



River Fields Briefing Sheet*
Louisville-Southern Indiana Ohio River Bridges Project, Jan. 2008

Our Position:

1) That the downtown project, which fixes the traffic and safety problems at Spaghetti Junction, be funded and sequenced for construction first.

2) That no right-of-way acquisition be made until a specific, realistic funding plan is both publicly issued and subjected to a public dialogue on what it means in practical terms to the entire community.

Bridges Fact Points:

- The latest estimate for the total cost of the Bridges Project is \$4.1 billion, which is an increase of almost 64% over the spring 2003 estimate of \$2.5 billion. When the state opened bids for the 12'x12'x1800' exploratory tunnel for the eastern bridge alignment on 9/7/07, the low bid came in at almost \$20 million, or 40% higher than the state's estimate. Project costs continue to escalate.
- The only way to fix the traffic and safety problems at Spaghetti Junction is to build a new interchange tied into a new downtown bridge.
- The current construction plan has the \$1.5 billion eastern bridge to be built first, with a projected completion date of 2013. The timeline for the downtown project—the project that will solve the current traffic problem—has been stretched out until the year 2024.
- Only **8%** of Kentucky's remaining project cost of around \$3 billion has a budget commitment from the Kentucky General Assembly. There is not another chance for significant new federal funding earmarks until at least 2011, the next federal highway bill reauthorization.
- If the eastern bridge is built, almost **11,000 permanent jobs are projected to move from Kentucky to Indiana** (because of the farmland opened up for development), taking about **\$343 million in salaries**. *Not one* net new permanent job will be created. The amount of lost tax revenue to Kentucky from moving these jobs across the Ohio River is about **\$26 million/yr**.
- The downtown project will create **70%** of all construction jobs and materials and supplies needed for the whole project (about **20,000** direct and indirect jobs).
- Kentucky's share of the eastern bridge is approx. **\$1 billion**.
- There is currently **\$1.8 billion in unfunded road projects** in Louisville Metro, exclusive of the Bridges, and **\$62 billion in unfunded road projects** in all of Kentucky.

*All information is taken from the Federal Highway Administration's \$22 million Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), except for the projected tax revenue lost to Kentucky from building the eastern bridge (River Fields consultant's estimate for our EIS response) and the state-wide unfunded road project list (KYTC, 11/07).