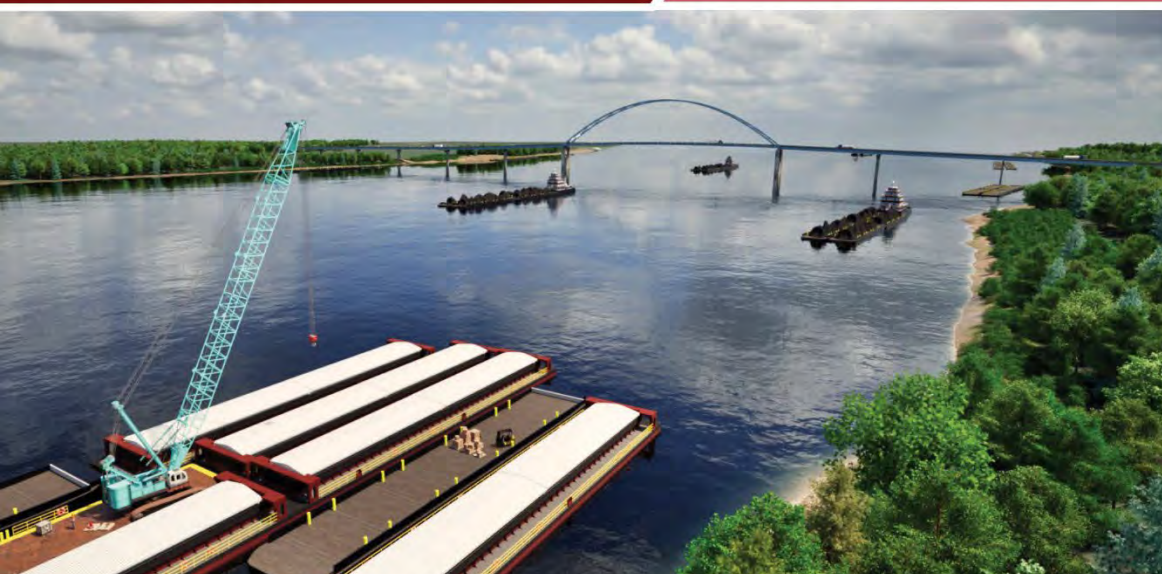




US 51 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT OVER THE OHIO RIVER

CAG/Local Officials Meeting Record

AUGUST 6, 2026



PREPARED FOR:

**TEAM
KENTUCKY®**
TRANSPORTATION
CABINET

PREPARED BY:

Michael Baker
INTERNATIONAL

**US 51 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT
CITIZENS ADVISORY GROUP/
LOCAL OFFICIALS
MEETING RECORD
AUGUST 6, 2026
4:00 PM CDT**



CAG/Local Official Attendees

Peggy Meriedith
Jerry Pace
Toya Wilson
Jon Young
Jim LeFevre
Thomas M. Simpson
Tara Potts
Nathan Whipple
Lynn Lane
Chip Bisson
Allen Tappan
Romello Orr

Project Attendees

Name	Agency
Austin Hart	KYTC
Carrie Dillard	KYTC
Susan Poe	IDOT
Ehren Kirby	IDOT
Aaron Stover	Michael Baker International
Anna Klenke	Michael Baker International
Patty Dunaway	Michael Baker International
Keri Oram	Michael Baker International
Sarah Halle	Michael Baker International
Brooke Vorbeck	Michael Baker International
Devin Chittenden	HDR
Brad Gregory	HMB

Meeting Summary

1. Purpose: The meeting was held at the Fort Jefferson Welcome Center to update the Citizens Advisory Group (CAG) and local officials on the project and gather their feedback.
2. Austin Hart and Aaron Stover opened the meeting with a project update presentation.
3. Austin and Aaron then opened the floor for questions.
4. After questions were addressed, a small group discussion about community insights and workforce development was held.

