

**BRENT SPENCE**  
**BRIDGE CORRIDOR**



# CUF Neighborhood Meeting (OH)

November 15, 2022



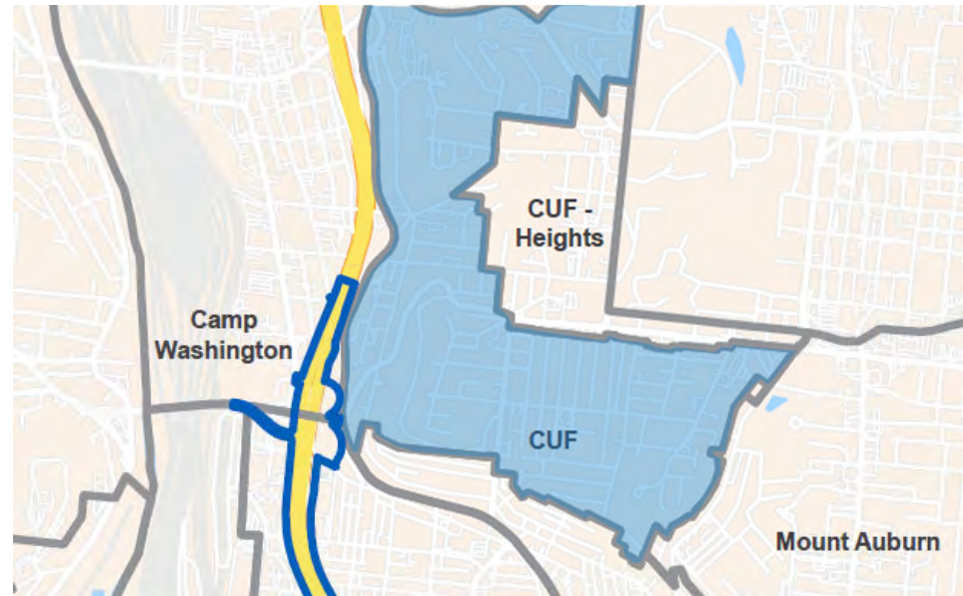
INVESTING IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES. GROWING AMERICA'S ECONOMY.  
[brentspencebridgecorridor.com](http://brentspencebridgecorridor.com)



The meeting will open with remarks by the City of Cincinnati (5 min) and introductions of the Project Team in attendance (2 min).

# Welcome

- Meeting purpose
  - Share updates on the Brent Spence Bridge (BSB) Corridor Project
  - Offer residents in the CUF neighborhood the opportunity to share feedback with the Project Team
- Agenda
  - General project overview
  - Project specifics in the CUF area
  - Discussion/feedback from CUF residents



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The reason we're here tonight is to give a brief overview of the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project both for those of you who aren't familiar with the project and for those of you who have been following the progress over the past decade. We're also here to give specific details about what the project will look like in and near the CUF neighborhood. Most importantly, tonight we're focusing on hearing from the residents of CUF. We're here to answer your questions and to listen to your feedback about the project.

# Project History



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For those of you who haven't been following the project for the last 15 years, let's go over a quick history.

In 2004, ODOT and KYTC formally began studying ways to improve 7.8 miles of I-71 and I-75 in Kentucky and Ohio. In Ohio, that includes I-75 from the Brent Spence Bridge to just north of the Western Hills Viaduct. Through a series of preliminary engineering and planning studies, we developed several potential alternatives for improving the corridor. We completed preliminary engineering and evaluated the impacts of each alternative. We also held several public meetings to gather feedback on the alternatives. The whole process led to the development of an Environmental Assessment (which is abbreviated "EA" on this slide) that compared the benefits and impacts of the alternatives and recommended one alternative – called the preferred alternative - to move forward into detailed design and construction. After reviewing the EA and gathering more feedback through public hearings, the Federal Highway Administration issued a decision called a "Finding of No Significant Impact" (also called a FONSI, as shown on this slide), which marked the formal approval the project and allowed the preferred alternative – Alternative I – to move into the next stages of design.

