

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (**CAMPO**) serves the three-county region of Williamson, Travis and Hays Counties in Central Texas.

CAMPO provides transportation planning and air quality services and coordinates with state and local jurisdictions to determine the priorities for spending federal transportation dollars in the region.

CAMPO is governed by a 23-member Transportation Policy Board composed of elected officials representing cities, counties and state legislative districts within CAMPO's boundaries, as well as representatives from transportation agencies.

CAMPO is responsible for promoting an efficient, affordable transportation system that meets the mobility needs of area residents while enhancing regional livability, the economy and the environment.

CAMPO is committed to involving the citizens of the region in building a quality multi-modal and balanced transportation system.

Toll Roads

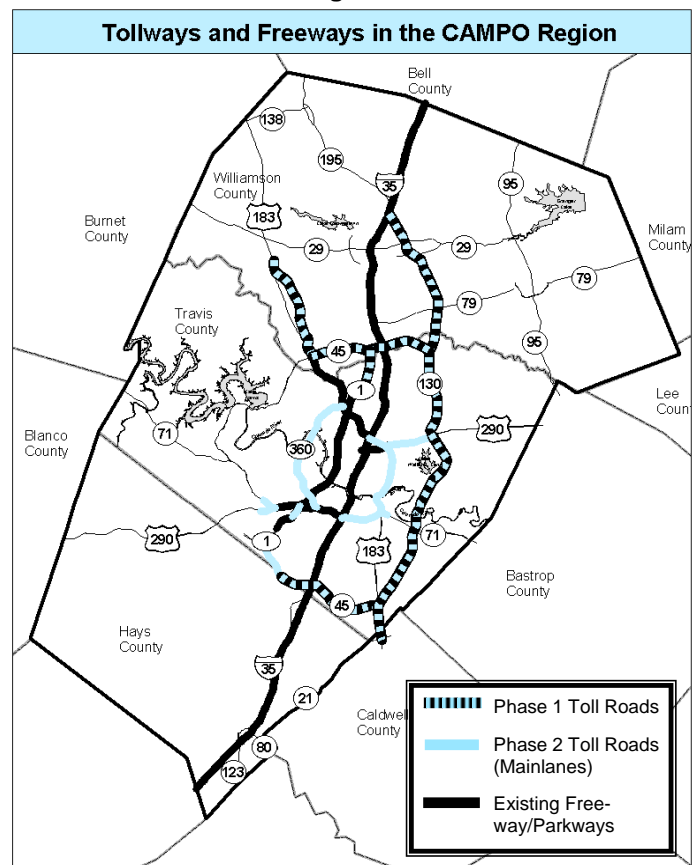
After extensive public input and deliberation, the CAMPO Policy Board, on July 12, approved the second phase of toll roads for the CAMPO three-county region as requested by the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (CTRMA). The first phase of toll roads was previously approved by CAMPO in June 2000 in adopting the *CAMPO 2025 Transportation Plan*. The second phase includes 260 miles of new tolled freeway mainlanes on the eight roads shown in Figure 1 and listed below:

US 183(S) from IH 35 to SH 71(E);
SH 71(E) from IH 35 to Thornberry Lane;
Loop 1(S) from US 290(W) to William Cannon; **SH 45(SW)** from Loop 1 to FM 1626; **US 290(W)** from FM 1826 to east of Williamson Creek;
SH 71(W) west of US 290; **US 290(E)** from US 183(S) to SH 130, and
Loop 360 from US 183(N) to US 290(W).

The Phase 2 roadway segments have been on the drawing board for many years. They can now be implemented and constructed (with the exception of

(continued on page 3)

Figure 1



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2030 Transportation Plan

The CAMPO long range transportation plan determines the future regional transportation system in the three-county CAMPO area. In May 2004, CAMPO staff presented the first review draft of the *CAMPO Mobility 2030 Plan* to the Transportation Policy Board. Since then,

CAMPO staff has presented the plan to groups around the region, and has solicited feedback from the agencies and jurisdictions that will implement the plan over the next 25 years. CAMPO staff will be revising the draft plan late this year. The CAMPO Transporta-

tion Policy Board will hold public hearings on the plan and consider adoption in early spring of 2005. For more information, or to request a draft of the plan, please contact Ms. Stevie Great-house at (512) 974-9715.

2004 CAMPO Transportation Issues Survey

In April, Opinion Analysts, Inc. conducted a public opinion survey of 1,600 peak-hour commuters in Williamson, Travis, Hays, Bastrop and Caldwell Counties. Survey participants were selected at random and were interviewed to determine opinions about transportation issues. Changes in travel behavior were also identified.