Presentation Questions

- Jim LeFevre asked about the current funding status of the US 51 Bridge Project, noting other ongoing bridge projects such as Brent Spence and I-69.
 - Austin Hart confirmed that KYTC and IDOT have secured funding for Phase I, although KYTC's funding is secured for only two years. While confident that the project will remain funded, he encouraged CAG members and local officials to contact their legislators and emphasize the project's importance.
- Nathan Wipple asked whether the river road on the Kentucky side would remain open during construction.
 - East Cairo Road will remain open, with possible brief closures for material deliveries or other construction needs.
- Nathan Wipple asked when load testing involving loud noise would occur.
 - Late fall was identified as a potential concern because of hunting season, although the official acknowledged the importance of advancing the bridge project. The closures associated with testing are anticipated to occur in the summer.
- Romello Orr asked how many employees would be needed for Phase I. In a follow-up, he also asked how many workers would be required for full construction.
 - Approximately 50 or slightly more workers are anticipated for Phase I. KYTC will research Phase II employment estimates and follow up. A future Pipeline Meeting will provide additional details about construction preparation.
- Nathan Wipple asked whether the project would use union labor.
 - Kentucky is a right-to-work state, meaning that Union and non-union labor can work on KYTC projects. The contractor will ultimately make that decision, but prevailing wage requirements will apply. For Phase I, Kentucky's prevailing wage will apply to work in Kentucky, and Illinois's prevailing wage will apply to work in Illinois. In future phases, for construction activities crossing both state lines, the higher wage will likely apply.

- Cairo Mayor Thomas Simpson noted that unions are prominent in the community and said hiring local workers would help keep project-related income in the area.

Breakout Discussion

- Sarah Halle then facilitated a discussion to gather participant feedback on several questions, focusing on community insights and workforce development.

COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

What are the biggest changes you've seen in your community over the past five years that the project team should be aware of as we move toward construction?

- Nathan Whipple said traffic through Ballard County has increased over the last five years but has not sustained the local economy. Participant noted the recent Census shows population decline but anticipated that nearby opportunities in Paducah connected to the DOE site could help reverse this trend. The recent opening of the four-lane highway near the county line will also be a boon for Ballard County.
- Romello Orr commented that hiring 25% of the workforce locally could benefit the community, although this may depend on whether the jobs are union or non-union. The participant noted a shortage of skilled tradespeople and said the bridge project may face challenges competing with the wages and per diem rates offered by private development construction projects in Paducah, particularly those recently announced at the DOE site, if they occur during the same timeframe as bridge construction.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Are there sufficient local institutions available to develop the workforce?

- Shawnee Community College is in its third year of offering construction courses and graduates approximately 12 to 13 students from the program each year. Participants also noted that the college is supporting a large water project currently underway.
- Participants emphasized that outreach to young people will be important and noted that colleges often partner with local high schools for recruitment.
- Other institutions mentioned included John A. Logan College, Carbondale, WKYTC, SIU, SEMO, and the University of Tennessee at Martin.
- Participants also suggested contacting local high school vocational programs to explain the project's workforce needs. They said that the workforce needs to start being trained now in order to be ready when construction begins.
- Participants noted that the IBEW, JATC, electrical union, ironworkers, and other trade organizations operate their own training facilities.

- The Kentucky Workforce Board advertises jobs and new training opportunities and was recommended as a useful contact. Mary Anne Medlock and Allen Tappan were also identified as potential contacts.
- Jerry Pace has contact information for other local workforce development groups.
- Participants said local communities collaborate well. Clear information about workforce needs and barriers would help them determine how best to reach potential workers.
- Wickliffe Mayor Lynn Lane discussed attracting people to live in the area and suggested that additional RV parks and utility hookups could help accommodate workers.

Meeting closeout

- As the meeting adjourned, Sarah asked CAG members and local officials to complete and return the questionnaire by scanning it. The team will also provide a digital survey to all invitees.
- Aaron and Austin thanked everyone for attending and invited participants to contact the project team with additional questions.
- Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:30 PM CDT.



