

# 106 SUCCESS STORY

## Creative Mitigation Heralded as Success for Local Economy

Milton, Kentucky/Madison, Indiana



“Although we lost a rare historic resource, the new bridge re-creates a similar silhouette and feeling that a concrete span would not.”

—PAUL DIEBOLD  
Assistant Director for Preservation  
Services  
Indiana Department of Natural  
Resources, Division of Historic  
Preservation & Archaeology



### THE STORY

Settled in 1785 on the banks of the Ohio River, the city of Milton is one of the oldest towns in Kentucky. That same year, the Continental Congress passed several laws establishing the system by which the western territories were to be settled into townships, and in 1810 the city of Madison was platted on the opposite bank of the Ohio River in Indiana.

With its river location and entry point into the Indiana Territory along the historic Old Michigan Road, Madison became a hub for transportation. Its many waterfront factories drew commerce, wealth, and settlers from the east. The National Historic Landmark District reflects the city's development between 1817 and 1939 and is a compelling embodiment of small town America. As a stop on the Underground Railroad, Madison also played an important role in the story of abolitionism with free African Americans establishing communities, commercial enterprises, and independent households. Since the founding of both cities, transportation across the Ohio River (ferry service prior to the construction of the bridge in 1929) has been a critical component of their development and prosperity.

### THE PROJECT

In 2009, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) proposed constructing a new bridge that would replace the National Register-eligible historic bridge built in 1929 at the current location. Over time, the bridge suffered substantial structural deterioration and since it was built for 1930s vehicles, it was considered too narrow for modern car and truck traffic.

The proposed project to replace the historic bridge received a \$20 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation Tiger Grant Program, a competitive program created under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. To qualify for funding under the program, the project had to be implemented by 2012, and as proposed, the project would close travel between Milton and Madison for 365 days.

Photos: Above, the original bridge as seen from Kentucky (photo courtesy Wikipedia); Right, the new bridge and Madison Historic District (photos courtesy Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology)



Photos: Left, transition span removal during construction (photo by Charlie Gannon); Right, Madison National Historic Landmark District (Madison is a Preserve America Community.) (photos courtesy Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology)

## THE 106 PROCESS

The FHWA provided funding for the project and was the federal agency responsible for conducting the Section 106 process under the National Historic Preservation Act. Section 106 requires federal agencies to identify historic properties and assess the effects on those properties of the projects they carry out, fund, or permit. Federal agencies also are required to consult with parties that have an interest in the fate of historic properties when adverse effects are likely to ensue.

A lengthy closure of the crossing was of considerable concern to the residents and businesses on both sides of the river. Through Section 106 consultation, the consulting parties focused on the effects of the project on the economic sustainability of the two communities, even though the historic bridge was the historic property directly affected.

FHWA initially concluded the Section 106 consultation with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) setting forth a number of measures to minimize the economic impact of the project on small businesses, including providing free ferry service during the bridge closure. However, the project contractor proposed an innovative plan that would close the bridge for only 10 days rather than a whole year. By truncating the closure timeline significantly, this plan addressed the economic impact concerns expressed by the consulting parties. In addition, FHWA agreed to implement the measures negotiated prior to the shortened bridge closure timeline to address the continued concerns of the project's economic impact on heritage tourism in Madison.

The consulting parties amended the MOA to eliminate the ferry crossing but retained other mitigation measures including financial assistance to promote preservation and heritage tourism, assistance to the City of Madison to employ a historic preservation officer for two years, and financial assistance to the Madison Main Street Program to assist businesses in the Madison Historic District.

## THE SUCCESS

The successful completion of the Milton Madison Bridge Replacement Project was in part due to the creative mitigation negotiated during the Section 106 consultation, so that the commercial districts on both sides of the river did not bear the weight of the economic impact associated with the bridge's long closure. The bridge project has received numerous state and national engineering awards for innovative design. Today, the new bridge is open, and visitors continue to enjoy the historic settings and vibrant waterfront businesses and attractions in Milton and Madison.

### Consulting Parties:

- Federal Highway Administration
- National Park Service
- ACHP
- Kentucky State Historic Preservation Officer
- Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer
- City of Madison
- City of Milton
- Historic Madison, Inc.
- Cornerstone, Inc.
- Indiana Landmarks
- National Trust for Historic Preservation

For more about  
Section 106 and  
the ACHP go to  
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