

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

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Why are you wasting your time on this 'done deal'? I am truly convinced that the metro Louisville region will be severely harmed by bridge 'tolls' and the massiveness of this dinosaur project. It is a regressive project that will hinder community growth for decades to come. We need a more innovative, 21st century approach which will spur economic development. Hopefully, new civic leadership will demand a more visionary project.

Why is your proposal 'better'? My design offers more options to void traffic congestion. The ORBP just enlarges the current 'mess' that we have. Accidents will still be able to easily snarl the interstates. Under my layout, traffic can escape tie-ups using the alternative local-access bridge routes or the I-71 / I-64 access connector. Plus, my proposal creates economic development zones on the east and west districts of downtown.

The ORBP leadership says that the Record-of-Decision (ROD) and the Memorandum-of-Agreement (MOA) cannot be changed, correct? Wrong. A simple Google search reveals that RODs are changed. And, the MOA actually contains sections (X and XI) describing how it can be altered. The key to both is not enlarging the scope of work, and lessening the project footprint.

Won't more bridges create more complications with the Corps of Engineers? No. By placing the two new local-access bridges adjacent to the existing bridges, the structural supports are 'pre-determined' and do not create new river obstacles.

Why are you questioning a process that involved numerous community forums and input? The process being questioned occurred prior to 1996, or 14 years ago. Under that process, the cost was proposed to be \$517 Million, with the East End Bridge being built by 2008. Now, many changes have occurred and the cost has skyrocketed to \$4.1 Billion with East End Bridge not opening till at least 2014. Plus, the funding in 1996 did not include tolls. Thus, if the public were to be consulted now, there likely would not be such support. Hopefully the leadership will continue these community forums on whether to place tolls on the bridges.

Your proposal has no traffic engineering analysis: Correct, I am not a traffic engineer. But, I have designed numerous complex circulation systems and built over \$2 billion in construction projects. The goal of this proposal is to lessen the traffic flowing through spaghetti junction by removing local traffic from it. Thus, the I-71 / I-64 East downtown connector removes the medical center, arena, waterfront, and east downtown (Humana, Slugger Field, etc.) traffic. The two new local access bridges remove southern Indiana traffic. Regardless, while the current ORBP continues, traffic engineering can be implemented to determine how my alternate proposal will impact spaghetti junction. I am not calling for a stop to the ORBP, just to look at another alternative in the interim. The East End Bridge can proceed on its present pace and the downtown bridge will not begin till end of this decade.

Wouldn't this delay right-of-way acquisition? No. the East End Bridge land will continue to be acquired. As to downtown bridge, land can continue to be acquired. My proposal would actually take less land to be acquired and thus shouldn't be an issue.

How will your proposal impact existing buildings? Not one historic building would be demolished under my proposal. The only historic property touched is the Drumanard estate. I am proposing either to relocate it and duplicate its landscape as part of an 'Olmsted Interpretive Center'; or, tunnel beneath it with private funding sources. Thus, this proposal has far less devastating impact on our community than the ORBP.

This proposal can't be built for \$1.4 Billion: I rely solely on the ORBP estimates. If those numbers are correct, then my numbers are correct.

Placing tolls on this project will serve as a model for other communities, and provide a method to pay for future infrastructure projects: Unfortunately, this will put metro Louisville / southern Indiana at a competitive disadvantage. No other Midwest city (other than Chicago) has tolls. While other states (Texas, etc.) are placing tolls on selective new roads, none is proposing to put tolls on all their major interstates like this project will do. Even in Chicago, tolls are just on selective roadways and one can still access downtown without paying a toll. Why would a business, especially a logistics-based one, want to locate in a community that has tolls? Louisville eliminated its last toll roads decades ago, and why then are we returning to this growth-inhibiting process? In 2003, the ORBP actually ruled out tolls as a funding source.

What about all the planning dollars expended thus far? Planning costs are very minor in relation to the overall construction costs. If we can save billions via a redesign, then it would be worth such revision. Also, the east end bridge design would not be changed and the local access bridges would not require extensive ramp approach design.

Why is it taking so long to build these bridges? The east end bridge was originally proposed as the 'North Belt Highway' in 1958, with bridge design to begin in 1975. Now, over 52 years since, there has been much obstruction primarily from east end residents to block construction of the eastern bridge. This has added billions to the cost as well as decades to the implementation.

What is the Drumanard Estate and why is that being discussed? This property was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in the early 1990s, along with other east end residential estates, primarily some think, to prevent the east end bridge construction. It sits directly in the path of the east end bridge route. Its grounds were designed by the Olmsted Brothers landscape firm – but, not by Frederick Law Olmsted. Federal projects cannot negatively impact a historic property without an approved 'mitigation' process. Tunneling underneath is the 'approved' mitigation approach. However, since first proposed the tunnel costs have soared from \$80 Million to upwards of \$261 Million. To spend that amount of money on one historic property appears unrealistic – especially when considering numerous historic buildings in both downtown Louisville and Jeffersonville will be demolished. This is why I propose either to duplicate the Drumanard Estate in another; or, have the east end resident assist in privately paying for the tunnel expense.

For your own interpretation of the Ohio River Bridges Project, click on the following links:

Ohio River Bridges Project: www.KyInBridges.com

Record of Decision: <http://www.kyinbridges.com/pdfs/rod.pdf>

Memorandum of Agreements / Section 106: http://www.kyinbridges.com/pdfs/rod_d.pdf

Financial Plan: http://www.kyinbridges.com/pdfs/Initial_Financial_Plan_200801.pdf

If you have additional questions or seek clarification to any of the above FAQs, then email Steve at WiserAIA@Hotmail.com