

2018-2022 Bond Program Strategy

Planning Board Report to Commissioners Court

Purpose of this Report

The Planning Board was asked to assist with the development of a Limited Access Roadway System (LARS) program for Collin County and to make a recommendation for bond funds that might be necessary to advance the program. This document will contain a brief summary of actions taken, and recommendations for the Court to consider.

Actions Taken

The planning board's first action was to conduct informational meetings with representatives of all Collin County cities to discuss the need for LARs and to promote the idea that the next transportation bond election will be focused on funding LARs rather than surfaces roads as has been done in the past. It was stressed, during the meetings, that Alignment of Roads was not part of the discussion and would be addressed through the normal public process conducted by NCTCOG and TXDOT at a later date. Feedback from the cities regarding dedicating bond funds to LARs was Positive to Mostly Positive. The main request the cities have made is to include city thoroughfares on a 50/50 shared basis as has been done in previous bond programs

Funding a LARs Program

It has been determined that limited access roadways (freeways) need to be added to Collin County's Transportation Plan. The MPO (NCTCOG) and TxDOT are evaluating the feasibility of freeways in various corridors. The Collin County Commissioners Court identified its priorities for freeways on February 1, 2016. The process of developing and actually opening a new freeway is a lengthy one – it will be many years before the first one is opened for use. Some corridors may be over-loaded by the time a freeway is opened; others may be able to be built in time to match the build-up of traffic congestion. It is the opinion of the Planning Board that it is urgent that freeways be planned now and that ROW corridors be acquired as soon as possible. The urgency is to prevent corridors from being closed due to development and to acquire the ROW at the lowest possible cost. Therefore, the development of all the freeway corridors needs to be initiated immediately.

Much of the resources to develop freeways will be provided by TxDOT, but it is clear that Collin County will have to provide substantial resources in the next five years if all the corridors are going to be initiated concurrently as soon as possible. One possible scenario of freeways that could be identified and prioritized by TxDOT and the MPO includes freeways on US 380 west of US 75, an extension of Spur 399 east of the termination of the Sam Rayburn Tollway, a north-south route in the peninsula of Lake Lavon and the Outer Loop west of US 75. The MPO and TxDOT have allocated \$607 million over the next ten years for various freeways in Collin County. The table below shows the Projected Five Year Funding Needs for such a LARs program. The table assumes that TxDOT will provide 20% of the amount allocated for US 380 for the engineering and ROW but for no other project. Therefore, if all of the freeways are to be initiated and moved to the point of construction within five years, Collin County would need to fund approximately \$536 million for the pre-construction tasks. Some or all of the

County contribution could be reimbursed and redeployed in future years as the road construction is fully funded by TxDOT and others. It is possible that as the MPO and TxDOT analyses continue these estimates may need to be revised. Collin County estimates that approximately \$560 million can currently be raised from bond sales without increasing the tax rate.

Planning Board Recommended Options 2017 Transportation Bond Program

There are transportation needs beyond the LARs program. It will be decided by the Commissioners Court whether any of the bond proceeds will be spent on those other needs. The Planning Board recommends a Bond Election be advanced seeking the entire \$560 million available without a tax rate increase. Further, the Board proposes the following three options be considered by Commissioners Court for allocating the funds:

Option 1:

100% Funding toward Limited Access Roadways

Option 2:

Up to 90% funding toward Limited Access Roadways

10% funding or more toward Principal Arterials connecting to LARs

Option 3:

Up to 80% funding toward Limited Access Roadways

10% funding or more toward Principal Arterials connecting to LARs

10% funding or more toward other Thoroughfares on County TP

Options 2 and 3 are presented based on the input from cities that county bond funds are still important to continued growth in the cities and that arterials are important in getting traffic to and from the freeways. This may be especially important to smaller cities. Under options 2 and 3, thoroughfare nominations will be submitted after the bond funds become available.

Next Steps

Recommendations and Options presented in this report must be considered by the Court and further instructions be given to the Planning Board. The Board is prepared to assist the Commissioners Court in preparing educational materials to be used to inform Collin County citizens about the bond program. The Planning Board members wish to thank you for your support developing the LARs program and to offer our continued effort to bring this to a final resolution.

Projected Five-Year Funding Needs for LARs

	Estimated Constr Amt	10-Yr Plan * (Millions)	20% for Engr & ROW	Estimated Eng & ROW	Gap (Est - 20%)
US 380, Spur 399 Extension	\$ 604	\$ 252	\$ 50	\$ 84	\$ 34
US 380, US 75 to Preston (ex align)	\$ 517		\$ -	\$ 157	\$ 157
SH 78 Alternate	\$ 156			\$ 36	\$ 36
Lake Corridor (SH 121 - PGBT)	\$ 1,395	\$ 200	**	\$ 191	\$ 191
Outer Loop, West of US 75					
ROW, plus unfunded portion of Serv Rd, DNT to 289	\$ 12	***		\$ 62	\$ 62
Outer Loop, SH 121 to US 380 - ROW				\$ 33	\$ 33
Outer Loop, US 380 to Rockwall - ROW		****		\$ 23	\$ 23
Total Needed, 2018 - 2022					\$ 536
* Programmed Construction Amount					
** Assumes TxDOT/MPO will not initiate more than US 380					
*** Do not plan to use \$100M programmed for this corridor in order to avoid Federal process					
**** Do not plan to use \$50M programmed for this corridor in order to avoid Federal process					