**US 51 BRIDGE
REPLACEMENT**



CAG/Local Officials Meeting

August 6, 2026



IN COLLABORATION WITH:




1

Agenda



Project Background

Bridge Replacement Project Overview

Phase I Advanced Letting

Pile Load Test Program

Schedule

Discussion

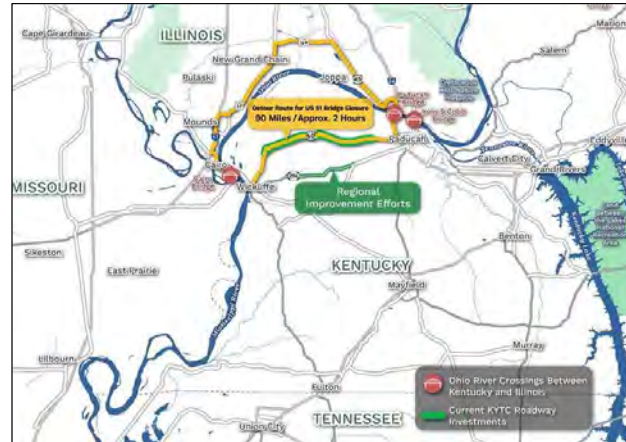
NOTE: *This presentation features preliminary information and is subject to change*

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Commitment to Safety



- Throughout the design and construction of the new US 51 Bridge, KYTC is committed to investing in the safety of the current structure.
- Regular inspections and maintenance will continue until traffic is moved to the new bridge.



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Purpose & Need

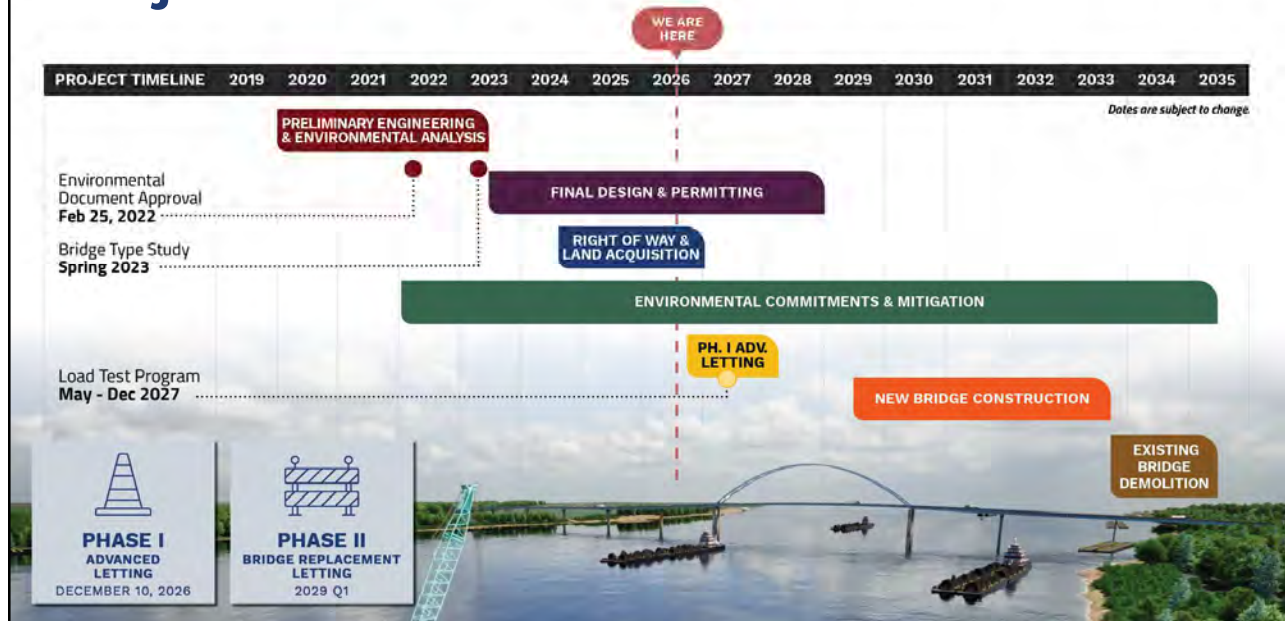


The purpose of the US 51 Bridge Project is to improve cross-river mobility between Wickliffe, Kentucky and Cairo, Illinois, by addressing the safety and reliability issues caused by the narrow lane widths, lack of shoulders, and tight curve of the existing bridge and its approaches.