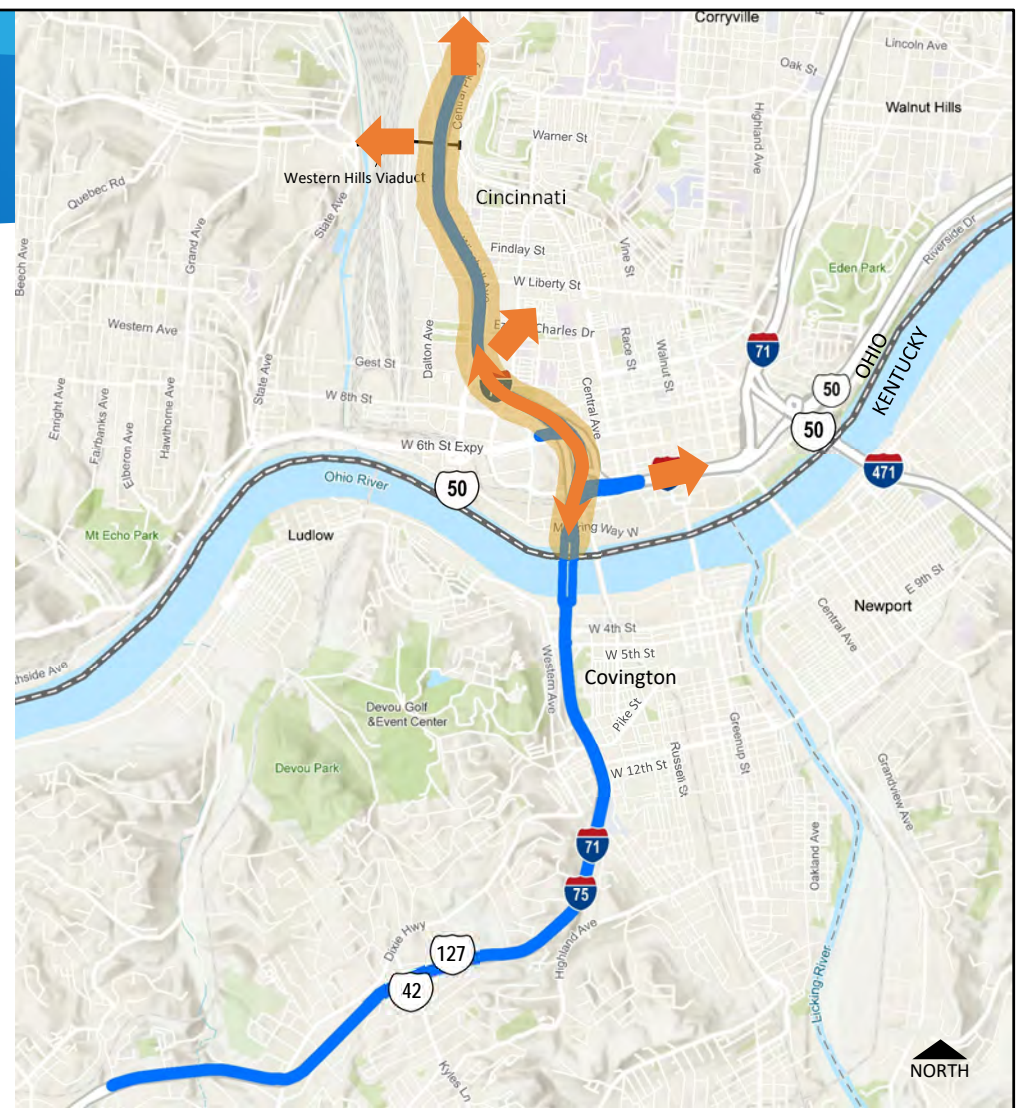
Since the approval of the FONSI in 2012, ODOT has been studying ways to improve the design, simplify the construction, reduce costs, reduce impacts, and incorporate additional enhancements into the project. These studies resulted in several refinements to Preferred Alternative I, which we are referring to as "Concept I-W" and what we will be presenting to you tonight.

Also since 2012, ODOT has purchased most of the land needed to build the project. In addition, we've begun detailed design from Linn Street to the northern project limits.

# Project Description

## Ohio

- Widen I-75
- Rebuild all overpass bridges and interchanges
- Build a collector-distributor system
- Tie into Mill Creek Expressway-Hopple Street Interchange project
- Tie into the Western Hills Viaduct project
- Add a northbound exit to Ezzard Charles Drive
- Connect to I-71 and US-50E



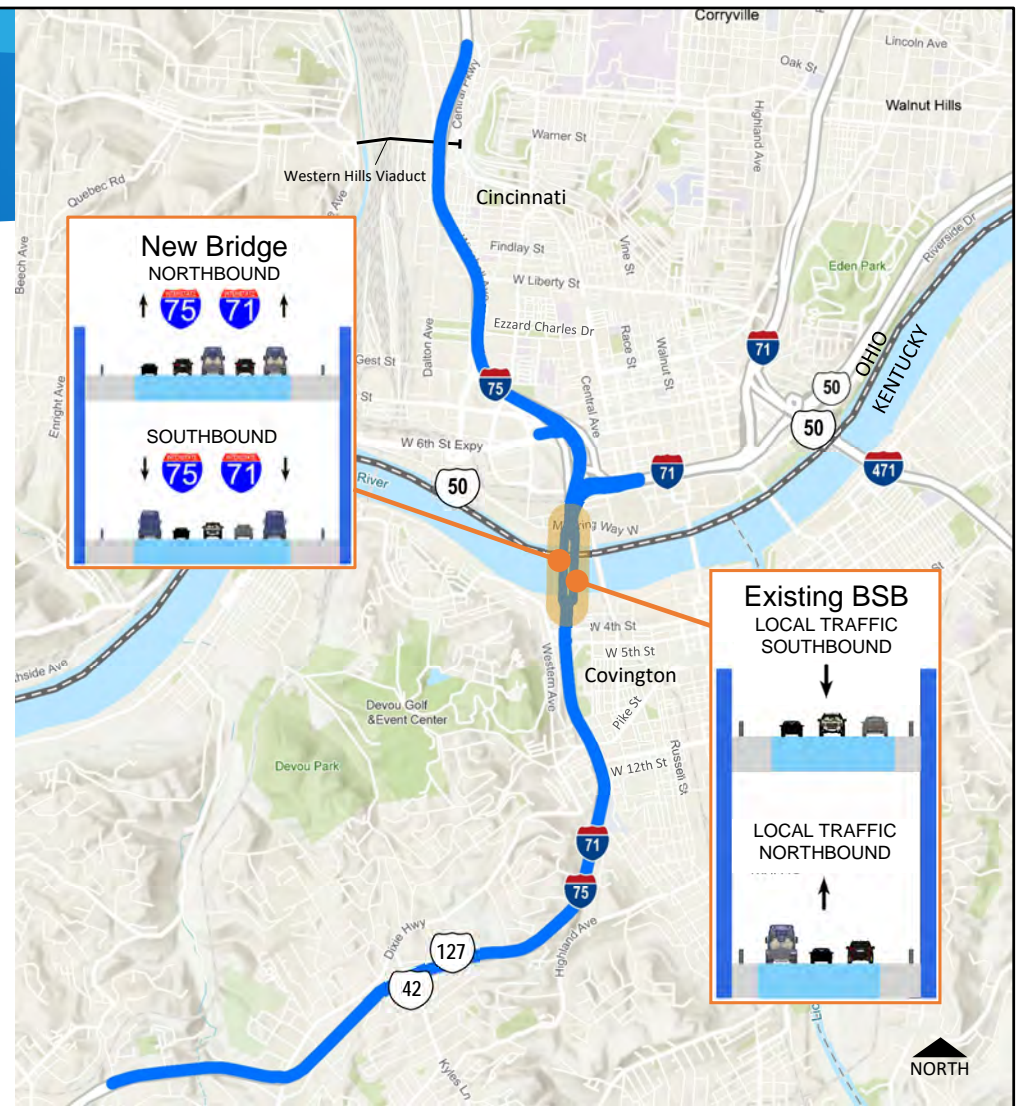
Note: Individual project elements will come in with click (marked by #).

