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Brent Spence Bridge Corridor May 29, 2026 eNewsletter

IT'S REALLY HAPPENING!

For more than 20 years, transportation officials and elected leaders in Ohio and Kentucky developed plan after plan for alleviating one of the worst bottlenecks in the country.

The planning came to fruition earlier this month when Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear and Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine were joined by federal, state and local leaders to break ground on the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project.

"Today, we took a major step forward for Kentucky, Ohio and America as we broke ground on the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project," Gov. Beshear said. "This historic project will deliver safer travel for our families, create good-paying construction jobs, boost national commerce and ease congestion for commuters."



This phase of the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project will build a new state-of-the-art cable-stayed companion bridge immediately west of the existing Brent Spence Bridge,

which crosses the Ohio River between Cincinnati and Covington, Kentucky.

In addition to new approaches to the companion bridge, all the connections to the existing bridge will be overhauled in each state. This includes more than 30 overpasses or underpasses in Ohio and a dozen in Kentucky.

“After decades of planning and preparation, we are finally breaking ground on a solution to the traffic headaches and interstate commerce delays caused by the overcrowded Brent Spence Bridge,” Gov. DeWine said. “This new companion bridge will make our roads safer and our economy stronger, while demonstrating what’s possible when states and the federal government work together to solve our biggest challenges.”

More than \$1 billion in freight passes through the I-71/75 corridor daily. The existing Brent Spence Bridge, which has served the region since 1963, carries significantly more traffic than it was designed to handle.

In addition to construction of the companion bridge, this \$4.05 billion phase of the project also includes improvements to the existing Brent Spence Bridge, such as the restoration of the emergency shoulders, redesigned ramp configurations and new pedestrian and bike paths to strengthen community connectivity. Once the companion bridge opens to carry through-traffic, the Brent Spence Bridge will serve local traffic traveling shorter distances.

The companion bridge is expected to open in 2031 with approach work substantially complete by 2033.

Construction of this phase is expected to begin this summer, generating approximately 6 million hours of work and employing as many as 1,000 skilled tradespeople.

A CELEBRATION OF PERSISTENCE AND COOPERATION

After many years of research, discussion, planning and design, construction for the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor project is finally starting! First up: the much-anticipated companion bridge.

We want everyone to get ready for the start of this important project that will better connect our communities, ease traffic congestion, improve safety and smooth travel along I-71 and I-75 in our region.

Watch this video to be part of the excitement – and keep an eye out for some familiar faces!



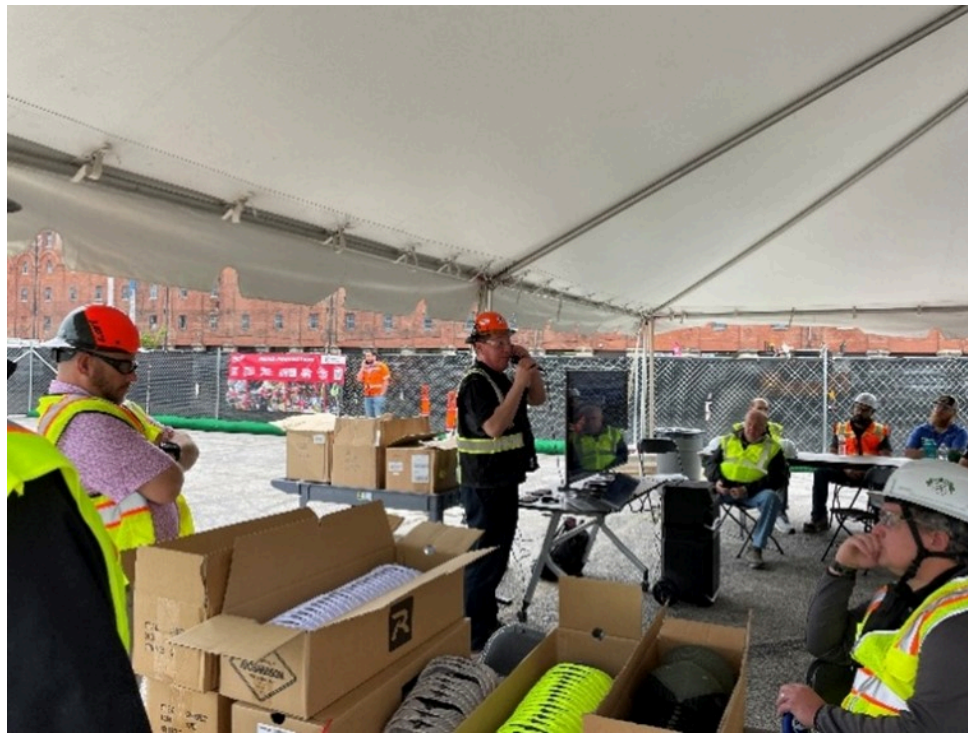
CONSTRUCTION SAFETY WEEK - ALL IN TOGETHER