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Project Timeline



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Bridge Replacement Project Key Elements

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Recent Efforts



- Producing Contract Documents and Specifications for Phase I Advanced Letting
- Developed Cost, Schedule and Management Plans meeting FHWA Major Project requirements
- Working with both state leadership teams to identify future funding needs
- Engaged contracting community through recently held Industry Forum
- Advancing Final Design

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Bridge Layout



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Roundabout Intersection



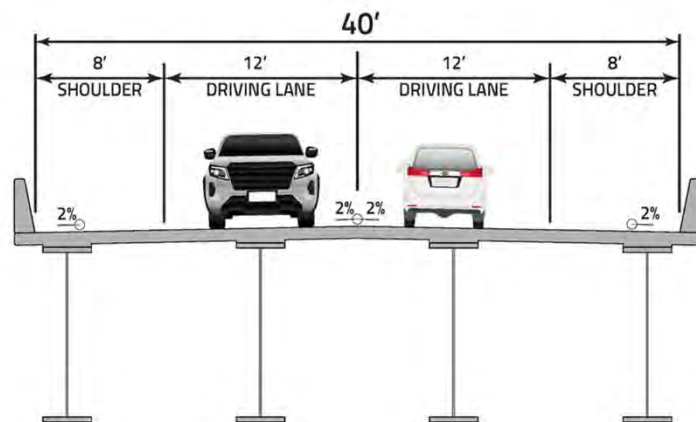
- Improves Safety
- Improved Traffic Flow
- Gateway/Focal point
- Accommodates WB-67 Truck Turning

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Typical Section



- Based on detailed traffic analyses, **two travel lanes** are warranted given the traffic count data and projected vehicle volumes.
- The bridge will be comprised of 2-12' driving lanes with 8' shoulders for a total width of 40' which is significantly wider than the existing bridge's 22.5' width.



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Unit 2 – Tied Arch Bridge



The tied arch bridge was determined to have the **least cost, better constructability** and **long-term maintenance and inspection benefits** than the other considered bridge types.

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Phase I
Advanced
Construction Letting

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Phase I Advanced Letting – Overview



- The Phase I Advanced Letting allows for important preparation work to happen before the main bridge construction contract begins.
- The work includes site preparation, testing and verification work to inform design decisions ahead of the bridge construction.
- This first step demonstrates commitment to building the new bridge.

Significant traffic impacts are not anticipated during the Phase 1 Advance Construction Letting.

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Phase I Advanced Letting – Benefits