In Ohio, the project will add one lane in each direction to I-75, remove left exits, and rebuild all bridges and interchanges. (#) Beginning near Ezzard Charles Drive, a collector-distributor system will be added to connect I-75 traffic to and from the local street network and US-50 West. (#) In the north, it will tie into the recently completed Mill Creek Expressway-Hopple Street Interchange project. (#) The project will rebuild the I-75 interchange at the Western Hills Viaduct and tie into the new bridge replacement project being developed by the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County. (#) A new northbound exit will be built at Ezzard Charles Drive to improve access to Union Terminal, TQL Stadium, and Over-the-Rhine. Lastly, it will connect to I-71 and US-50 East.

# Project Description

## Brent Spence Bridge

- New double-decker companion bridge
  - 5 lanes each deck
  - Carry through (interstate) traffic
- Rehabilitate and reconfigure existing bridge
  - Three lanes each deck
  - Increased inside/outside shoulders
  - Carry local traffic



Note: Bridge details will come in with click (marked by #).

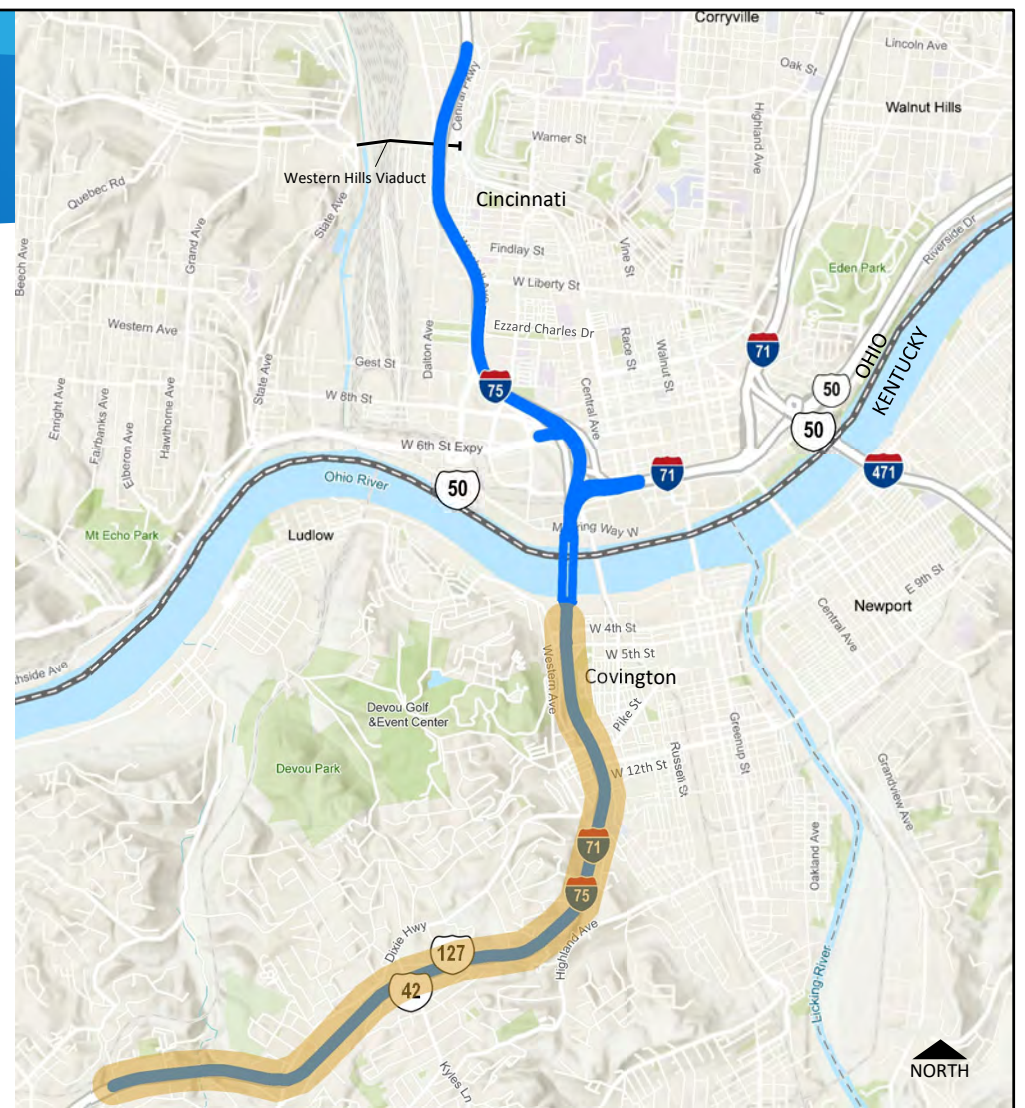
Let's move south to the Brent Spence bridge crossing. The project will build a new double decker companion bridge with five lanes on each deck west of the existing BSB. The new bridge will carry through (interstate) traffic. (#)

The existing double-decker Brent Spence bridge will be rehabilitated and reconfigured to reduce the number of lanes on each deck from four to three and increase inside and outside shoulder widths. The existing bridge will carry local traffic only.

