



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:**  
**Kathy Melvin, Business Integrated**  
**Communications 502.609.9813**

## **Louisville Commuters Directly Impacted by State Senate Transportation Budget Plan**

### **Dropped \$60 Million in Projects Looks Like a Top 10 List of Metro's Most Congested Interchanges**

**Louisville (March 26, 2008)**— The Kentucky Senate on Monday called for removing \$60 million of Metro Louisville's federal highway funds for other projects to pump up the Louisville Bridges Project to previous funding levels.

This budget proposal means construction and maintenance funds for some of the area's most congested interchanges (including the funds necessary to complete the critical Watterson Expressway and Westport Road Interchange) would be eliminated to build the eastern bridge, delaying the downtown bridge.

The plan to put \$325 million back into the bridges plan was approved Monday by the State Senate Transportation Committee and the Appropriations and Revenue Committee before receiving quick approval by the full Senate.

The Louisville congestion improvement projects that appear to have been dropped in the Senate budget plan, including the \$27 million Watterson Expressway/Westport Road Interchange, are:

- Reconstruction of the I-64/Hurstbourne Parkway interchange (\$5.46 million right of way and utilities)
- Improvements to the South Hurstbourne Parkway and Shelbyville Road interchange (\$3.34 million for right of way, utilities, and construction)
- Addition of a lane on the Watterson eastbound at Brownsboro Road to help congestion (\$1.35 million for construction).

- Addition of an auxiliary lane on I-64 westbound before the Watterson Interchange, (\$2.83 million for utilities and construction)

Additional projects left without funding include:

- Improvements to the Gene Snyder and Preston Hwy interchange (\$2.59 million for construction)
- Reconstruction of the Shawnee Expressway ramp to I-64 (\$4.79 million for construction)
- Cleaning and painting the Clark Memorial Bridge (\$2.71 million)
- Reconstruction of the Gene Snyder and US 60 Interchange (\$480,000 in right of way and utilities)
- Addition of auxiliary lanes on I-71 and improve the Zorn Ave. interchange (\$2.2 million for right of way and utilities)
- Reconstruction of the I-65 southbound ramp at Outer Loop (\$1.55 million for construction)
- Improvements to the Gene Snyder and LaGrange Rd. (KY 146) interchange (\$2.53 million for construction)
- Improvements to the I-64 and Blankenbaker Rd. interchange (\$2.17 million for construction)

Commuters in these heavily congested areas will feel the impact of the proposed budget plan.

Jodie Goldberg, who lives close to Shelbyville Road and Hurstbourne Lane, said "I am disgusted and unhappy. They're going to take money that we need to relieve desperate traffic congestion and put it toward a project that won't be finished for years. Does that make sense to anyone?"

"It seems to be fiscally irresponsible for our fiscally conservative state senate to keep moving forward this enormous project," said Bob Kulp, board chair of River Fields. "We are sacrificing current congestion needs for an uncertain future. The \$60 million in projects that will suffer are badly needed to fix major traffic problems in the Metro area."

"I have a great concern that traffic congestion in Jefferson County will appreciably worsen due to the Senate's decision to eliminate these important transportation projects, while at the same time there remains uncertainty regarding Kentucky's ability to finance its \$3 billion share of the bridges project."

Kulp pointed out that after 2010, neither the House or Senate budget plans have allocated any federal or state funds for the bridges project. "This plan gives commuters no assurances that the traffic congestion in Spaghetti Junction will ever be relieved," he said.

River Fields' position is that the downtown bridge and the reconstruction of Spaghetti Junction should be sequenced first to fix the current traffic congestion and decrease the high rate of traffic fatalities in the area.

# # #

*River Fields is the largest and oldest river conservancy along the 981- mile Ohio River. For nearly 50 years, River Fields has utilized its resources to effectively protect, preserve and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the land and water around the Ohio River in our region. Through its programs of land conservation, advocacy, and education, River Fields strives to create harmony between nature, history and the people who live here. River Fields owns land or holds conservation easements on 34 properties, totaling more than 2,200 acres, most of which is preserved forever. River Fields is one of the nation's few land trusts tackling regional advocacy work and land conservation.*

[www.riverfields.org](http://www.riverfields.org)