Reduces Risk &
Uncertainty

Informs Final
Design

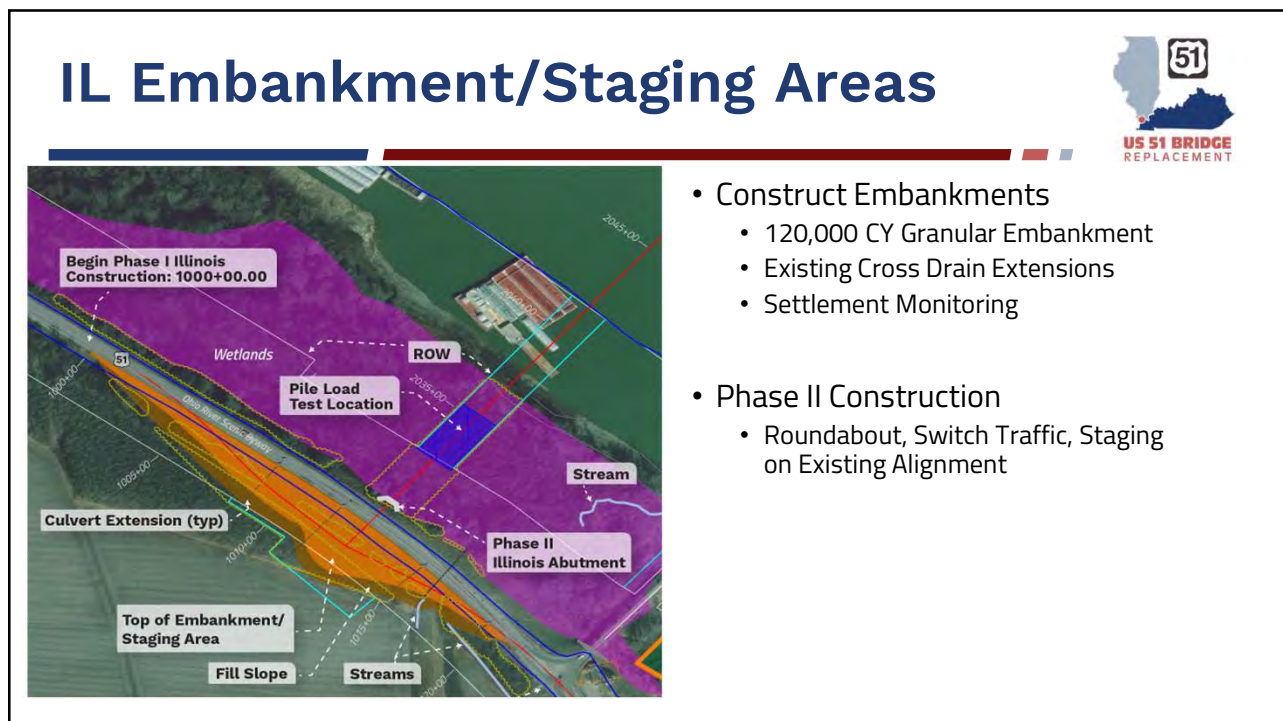
Prepares the Site
Early

Gives
Contractors
Confidence

14



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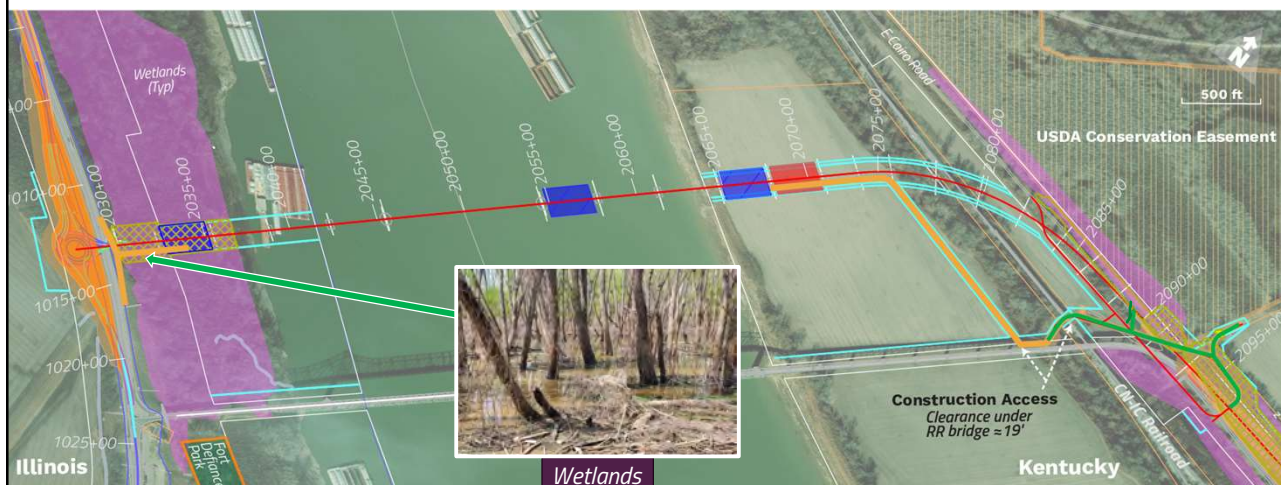
KY Embankment/Staging Areas



- Tree Clearing
- Access Under CN RR
- Construct Embankments
 - 190,000 CY Granular Embankment
 - Ground Improvements Installed at KY Abutment
- Maintain access to E. Cairo Rd.

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Access & LTP



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Pile Load Test Program

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Pile Load Test Program



- Pipe Pile Testing Program
- Proof of Drivability and Resistances
- Constrictor Plate (Artificial Plug)
- Dynamic, Static and Pseudo-Static Testing
- Ground Improvement Test Area



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What to Expect



- Statnamic testing uses explosives to test how the soil will react in different scenarios.
- Anticipate periods of loud booms while testing is occurring.