# Project Description

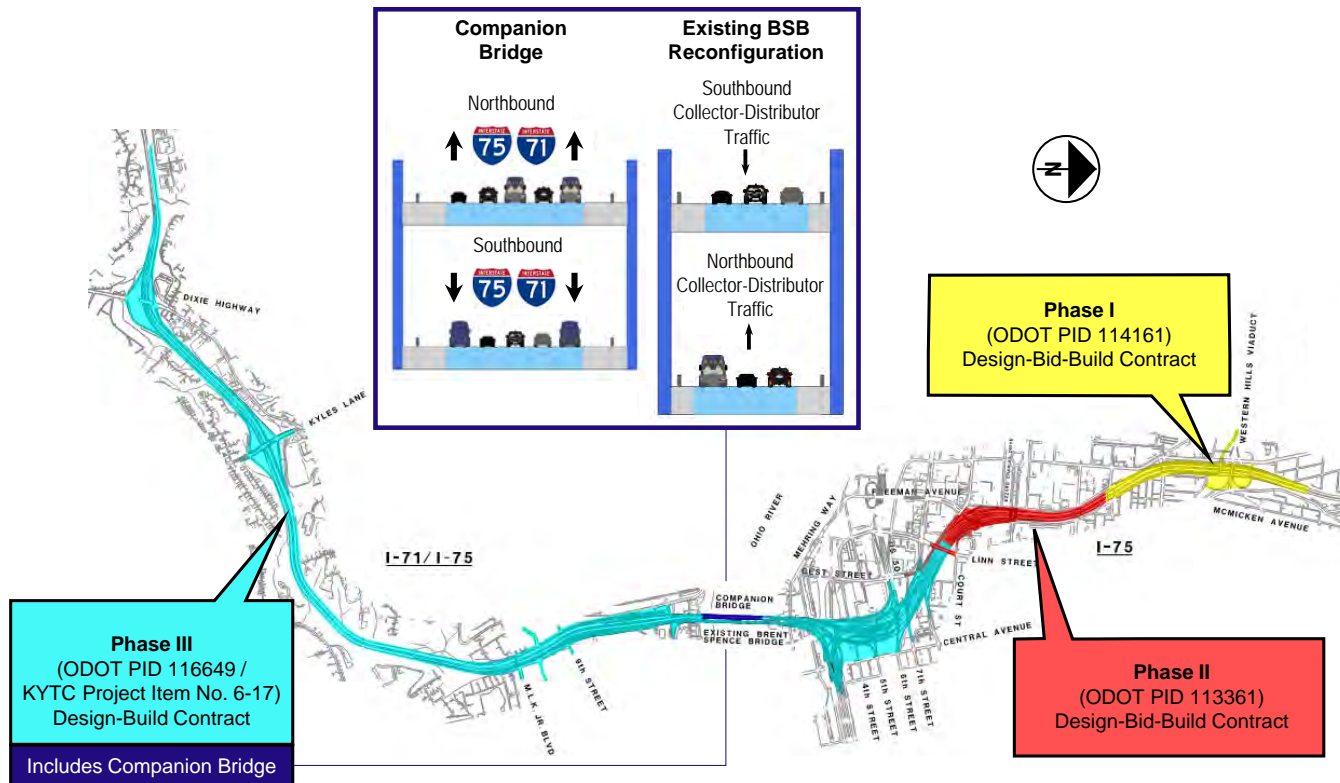
## Kentucky

- Widen I-71/I-75
- Rebuild all overpass bridges and interchanges
- Extend frontage roads in Covington
- Construct collector-distributor systems in Covington and Ft. Mitchell/Ft. Wright



In Kentucky, the project will widen I-71 and I-75 and rebuild all overpass bridges and interchanges. The project will also extend existing frontage roads to improve connectivity in Covington. A collector-distributor system will also be built beginning in Covington to connect interstate traffic to and from the local street network. Lastly, collector-distributor ramps will be built in Fort Mitchell and Fort Wright to reduce the need for traffic to weave between ramps and the through lanes on the interstate.

# Project Description

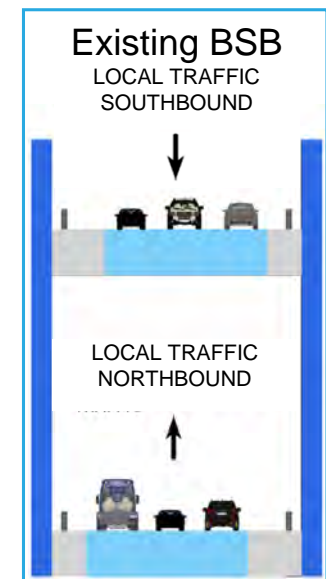
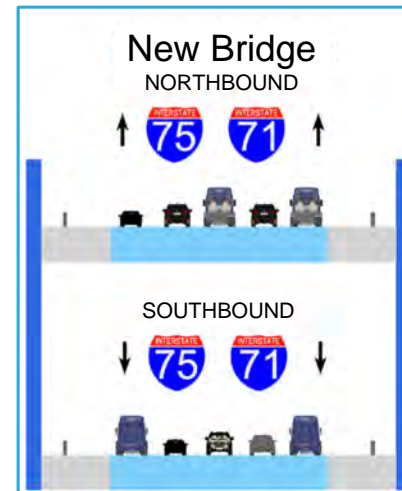


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The project is going to be built in three phases. Phase I (shown in yellow) will stretch from Findlay Street to the north. Phase II (shown in red) will stretch from Linn Street to Findlay Street. Phase III (shown in blue) will build everything else, including the new companion bridge. Phase I, which is closest to CUF is currently under design with construction expected to begin in 2028. The construction time frame may adjust based on on-going coordination with the City's Western Hills Viaduct Project.

