

Brochure for Ashland Connector

Project Item Number: 9-129.00

County and Route: Boyd, Improvement or New Route

Project Description: Planning study for urban connector from I-64 to downtown Ashland

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Approximate dates: Spring 2008

Comments (number of people reached, effectiveness of the technique, what you would do differently, etc.): Very effective brochure in that it contains all relevant project information, and so serves as a “cheat sheet” for local officials and cabinet staff as they talk to the public about the proposed project.



I-64 to US 23 Ashland Connector Study

Purpose:

Identify Community Concerns and evaluate project alternatives to improve access and mobility between I-64 and Ashland

Study Elements:

Evaluate existing conditions, Collect Environmental Data, Develop and Evaluate Alternatives, and Public Involvement.

Study Outcomes:

Define project goals, needs and issues, identify community and environmental issues, Identify and Evaluate short and long term projects in the study area.

Study Schedule:

18 month Schedule concluding in November 2008.

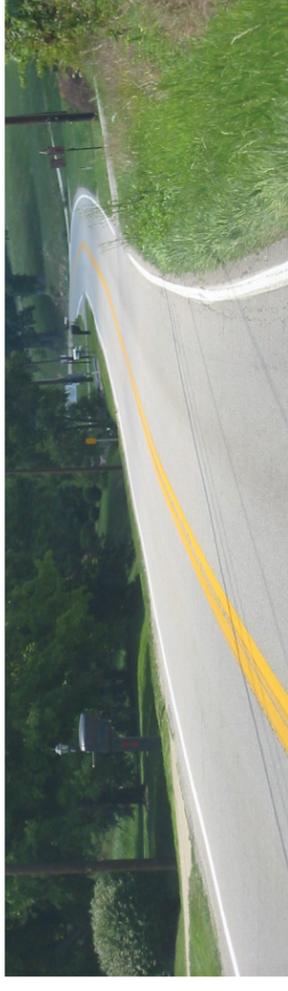
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I-64 to US 23

Ashland Connector Study



I-64 to US 23 Ashland Connector Study

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet has recently begun a planning study in Boyd County called the I-64 to US 23 Ashland Connector Study (formerly known as the Ashland Urban Penetrator Study).



What is its purpose?

The purpose of the I-64 to US 23 Ashland Connector Study is to identify community concerns and evaluate project alternatives to improve access and mobility between I-64 and Ashland. The study is intended to help define the purpose of the project, the location of necessary transportation improvements, and to better meet Federal requirements regarding consideration of environmental issues.

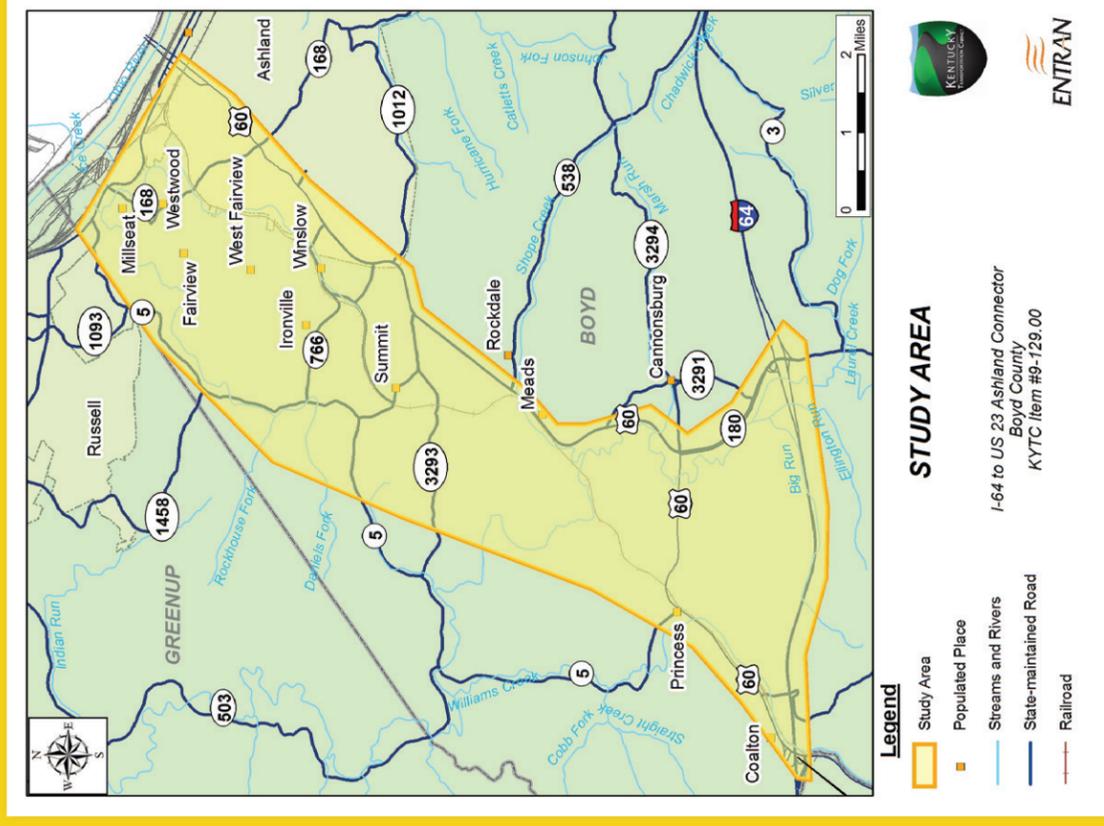
There is a need for improved mobility between I-64 and Ashland. Currently, the only direct routes to downtown Ashland from I-64 are US 23 (via the Catlettsburg interchange) and US 60. US 60 is accessed via either the KY 180 interchange or the US 60 interchange (known as the "Coalton" interchange) with I-64. US 60, a signalized arterial, currently carries close to 30,000 vehicles per day (vpd), including a high percentage of heavy trucks, and has access management issues that tend

