this region.”

“Replacing a narrow, winding road with a safer, straighter route is about more than just better pavement—it’s emblematic of our shared work to build a better Kentucky for everyone,” said Lt. Gov. Coleman. “Thank you to the state and local leaders, contractors, and crews whose expertise brought this vital project to the finish line.”

Construction for the U.S. 421 project, led by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC), began in March 2025 and was completed in October, ahead of schedule. The new roadway

extends about 1.5 miles from the Kentucky/Virginia state line to the base of Virginia Mountain and provides a straighter, shorter route than the previous corridor. The roadway has three lanes, including a truck climbing lane, and other features designed to improve safety, enhance traffic flow and increase capacity for motorists traveling through the region.

“These improvements reflect Team Kentucky’s priority of better, safer highways for the families who rely on them to get where they need to go,” said KYTC Secretary Rebecca Goodman.

“We’re grateful for the support of the Harlan County community during construction, and for our District 11 office and the design-build team who made it happen.”

Of the \$32 million in state funding allocated for all phases of the project, approximately \$22 million was dedicated to construction, which the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet delivered using the design-build method to help advance the project more efficiently. The process encourages early and continued collaboration among the owner, designer and contractor, which streamlined decision-making and allowed design, planning and construction to move forward in a more cost-efficient manner than under traditional project delivery methods. Bizzack Construction, LLC, served as the project contractor, with the design-build team led by HMB Professional Engineers, Inc.

The completed U.S. 421 improvements are expected to provide a safer and more efficient route for motorists while improving mobility and transportation connectivity between Harlan County and the Kentucky-Virginia state line.

The KYTC Department of Highways District 11 office is headquartered in Manchester, where staff oversee state highway construction and maintenance for Bell, Clay, Harlan, Jackson, Knox, Laurel, Leslie and Whitley counties.

More information about District 11 is available online at transportation.ky.gov/DistrictEleven, where motorists can find project updates and sign up for news alerts. District 11 is also on Facebook at KYTCDistrict11 and X at KYTCDistrict11.

###

Editors: [Photos from the event will be available today at the following link.](#)

TEAM
KENTUCKY



transportation.ky.gov