# What Has Changed?

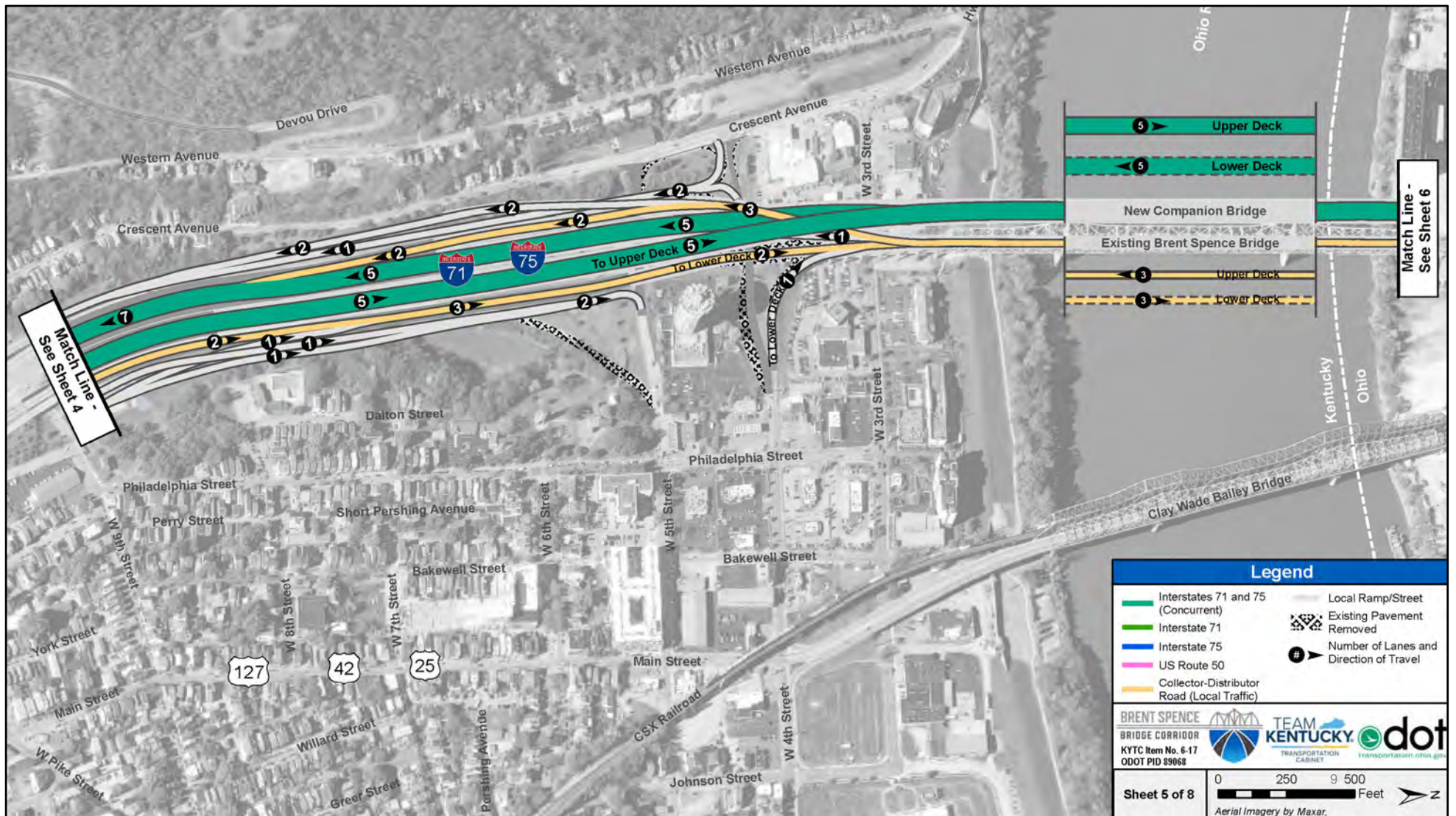
- Reconfigured how traffic travels across the Ohio River
  - Companion bridge carries through (interstate) traffic
  - Existing bridge carries local traffic
  - All northbound and southbound traffic on one deck
  - Width of companion bridge substantially reduced



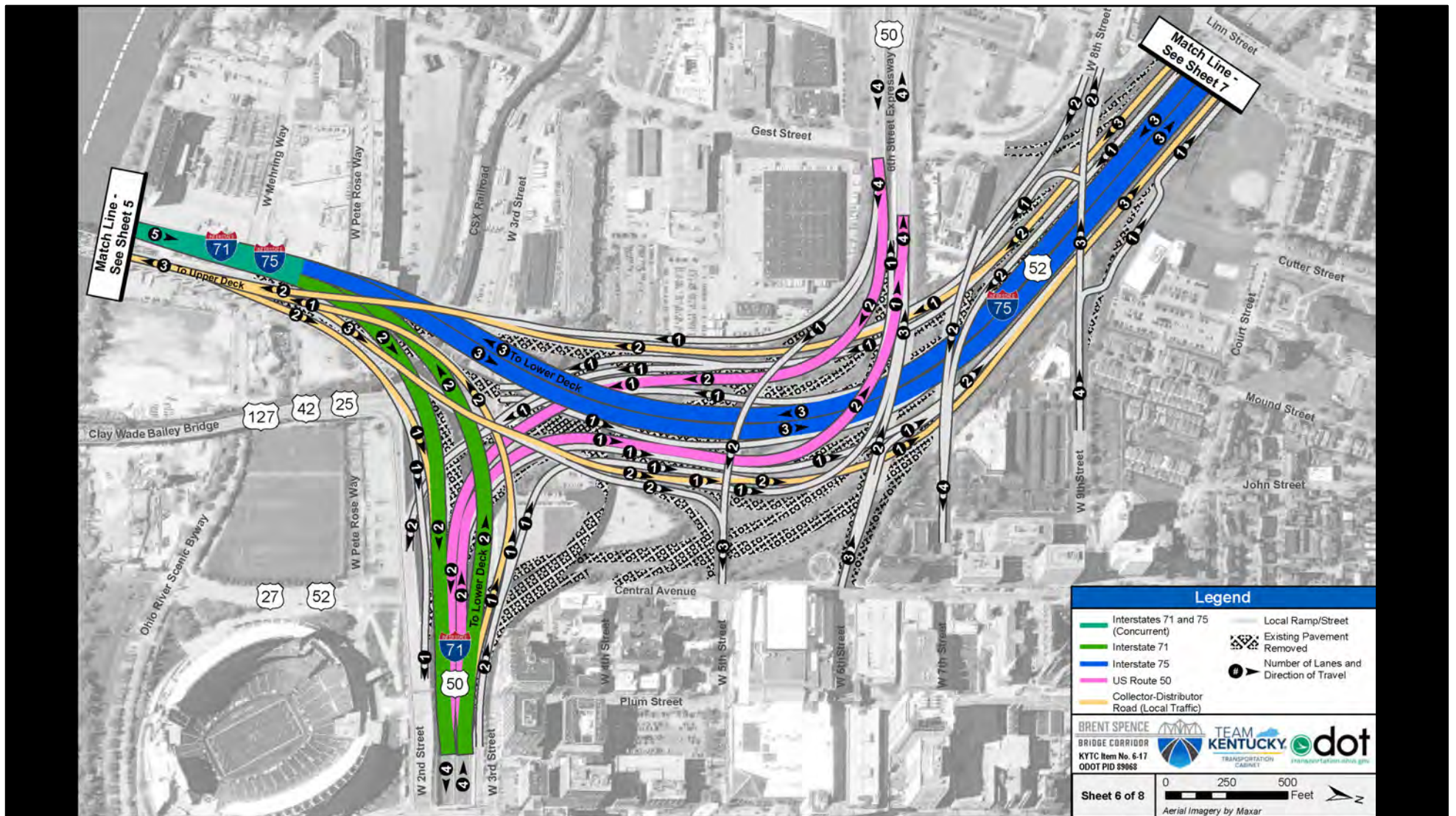
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As mentioned earlier, since the 2012 EA and FONSI, ODOT has been studying ways to improve the design, simplify the construction, reduce costs, reduce impacts, and incorporate additional enhancements. One of the biggest changes is how traffic will travel across the Ohio River. The Preferred Alternative identified in 2012 mixed local and interstate traffic on both bridges. The 2012 design also placed northbound and southbound traffic on the same bridge decks, which required additional width for a median to safely separate opposing traffic.

