



## PARIS PIKE, KENTUCKY

Paris Pike in Kentucky is one of the most highly praised road reconstruction projects in the country. When it was first proposed in the late 1960s, it was envisioned as a traditional widening of a two-lane historic and scenic road to a standard four-lane highway. The widening would have caused major destruction of features such as historic stone walls and canopies of mature trees. The project met with opposition from local citizens who sued the Department of Transportation for failing to comply with section 4(f). The court agreed and, in 1979, imposed an injunction on the project “until such time as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation demonstrates to the court’s satisfaction compliance with section 4(f).”

In the summer of 1986, Kentucky restarted the engineering and planning studies required by the court injunction, and entered into a mediation process with stakeholders, which eventually led to a radical new approach to the design of the road – one that would maximize the preservation of character – defining features in the corridor.

In 1993 the injunction was finally lifted. The project is now nearly finished. As Paris Pike progressed in its second life, it became a model of public involvement and context-sensitive design and has received accolades from many sources. Historic places and landscapes were preserved and enhanced. Public support for the new approach to the Paris Pike widening was widespread.

Section 4(f) was instrumental in stopping an insensitive plan for the Paris Pike widening project. Subsequent enthusiastic compliance with the requirements of section 4(f) led to the completion of an award-winning project. The historic places that were protected during the widening were all in private hands. Threats to these sites led to the injunction in 1979, and without Section 4(f), these sites would not be protected.