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Environmental Commitments

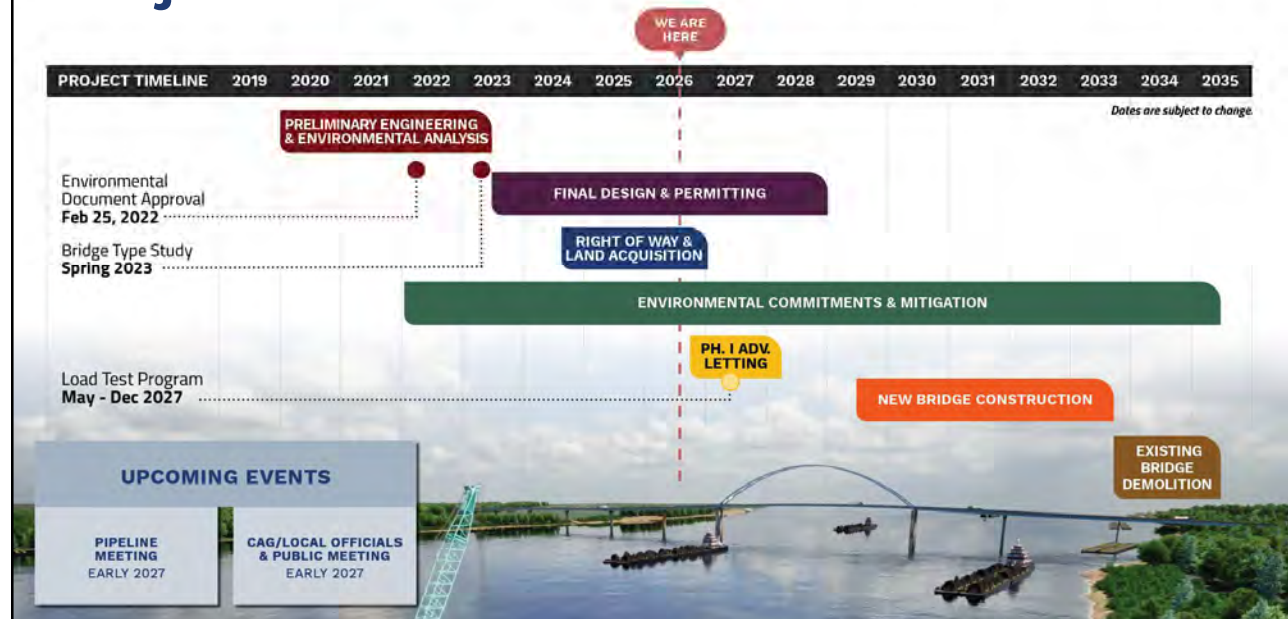


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Schedule

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Project Timeline



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Questions/Comments?

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Discussion

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Building the Workforce



- Connect local talent to future jobs
- Identify workforce partners
- Promote training opportunities
- Understand barriers to employment
- Support local economic growth

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Community Insights



- What are the biggest changes you've seen in your community over the past five years that the project team should be aware of as we move toward construction?
- Have you noticed any changes in how people travel through or around the region compared to five years ago?
- Are residents getting information differently today than they were five years ago?
- What's the best way to quickly and timely communicate with residents while construction is ongoing?
- As construction approaches, what changes in the region do you think will have the biggest impact on the success of this project?

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Workforce Development



- What would make local residents interested in pursuing work on a major bridge construction project?
- How has the local workforce changed over the past five years?
- What are the opportunities and/or challenges to connecting local residents with construction jobs?
- How do local residents typically learn about jobs?
- Who should we partner with to help spread information about upcoming workforce opportunities?

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Learn More



If you are interested in learning more about the US 51 Bridge Replacement project, have questions, or would like to comment on the project, please use the links below.

- Visit the project website and sign up for email newsletter updates at www.us51bridge.com.
- Follow the [KYTC District 1 Facebook Page](#).
- Have questions or comments? Email the project team at US51bridge@mbakerintl.com.