This spring's survey covered the same five counties as were surveyed in 2001. A smaller area, made up of Travis County and portions of Williamson and Hays Counties, was surveyed in 1994 and 1997.

Some significant findings of the 2004 Survey include:

- Average travel time to/from work/school remained the same in 2004 as 2001 (25 minutes) but the average commute was a mile shorter;

- Major roads used during commute trips are IH 35 (26%), MoPAC/Loop 1 (26%), and US 183 (24%);
- 83% of commuters drive their own cars, 9% of commuters carpool/vanpool, 4% of commuters ride a bus, and 1% of commuters ride a bicycle;
- 51.2% of the respondents (peak-hour commuters) preferred to pay a toll as a funding mechanism for new roads rather than wait until a free road could be built; and
- 41.6% would approve a 5¢ increase in state tax on gasoline dedicated to build new roads within the CAMPO region.

Suggestions for improving transportation in the area remained identical from 2001, with synchronizing traffic lights, more east-west thoroughfares through Austin, more toll-free roads and freeways, and a light rail or commuter train topping the list.

Respondents reported that alternative work schedules are offered less by employers but more employees are taking advantage of the available opportunities.

The number of respondents familiar with the region's Ozone Action Day program decreased from 91% in 2001 to 88% in 2004. However, 54% of respondents are doing something different on Ozone Action Days, with delaying mowing lawns and delaying purchases of gasoline until after 5:00 p.m. being the most often cited changes.

Details from the survey can be found in the *Summary Report* on CAMPO's website: www.campotexas.org. The 2004 Transportation Issues Survey is available on CD in the CAMPO office.

October is Commute Solutions Month

It's almost October, the time of year when our thoughts turn to cooler weather, football, and alternative commutes. October is Commute Solutions Month, the annual campaign to encourage everyone to try an alternative to the typical solo drive to work. You don't have to give up your car, just consider coming to work without it a few days a week. Try a carpool or vanpool. Take the bus. Some people combine workout and commute by walking or biking to the job; others telework. Any time you avoid

a trip alone in the car you help reduce both traffic congestion and the auto emissions that pollute our air.

Many find that using a commute solution saves money and reduces stress, but during October commuters have an additional incentive – PRIZES. This year's Commute Solutions Contest runs from October 10 through 23. For each day of the contest that you get to work some way OTHER than alone in your car, you can enter your name in the prize drawing. The more days you

use a commute solution, the better your chances of winning. The contest is available to anyone who lives and/or works in Hays, Travis, or Williamson Counties.

For more information, visit the Commute Solutions website at www.commutesolutions.com or call Ms. Shana Norton at 974-3458.

TMMP Forwarded to the Texas Transportation Commission

At the request of Governor Perry, the CAMPO section of the Texas Metropolitan Mobility Plan (TMMP) was approved for submittal to the Texas Transportation Commission in July. CAMPO, together with the seven other large MPOs in Texas, participated in this first-ever effort to identify congestion in a consistent manner by the eight large Texas MPOs. The Texas Department of Transportation and the Texas Transportation Institute were actively involved in this unique planning effort.

The TMMP is a conceptual long-range, needs-based plan. It is unlike the federally-

required CAMPO long-range plan as it does not consider a funding limit when identifying ways to reduce congestion. The TMMP shows that almost 4,800 additional lane-mile equivalents are needed to bring Williamson, Travis and Hays Counties to an acceptable level of congestion. Lane-mile equivalents are a surrogate for anything from tollways and freeways and commuter rail to roadway operations improvements and land use planning.

The estimated cost for implementing these projects over the next 25 years is

\$28 billion. The \$28 billion can't be funded through traditional sources alone, so a discussion on additional funding opportunities and cost reduction strategies complete the TMMP. The fiscally constrained (and implemental) *CAMPO 2025 Transportation Plan* is estimated to cost \$9.6 billion.

The TMMP Executive Summary is available on CAMPO's website www.campotexas.org the full report is available on CD in the CAMPO office.

Toll Roads *(continued from page 1)*

Loop 360) as toll road mainlanes under CAMPO's short-run funding program, the 2004-2008 Transportation Improvement Program.

Loop 360 is being considered separately from the other Phase 2 roadway segments. The CAMPO Policy Board asked the CTRMA and TxDOT to conduct an engineering and environmental evaluation of alternative roadway designs for Loop 360 with extensive public input prior to requesting funding approval from CAMPO. No funding or significant improvements to Loop 360 may be undertaken without additional study and CAMPO approval.