Concept I-W carries all interstate traffic on the new companion bridge and all local traffic on the existing Brent Spence Bridge. In addition, all northbound and southbound traffic is grouped on their own bridge decks. As a result, the width of the companion bridge was reduced from 172 feet to 107 feet, substantially reducing the cost of the bridge. This configuration will also improve traffic flow and safety by separating through and local traffic.



This slide shows how traffic will move across the Ohio River. Interstate traffic (shown in green) will use the companion bridge and stay on the interstate corridor to travel through Covington and Cincinnati. Local traffic will use ramps and the collector-distributor system to travel to destinations in Cincinnati and Covington.



This slide shows how traffic will through Cincinnati. The blue lines show how I-75 traffic will travel to and from the companion bridge. The green lines show how traffic will on I-71 will be routed to and from the companion bridge. The orange lines show the collector-distributor system that will funnel traffic to and from local roadways and ramps. The grey lines show ramps connecting directly to local streets. Finally, the pink lines show how traffic will flow on US 50.

Other changes since 2012 include reducing shoulder widths on I-71, I-75, and collector-distributor roads to 10 feet to match current design standards. Previous design standards were 12 feet.

In addition, the design speeds on I-71, I-75, and the collector-distributor roads were adjusted to match the posted speed limits – which is 55mph for the interstate and 45 mph for the collector-distributor roads. This is 5 mph less than the 2012 design and allows us to reduce the overall area needed to build the roadways. We also reduced the number of lanes on some of the frontage roads in Kentucky.



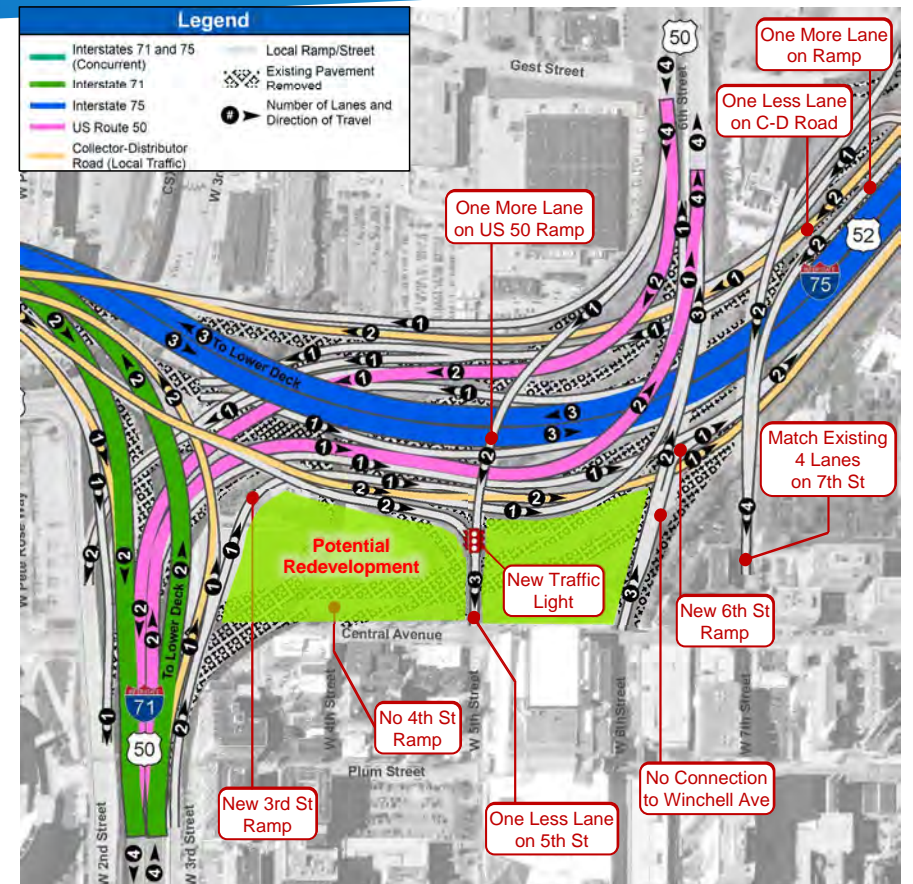
This drawing shows what the new companion bridge and the existing Brent Spence Bridge might look like after the project is built. Please note that the final design of the companion bridge will not be complete for a few years. It is possible it could be a cable-stayed design.