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US 51 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

PROJECT UPDATE

Summer 2026



ABOUT THE US 51 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

The US 51 Bridge Replacement Project continues to make significant progress toward delivering a safer, more reliable connection between Wickliffe, Kentucky, and Cairo, Illinois. Following the selection of a preferred bridge alignment and bridge type, the project team has advanced into final design and is working closely with the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC), Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to prepare for construction.

Looking ahead, the project will move forward in two phases: Phase I Advanced Construction Letting and Phase II Bridge Replacement. Construction is currently scheduled to begin in 2029 at the earliest.

RECENT PROJECT EFFORTS

Producing contract documents and specifications for Phase I Advanced Letting

Developed Cost, Schedule and Management Plans meeting FHWA Major Project requirements

Working with both state leadership teams to identify future funding needs

Engaged contracting community through industry forum

Advancing Final Design



PHASE I ADVANCED LETTING

The US 51 Bridge Replacement Project is using the Phase I Advanced Letting to complete critical testing and site preparation activities ahead of major construction.

This proactive approach helps reduce risk, inform future construction decisions, and support a more efficient and successful bridge replacement project.



The Phase I Advanced Letting allows important preparation work to happen before the main bridge construction contract begins.



The work includes site preparation, testing and verification work to inform design decisions ahead of the bridge construction.



Significant traffic impacts are not anticipated during the Phase I Advance Construction Letting.



This first step demonstrates commitment to building the new bridge.

BENEFITS OF ADVANCED LETTING

REDUCES RISK & UNCERTAINTY

Confirms foundation performance and site conditions before major construction begins.

PREPARES THE SITE EARLY

Embankments and ground improvements can be completed ahead of time, allowing the site to be ready for future construction activities.

INFORMS THE FINAL DESIGN

Testing results provide valuable information that can be incorporated into the final bridge construction plans.

GIVES CONTRACTORS CONFIDENCE

Early testing and verification help ensure the project is built on a strong and well-understood foundation, giving contractors more confidence about the future phase of work.