Safety is always our top priority. This year’s Construction Safety Week theme was *All in Together*, so the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor project team joined industry partners to reinforce a shared commitment to safety.



Crews participated in daily vendor presentations, live equipment demonstrations and hands-on discussions focused on hazard awareness and best practices in active work

zones. These activities focused on the pillars of safety: helping crews *recognize* risks in the field, *respond* with the right procedures, and reinforce *respect* for every worker on site.



In addition to the training, crews and partners connected over shared experiences and conversations, strengthening relationships and reinforcing that safety is everyone's responsibility. Safety Week is a reminder that protecting one another is just as important as getting the work done. By staying *All in Together*, the team continues to look out for one another and ensure everyone goes home safely each day.

BRIDGE-BUILDING BARGES ARE ON THE WAY

The barges that will play a pivotal role in the construction of the companion bridge as part of the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project are scheduled to arrive next week on the Ohio River.

Pushed by a tugboat from St. Louis at an average rate of three to five mph since May 26, the flotilla consists of two spud and four deck barges.

Spud barges feature vertical steel shafts, often called spuds, which can be lowered and anchored directly into a riverbed, creating a stable platform from which cranes and other machinery can operate. Though they vary in size, spud barges are typically 60 feet wide by 180 feet long.

Deck barges, meanwhile, are flat-bottomed vessels with open decks, which can accommodate heavy machinery, construction equipment and building materials.

The first order of business for the barges is to support the construction of a mooring system at the Pete Rose Pier in Covington for all the barges that will be used on the project, which could range from 12 to 18 at the height of activity. The pier will also be used throughout the project to transfer material and equipment to the Kentucky side of the project area.

The barges will then focus on supporting the installation of steel sheet piling and the construction of bulkheads and temporary trestles or work bridges required to build the companion bridge.

This fall the barges are expected to support the beginning of drilling for the bridge piers that will sit in the Ohio River.



WHILE BOBBY LEWIS TOSSED AND TURNED, BARGE WORKERS DROVE STEEL INTO THE OHIO RIVER

It was July 13, 1961. Across town at Crosley Field, the Cincinnati Reds were in the middle of a pennant-winning season that would carry them to the World Series. That

night, Jim O'Toole threw a complete game to edge the Chicago Cubs, 4-3. On the radio, Bobby Lewis was pleading that he couldn't sleep at all last night with the No. 1 song in America, "Tossin' and Turnin'."

Out on the Ohio River, nobody was tossing or turning. They were driving steel.



This image from the archives shows barge-mounted cranes at work on Pier No. 2, one of two in-river foundations that would anchor the Brent Spence Bridge, known during construction as the Cincinnati-Covington Bridge.

By August 24, 1962 all four piers, one on each shore and two in the Ohio River, were completed. The bridge opened in November 1963.

Archive photo courtesy of the City of Cincinnati, Division of Engineering. Photo by Dan Donnelly.

PEDESTRIAN TRAVEL CHANGES IN KENTON COUNTY

As part of the ongoing Brent Spence Bridge Corridor project, several closures and detours took place in May in Covington for crews to begin staging equipment for upcoming construction while ensuring safe connections for pedestrians.

Closure of Pedestrian Bridge over I-71/75 Northbound W. Fifth Street Exit Off-Ramp

As part of the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project, permanent roadway configuration changes required the closure and future demolition of the pedestrian bridge over northbound I-71/75 at the West Fifth Street off-ramp. As part of the current construction contract, a new shared-use path will be built to provide better pedestrian and bicyclist connections in Covington. The additional greenspace from the removal of the bridge will be part of an expansion of Goebel Park.