# What Has Changed?

- Reconfigured Downtown Cincinnati Ramps

## Additional changes evaluated

- Depressing I-75 and extending downtown streets to form an urban street grid
  - Cannot meet current design criteria
  - Safety concerns due to steep grades
  - Increased project footprint
  - Continuity along US 50 not maintained
  - Increase traffic in Covington



**Note: Click to walk through ramp changes (marked by #)** | Another change is the layout of the ramps in Downtown Cincinnati. First, ODOT optimized the interchange layout to use land formerly occupied by the Dunnhumby building. More recently, the City asked ODOT to evaluate ramp changes to open up additional land for redevelopment. (#) Based on the City's request, the 4th street ramp to NB I-75 was removed. (#) To provide access for traffic that would have used 4th Street, a new entrance ramp to NB I-75 was added to 3rd Street. (#) The SB exit to 5th Street was removed, which also resulted in fewer lanes on the SB collector-distributor road and at the Central Avenue intersection. The 7th Street exit was also widened to provide additional lanes for traffic that would have used the 5th Street exit. (#) The NB exit to 5th Street was moved closer to the highway to intersect the US 50 ramp at a traffic light, and one more lane was added to the US 50 ramp to make sure all traffic could move smoothly through the light. (#) The 6th Street connection to Winchell Avenue was removed and replaced with a new connection between 6th Street and the NB collector-distributor road. (#) All these changes will open up about 9.5 acres of land for redevelopment, which has been a consistent comment we've been hearing from the public in the last several months.

ODOT has also received several comments about depressing I-75 through downtown Cincinnati and extending downtown streets to form an urban street grid similar to Fort Washington Way. Because I-75 first passes over the railroad, it would have to descend at very steep grades (around 8%) in order to be depressed through downtown. This doesn't meet current design standards which state the maximum grade must be 5%. In addition, such steep grades would introduce safety concerns, particularly given the large number of trucks that travel on I-75. Since I-75 cannot be lowered, local streets would need to be raised to form an urban street grid across I-75, which would increase the project footprint. Finally, building an urban street grid would require starting and ending US 50 on either side of I-75. Moving all local traffic to an urban street grid as opposed to the collector-distributor system currently included in Concept I-W would also substantially increase traffic on the local streets in Covington.



This drawing shows what the Downtown interchange area might look like once the project is built.

# What Has Changed?

- Northbound I-75 entrance ramp moved from Freeman to Winchell
- One Ezzard Charles Drive bridge
- Minimize work along Winchell



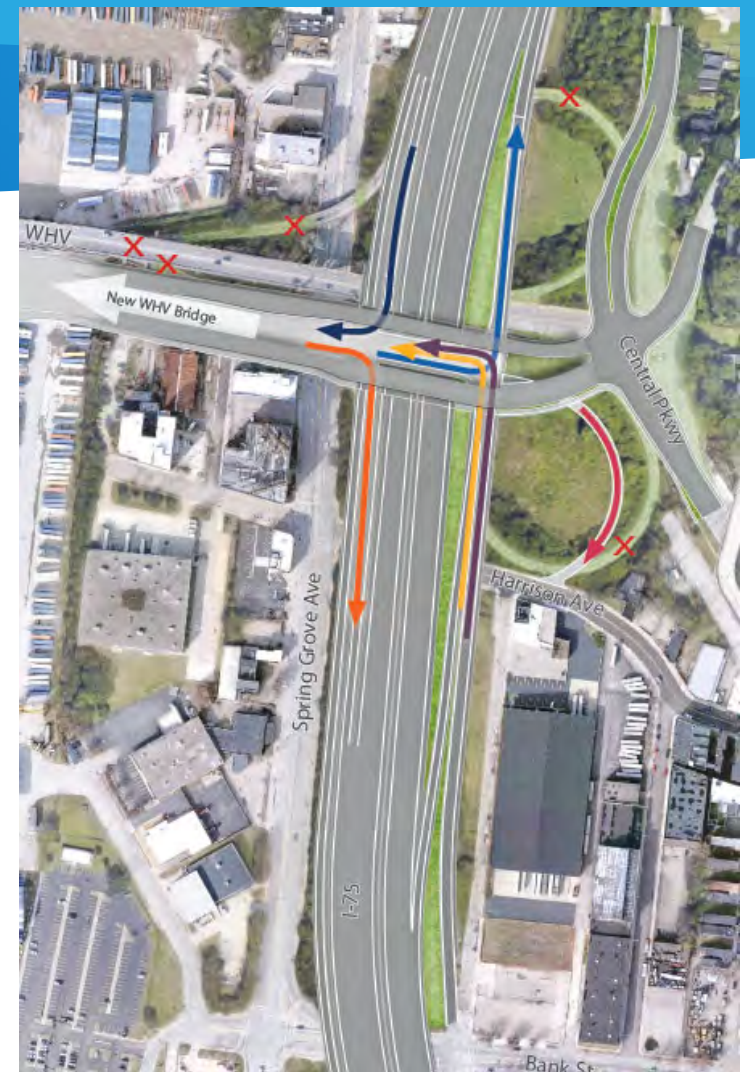
Note: Changes will come in with click (marked by #).

Another change ODOT's made since 2012 involves moving the northbound entrance ramp to I-75 from its existing location at (#) Freeman Avenue (south of Ezzard Charles Drive) (#) to Winchell Avenue (north of Ezzard Charles Drive). Also, (#) the two existing one-way bridges on Ezzard Charles Drive will be replaced with one, two-way bridge. These changes were also made in coordination with the City of Cincinnati to reduce project impacts and costs and improve local access to the interstate.

We've also refined the roadway layouts so that work will not occur along Winchell Avenue beyond what is needed to build the northbound entrance ramp shown in this drawing.

# What Has Changed?

- Interchange at the Western Hills Viaduct



Turning our focus to the areas closest to CUF, the layout of the project has been refined to tie into the new Western Hills Viaduct, which is a separate, stand-alone project being developed by the City and County. The existing ramps at the I-75 interchange will be removed and replaced with new ramps that will provide direct access to and from the new Western Hills Viaduct bridge. The ramps will also connect I-75 to the local street system at Findlay Street for southbound traffic and Bank Street for northbound traffic.