to increase congestion. This congestion has led to high crash rates within the corridor. There have been over 1,500 reported crashes along US 60 within the past five years between I-64 and US 23. South of Ashland, US 60 is four lanes with full outside shoulders and a grass median with turn lanes at major intersections. Approaching Ashland, the roadway narrows to four lanes with no shoulder and limited turn lanes.

Development along US 23 within and to the west of Ashland has increased travel demand, particularly to the northwest and near Russell. The area west of Ashland is densely populated and contains a series of narrow local roads with limited connectivity. Local roads such as Roberts Drive serve as alternate routes and carry high amounts of traffic through the Westwood and Fairview communities.

Study Tasks Include:

- Discuss the project needs with public officials, resource agencies, the general public and other groups which have an interest in the project
- Define project goals, needs, and issues
- Identify any known environmental issues, including environmental justice
- Define project termini (the beginning and ending points of the project)
- Identify and evaluate short and long term projects, including access management, spot improvements, alternate corridors and design criteria



The study area limits have been defined as beginning at I-64 between exits 181 and 185, extending to US 23 on the west side of Ashland from 13th Street (US 60) to KY 5 at the Greenup County line.

Study Elements

Evaluate Existing Conditions

Critical elements of the existing transportation network have been gathered to assist in identifying deficiencies and opportunities in the study area. Items such as existing and future traffic volumes, crash rates, lane widths, and will be considered in determining the need for and scope of potential improvement options.

Community Involvement

Public Involvement is a major and critical component of this project. It is only through meeting with local citizens and discussing the potential problems and project issues, that a comprehensive study can be developed. There will be over 15 public meetings scheduled among local officials, stakeholders, the Ashland Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the general public over the next 16-18 months. KYTC is partnering with the community during every step of the study from identifying community issues, evaluating alternatives, and making recommendations to ensure a successful study that adequately addresses the needs of the community.

Collect Environmental Data

Through field surveys, agency input, and other sources, an environmental overview will be prepared for the study area. The overview will identify major natural and human environmental factors such as wetlands, endangered species, hazardous material area, and community impacts.

Develop and Evaluate Alternatives

After gathering and analyzing initial data, and considering public input, a series of alternatives will be identified. These alternatives will be evaluated on a set of criteria that consider items such as traffic impacts, environmental impacts, public input, costs, and other such issues. It is anticipated that both short and long term improvements will be recommended. These may include:

- Spot improvements to increase safety and capacity. These may include adding turn lanes at intersections, correcting substandard curves, or other minor improvements.
- Access management and other general recommendations, including items such as median construction, driveway consolidation, and turn lanes.
- New Corridor(s). For any new corridor that will be recommended, items such as project termini, access control, and roadway characteristics will be determined.

STUDY SCHEDULE