When the Board approved the Phase 2 toll roads, it also adopted eight resolutions clarifying and conditioning its approval. These resolutions have been transmitted to the CTRMA to convey CAMPO's intent for the development, design and operation of the toll roads. On July 28, the CTRMA Board accepted and endorsed the eight resolutions. The resolutions address the following topics:

1. Non-tolled Alternatives
2. Toll Policy
3. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Outreach
4. Context Sensitive Design
5. Loop 360
6. Loop 1 South
7. No Pay, No Play
8. State Highway 45 Southwest

Also shown in Figure 1 are existing freeways and Phase 1 toll roads. Existing freeways are not affected by the July 12 vote. The Phase 1 toll roads are: **SH 130** from IH 35(N) in Georgetown to the southern boundary of Travis County; **Loop 1** from Parmer Lane to SH 45(N); **SH 45(N)** from US 183 to SH 130; **SH 45(S)** from FM 1626 to US 183/SH 130; and **US 183(A)**. All of these roadways, except SH 45(S) from FM 1626 to IH 35(S), are expected to be completed by 2007. Phase 1 toll roads will add about 500 miles of new freeway mainlanes to the highway system in the CAMPO area. When Phases 1 and 2 are completed, the CAMPO area will have achieved a basic freeway system.

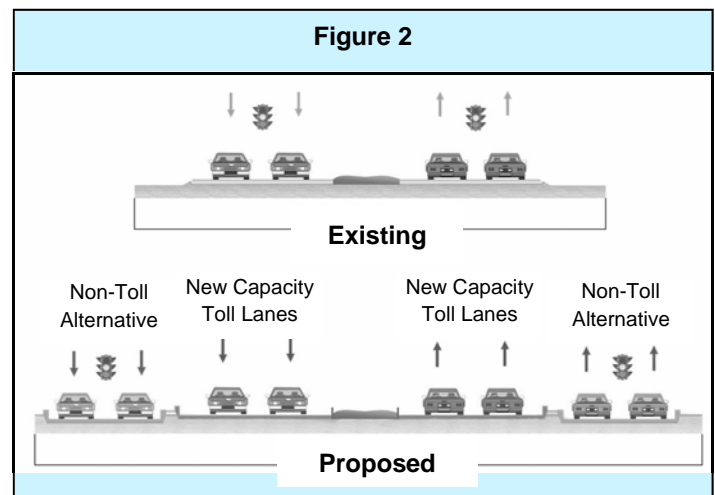
The impetus to build new freeway lanes as toll roads comes from legislation and financial policies adopted by the Texas Legislature and the Texas Transportation Commission. TxDOT has funds available to build only 33% of the highways needed throughout the state. There has been no increase in federal or state gas taxes since 1993 and 1991, respectively. About 40% of TxDOT's budget goes to **maintain** existing highways and only 30% goes to build and expand the highway system. The amount of state gas tax that TxDOT receives every year (\$2.1 billion) is less than the annual cost of maintaining the state highway system (\$2.2 billion). The cost of highway construction and right-of-way have escalated greatly in the last decade.

Because of this fiscal shortfall, the Texas Transportation Commission has directed TxDOT staff and requested MPO boards to evaluate all new freeways "in any phase of development or construction" for toll feasibility. The intention is to leverage the limited federal and state gas tax funds by combining them with

toll revenue to build highways much faster than if only gas tax revenue was used.

The new emphasis on toll roads is being addressed throughout Texas, not just in the CAMPO area. This emphasis is expected to be long term. In the upcoming *CAMPO Mobility 2030 Plan* all future planned freeway construction and expansion projects will be considered for tolling.

Shown below, in Figure 2, is a typical cross section of existing and proposed roadways in Phase 2. Only new freeway mainlanes will be tolled. Drivers will have the option of continuing to travel on the highways on free frontage roads, or of paying a toll to travel on the new freeway mainlanes.



Although over 5,000 people opposed the toll roads adopted by CAMPO on July 12, the *2004 CAMPO Transportation Issues Survey* shows modest support for toll roads in general among commuters. A scientific survey was conducted in Williamson, Travis, Hays, Bastrop and Caldwell counties between April 12 and 27, 2004 by interviewing a random sample of 1,600 people who commute to work or school during peak hours. The question and response follow:

Question: Demand for new roads exceeds the funding available. For a new highway that would be accessible for your daily commute, would you be willing to pay a 12 cent per mile toll to have the highway ready in five years, or would you rather wait 10 to 20 years and not pay a toll?

Response: Pay toll - 51.2%, Depends - 6.5%, Wait - 37.8%, Don't Know - 4.5%

For more information on toll roads, visit the CTRMA website:

www.ctrma.org

or the CAMPO website:

www.campotexas.org

NOTICE OF UPCOMING SEMINAR
TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
 Free to the Public
 Hosted by: Envision Central Texas
 Wednesday, September 29
 1:00 to 5:00 PM
 UT LBJ Bass Lecture Hall
 For additional information: 916-6037

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