# Aesthetics

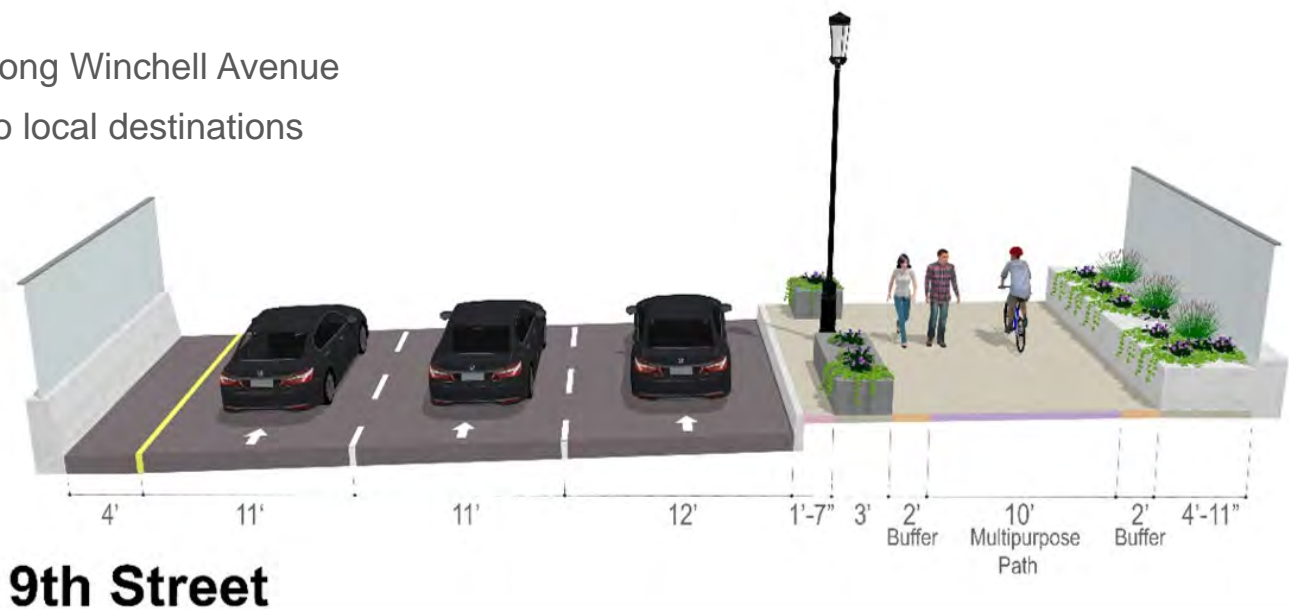
- Corridor-wide aesthetic treatments
  - Ashlar stone treatments for abutments, piers, and walls
  - Decorative bridge parapets
  - Translucent screen walls and planters on bridges
  - Other features (lighting, sidewalks, etc.) to match City standards



ODOT has worked with the City and the project Aesthetic Committee to develop an Aesthetic Design Checklist that will guide what the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor will look like. For example, ODOT will add aesthetic treatments in a pattern called “Ashlar Stone” to all bridge abutments, parapets, and piers. Retaining walls and the extended traffic safety barriers we just discussed will also have ashlar stone treatments. Overhead bridge parapets will have end treatments with the bridge identification name, construction completion data, and rustification design features. Examples of similar bridge parapets are shown in the images on this slide. In addition, overpass bridges will have wide sidewalks or shared-use paths, planters, and translucent screen walls. Other features throughout the corridor will match City aesthetic standards, including lighting, sidewalks, tree lawns, and others. We will show some examples of what specific locations near CUF will look like in just a few slides.

# Pedestrians and Bicycles

- Connections across I-75
  - Sidewalks
  - Shared use paths
  - Bike lanes
- New shared use path along Winchell Avenue
- Improved connections to local destinations



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The project will install bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on connections across I-75 like what is shown here for 9th Street. Pedestrian and bicycle connections will also be provided on 6th Street, 7th Street, Linn Street, Freeman Avenue, Ezzard Charles, Liberty Street, Findlay Street, Bank Street, and Harrison Avenue. In addition, new shared use path will be constructed along Winchell Avenue between 9th Street and Ezzard Charles Drive, including a pedestrian bridge connection to Freeman Avenue. To promote safety for bicycles and pedestrians, the ramp connections with local streets are being designed as lower-speed urban intersections in accordance with City of Cincinnati design standards. The pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure included in the project will improve connectivity to transit, employment, healthcare, cultural, recreational, and commercial destinations.





This is a view of what Findlay Street will look like when the project is built. Notice the 57-inch barrier on the I-75 bridge and the 8-foot extended traffic safety barriers on both sides of the bridge to reduce traffic noise. This also shows what the barriers and bridge walls will look like with the ashlar stone treatment. Also notice the rebuilt sidewalks, added bike lanes, and underpass lighting.



This view shows what the new, two-way bridge on Ezzard Charles Drive will look like. Notice the wide shared use path on the right and the sidewalk on the left. Also notice the planters, screenwall, and decorative lighting on the bridge. The bridge lights and traffic signal supports will be black and meet City aesthetic standards.



This view shows what the finished project will look like from Ezzard Charles Drive looking north toward CUF. Notice the 8-foot-tall extended traffic safety barriers for noise reduction. Also notice the ashlar stone treatments on the retaining walls.



# THANK YOU!

For more detailed information or to provide feedback visit:  
[www.PublicInput.com/bsbc](http://www.PublicInput.com/bsbc)



[BRENTSPENCEBRIDGECORRIDOR.COM](http://BRENTSPENCEBRIDGECORRIDOR.COM)



This concludes our formal presentation. We would like to hear your thoughts about the project. You can also visit a [PublicInput.com](http://PublicInput.com) to review information about the project and provide your feedback.