



## **BUILD THE BRIDGES COALITION**

[www.buildthebridges.com](http://www.buildthebridges.com)

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **Bridges Project addresses growing safety concerns**

Leaders of Build the Bridges Coalition say reports raising safety concerns about aging infrastructure across the country and in the Louisville metropolitan area reinforce the need to complete the Ohio River Bridges Project as quickly as possible.

The project addresses key safety needs, providing modern and safe design features and adding capacity to accommodate huge increases in traffic crossing the river, said C. Edward Glasscock, chairman of the coalition. The coalition is a non-profit organization advocating for the two new bridges and the rebuild of Spaghetti Junction.

“Our cross-river transportation network is an economic lifeline. We need the project completed as soon as possible to address growing congestion and safety concerns, and to ensure a bright economic future,” Glasscock said.

Underscoring safety issues, a federal study that resulted in approval to build the project cited these facts:

- None of the region’s existing bridges meet current design safety standards or criteria.
- Spaghetti Junction also does not meet current design safety standards and has an accident rate that is more than 170 percent greater than average for urban interstate highways in Kentucky. According to Louisville Metro officials, an average of two accidents a day occur in the junction.

#### **Coalition launches web site:**

[www.buildthebridges.com](http://www.buildthebridges.com)

Build the Bridges Coalition has a new web site that provides factual information about the need for the project and the benefits it will bring.

From the site, studies and facts can be accessed. The site also features news items about the project, coalition news releases, and a link for sending messages of support for the project to elected officials.

- Traffic analyses show congestion will worsen, and all three bridges will be carrying more traffic than they were designed to handle, resulting in daily gridlock on all bridges with congestion spilling over onto connecting highways for miles.
- The Kennedy Bridge (I-65) has been carrying more traffic than it was designed to handle for at least the past seven years. By 2025, the bridge will be 42 percent over capacity.
- Shoulder lanes on the Kennedy Bridge were converted into traffic lanes nearly a decade ago because of increased traffic volume. But that has hampered emergency response, and has added to congestion and safety concerns when there is an accident or disabled vehicle on the bridge.

Glasscock noted that transportation experts have repeatedly said that the recent bridge collapse in Minneapolis draws attention to the need to upgrade infrastructure. The Bridges Project, he said, will provide the needed upgrades to the aging and congested cross-river transportation network in Louisville and Southern Indiana.

The coalition, with representation from 18 business, civic, government, union and non-union trade groups, is working to educate the public about the project's needs. The group's new web site, [www.buildthebridges.com](http://www.buildthebridges.com), contains the 2003 Record of Decision authorizing the project and a key chapter from the federal Environmental Impact Statement study in formats that can be downloaded.

The information includes traffic analyses showing that only two bridges – one downtown and the other in the east end - and a rebuild of Spaghetti Junction will address cross-river transportation needs for the foreseeable future.

Glasscock said the coalition, which formed last spring and recently adopted the name "Build the Bridges Coalition," is examining possible funding, governance and construction options in an effort to help identify the most effective ways that the project can be built as quickly and as inexpensively as possible.

#### **Build the Bridges Coalition**

The coalition is a private, non-profit organization advocating for completion of the Ohio River Bridges Project. Eighteen organizations have representatives on the coalition, which was founded by Greater Louisville Inc., One Southern Indiana, the Louisville Downtown Development Corp., and the Regional Leadership Coalition. Other organizations participating: Greater Louisville Building and Construction Trades Council; Associated Builders and Contractors of Kentuckiana, Inc.; The Greater Louisville Logistics Network; Louisville chapter, National Association of Women Business Owners; The Hispanic-Latino Business Council; The African-American Business Alliance; Young Professional Association of Louisville; The Louisville Urban League; The Urban League Young Professionals; the cities of Louisville Metro, Bowling Green, Elizabethtown, and Jeffersonville, Ind.; and Bullitt County.

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