Pedestrian access on W. Fifth Street (KY 8) is maintained by utilizing the sidewalk on the south side of W. Fifth Street until the I-71/75 northbound exit off-ramp to W. Fifth Street. Pedestrians can cross ahead of the stop signs utilizing the crosswalk prior to the northbound exit off-ramp. Pedestrians can then use the Philadelphia Street crosswalk to access Goebel Park.

As part of the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor project, on Tuesday, May 26, W. Fifth Street from Crescent Avenue (6.5 mile point) to the I-71/75 northbound exit off-ramp (6.66 mile point) was closed. This included a sidewalk closure in the area.



Pedestrian bridge over W. Fifth St. exit off-ramp

CLOSURE, DETOUR ON PORTION OF RIVERWALK TRAIL (FORMERLY RIVERFRONT COMMONS TRAIL)

To ensure public safety, a 0.8-mile portion of Covington's Riverwalk closed earlier this month to support the construction of the new companion bridge to the west of the existing Brent Spence Bridge for crews to safely move materials and equipment through the area. Signage is in place to alert trail users of the closure and guide them along the detour.

On Rivercenter Boulevard, the roadway will be restriped to accommodate a ten-foot two-way bicycle lane within the existing roadway, while pedestrians will continue to use the adjacent 4-foot-wide sidewalk. On W. Third Street and Highway/Crescent Avenue (KY 8), the north-side sidewalk will be widened to accommodate an eight-foot shared-use path for both cyclists and pedestrians. On Highway/Crescent Avenue, a concrete barrier will separate the path from traffic for added protection.



Detour Map for Riverwalk Trail in Covington

As part of this detour, some utility work associated with the project will require the use of an additional short-term detour route within the existing Brent Spence Bridge this summer. Signage will clearly indicate when this temporary route is in place.

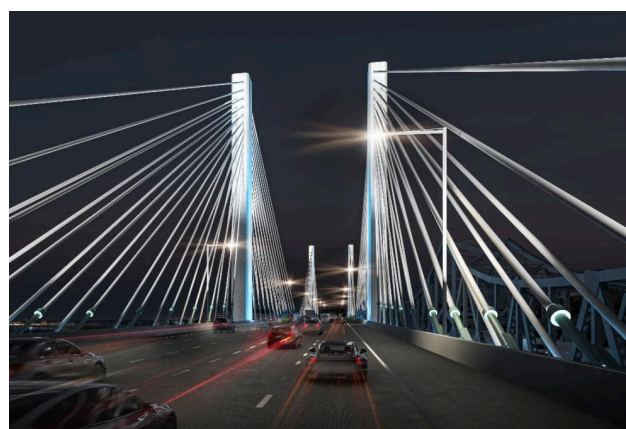
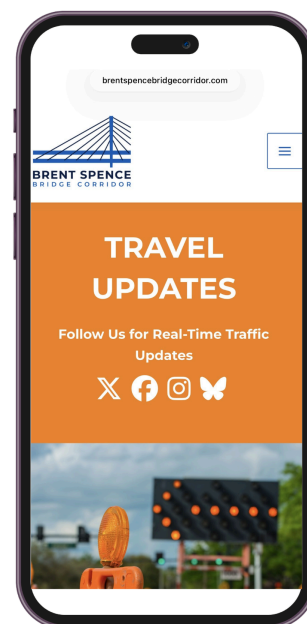
TRAVEL CHANGES ARE COMING. ARE YOU READY?

It's never too late to [sign up](#) for the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project travel advisories and alerts.

We encourage you to sign up for our dedicated email or text notifications, where we will share:

- Traffic and detour notices
- Construction schedule information
- Milestones and progress updates

Follow us on [X](#) and [Facebook](#) to get instant notifications, important announcements and traffic alerts in your newsfeed. Visit the [project website](#) to sign up for text and email updates.



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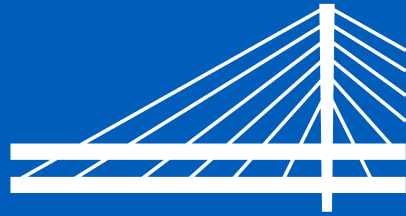
ABOUT THE PROJECT

Stretching from the Western Hills Viaduct in Ohio to Dixie Highway in Kentucky, the project will be built without tolls and transform an eight-mile portion of the I-71/75 interstate corridor, including a companion bridge immediately to the west of the existing bridge. More information about the project is available at BrentSpenceBridgeCorridor.com.

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