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TRANSPORTATION CABINET
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Gov. Andy Beshear Announces Search for Design-Build Team for Project to Improve Section of U.S. 421 in Harlan County

Project to include removal of mountainside switchback curve

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 13, 2023) – Gov. Andy Beshear, who has made transportation safety and modernization a top priority of his administration and a key to economic development, today announced a search for an engineering team to improve a section of U.S. 421 in Harlan County.

The project, which will cover 1.5 miles, beginning at the Kentucky-Virginia state line, is to include removal of a “switchback” curve on Stone Mountain at Cranks.

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) issued a final Request for Proposals ([RFP](#)) from prospective contractors last Friday. The cabinet expects to award the project in late April with a goal of breaking ground in October. The 2022-2028 Kentucky Highway Plan provides \$25 million through 2026 for construction of the project.

“We have put a high priority on transportation projects that increase safety and open up entire regions to economic development and good jobs,” Gov. Beshear said. “Completion of this 1.5-mile-long section will bring us very near to completing the larger and long-awaited U.S. 421 expansion project from Grays Knob to the Virginia line.”

KYTC Secretary Jim Gray said the cabinet is pursuing the project through a method known as Progressive Design Build, in which project designers and builders will work hand in hand.

“It will allow the project team to devise specific solutions as work progresses, and in the end will expedite the timeline,” Secretary Gray said.

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