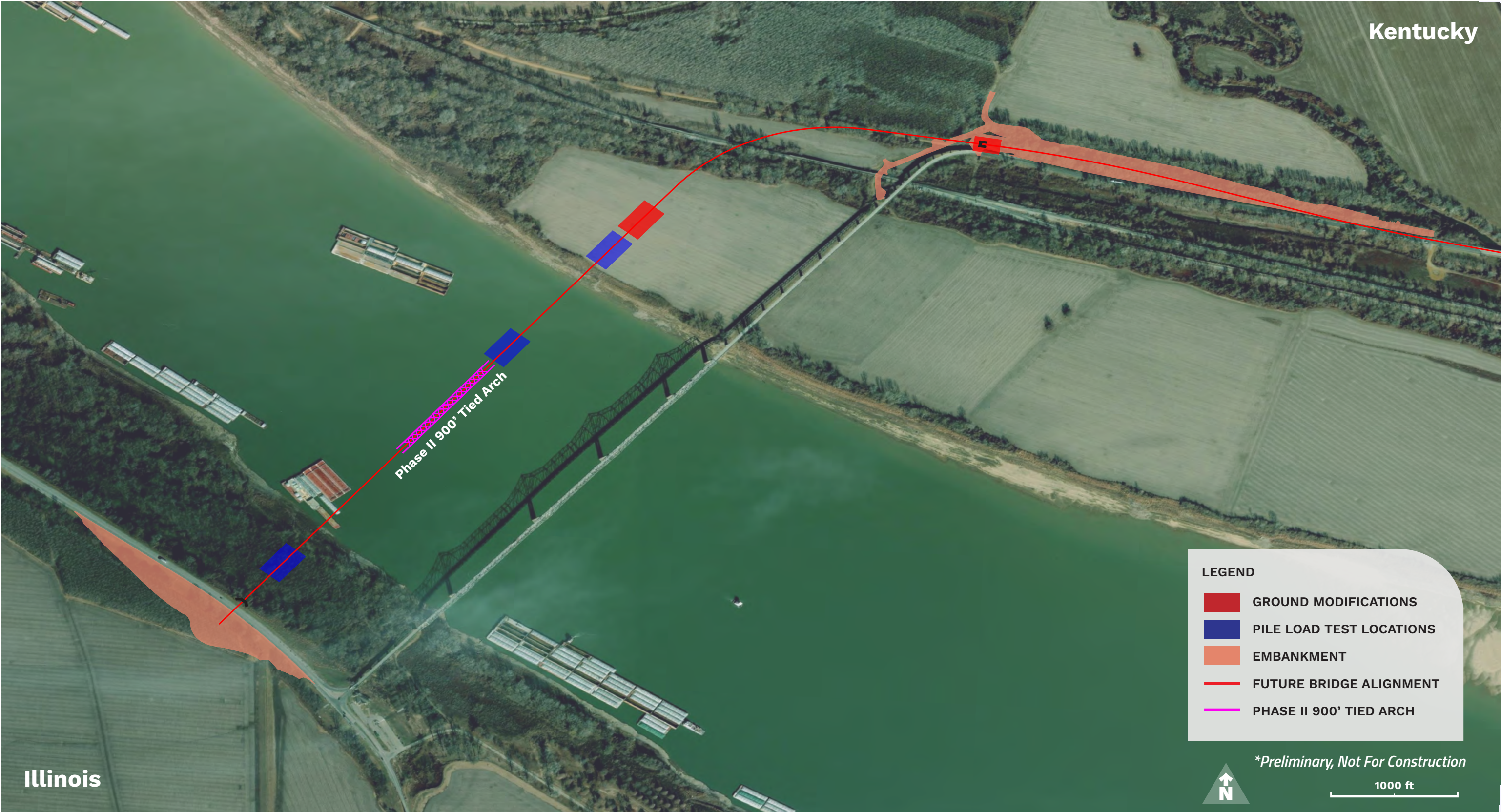
PILE LOAD TEST PROGRAM

Before building the new bridge, the project team will install and test full-size foundation piles—the large steel pipes that will help support the bridge. These pipe piles will be 72” in diameter in the river and 48” in diameter on land.

The pile load testing and ground improvement program allows engineers to confirm that the bridge foundation and surrounding soil will perform as expected, reducing risk and providing valuable information before construction of the new US 51 Bridge begins.



PHASE I ADVANCED LETTING



US 51 Bridge Replacement Over the Ohio River

QUESTIONNAIRE

Summer 2026 | Item Number: 1-1140.00



(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ E-mail: _____

Community Insights

What are the biggest changes you’ve seen in your community over the past five years that the project team should be aware of as we move toward construction?

Have you noticed any changes in how people travel through or around the region compared to five years ago?

Are residents getting information differently today than they were five years ago? If so, how?

What’s the best way to quickly and timely communicate with residents while construction is ongoing?

As construction approaches, what changes in the region do you think will have the biggest impact on the success of this project?

US 51 BRIDGE REPLACEMENT OVER THE OHIO RIVER QUESTIONNAIRE

Workforce Development

What would make local residents interested in pursuing work on a major bridge construction project?



How has the local workforce changed over the past five years?

What are the opportunities and/or challenges to connecting local residents with construction jobs?

How do local residents typically learn about local jobs?

Who should we partner with to help share information about upcoming workforce opportunities?

Your answers will be given to the Project Team for their use in the continued development of this project.

Please turn in your questionnaire tonight.

If you have additional thoughts please send it via email or mail by August 20, 2026.

US51Bridge@mbakerintl.com

Michael Baker International
1650 Lyndon Farm Court, Suite 101,
Louisville, KY 40223



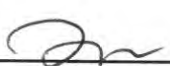
US 51 Bridge Replacement over the Ohio River

CAG/Local Officials Meeting

Fort Jefferson Welcome Center

8/6/2026, 4-6:30 p.m. CDT

	Name	Email
1	Peggy Meriedeth	pmeriedeth@brtc.net
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10	Cliff Bisson	1652nd1551@baker.com

	Name	Email
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13		
14		
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PROJECT TEAM

CAG/Local Officials Meeting

Fort Jefferson Welcome Center

8/6/2026, 4-6:30 p.m. CDT

	Name	Email
1	Keri Oram	keri.oram@mbakerintl.com
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8	Patty Dunnaway	Patty.dunnaway@mbakerintl.com
9	Brad Gregory	
10	Austin Hart	