

The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) today provided an update on structural repairs necessary to reopen the I-64 Sherman Minton Bridge, and efforts to keep cross-river traffic and commerce flowing. As part of its \$13.9 million bid, Hall Contracting of Kentucky committed to reopening the bridge in 135 days, barring abnormal weather conditions.

Prior to steel being delivered, Hall Contracting began preliminary work this week. Preliminary work includes:

- Installing platforms that allow crews to work underneath the bridge,
- Verifying measurements in construction plans for new steel plates,
- Dividing the structural welds into smaller sections to minimize the spread of cracks,
- Sandblasting/priming the existing load-carrying girder, and
- Switching out traffic control measures installed quickly after the bridge was closed.

While the bridge remains closed, contractors will be patching rough spots in its driving surface as weather and the repair schedule allows. Behind the scenes, mills around the Midwest have begun casting the 2.4 million pounds of structural steel needed to reinforce the Sherman Minton Bridge.

“The typical lead time to procure specialized steel from U.S. mills is several months,” said Kathy Eaton-McKalip, Deputy Commissioner for INDOT’s Seymour District covering southeastern Indiana. “INDOT selected specific types of steel that could be acquired more quickly. Plus, the \$100,000-per-day incentive helps shift the supply and demand equation in our favor.”

In an effort to keep traffic and commerce moving in Southern Indiana, INDOT is bolstering its Hoosier Helper freeway service patrols sponsored by State Farm. Two additional drivers are being hired for a total of four vans patrolling I-65, I-265 and I-64 in urban Clark and Floyd counties. INDOT recently signed a three-year sponsorship agreement with State Farm to develop a supplemental funding source for the program, which is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> year of operation.

KYTC continues to implement a reversible lane on the Clark Memorial Bridge for southbound U.S. 31/Second Street traffic starting at each morning at 6 a.m. In recent weeks, police have noticed traffic thinning out as early as 9 a.m. KYTC crews will continue to remove the cones at the direction of police.

“As we look ahead to the Thanksgiving travel holiday, INDOT will be working notify unfamiliar interstate traffic on both I-64 and I-65 about the detours and possible delays,” said Ryan Gallagher, INDOT Director of Traffic Management and District Support.