



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TRIANGLE EXPRESSWAY SOUTHEAST EXTENSION

### PROJECT LOCATION ■

#### **Why is the Southeast Extension necessary?**

Southern Wake County and Johnston County have been experiencing tremendous growth and this growth is expected to continue. The Southeast Extension of the Triangle Expressway, a proposed toll road that would span nearly 30 miles through southeastern Wake County, would increase the overall capacity of the region's existing roadway network and divert traffic from congested secondary roads.

Once completed, the Southeast Extension will connect communities in southern Wake and Johnston counties and will provide a link between major roadways in this area. It will ease congestion on heavily traveled routes like the Raleigh Beltline (Interstate 440), Interstate 40, NC 42, NC 55 and Ten Ten Road. It will also complete the 540 Raleigh Outer Loop.

#### **What routes are being considered for the road?**

Several potential routes, known as alternatives, will be identified and evaluated during this process. The study will examine not only the option of new construction, but also the possibility of widening existing roadways.

Preliminary alternatives are screened early in the project study process, and only those that clearly address the needs of the project and could be reasonably implemented are studied in further detail. Based on the current project schedule, preliminary alternative routes will be displayed to the public in fall 2010.

A protected corridor for Phase I of this project, which runs from the NC 55 Bypass in Holly Springs to Interstate 40 near the Wake/Johnston County line, was established by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) in the mid-1990s under the Transportation Corridor Official Map Act. A protected corridor preserves the possible location of a new road from encroaching development. The Turnpike Authority will evaluate that corridor, as well as other alternative routes, during the study. There is no protected corridor for Phase II.

#### **How will a route be selected?**

Route selection is a 3-step process:

- 1. Recommended Route:** *The Turnpike Authority will recommend a route for the Southeast Extension in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), a report prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Draft EIS, tentatively scheduled for 2012, will evaluate potential environmental impacts of the proposed project.*
- 2. Preferred Route:** *The Turnpike Authority, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), will identify a preferred route following publication of the Draft EIS and consideration of comments from the public and environmental agencies. The Preferred Route will be included in a Final EIS.*
- 3. Selected Route:** *FHWA will finalize the selection of the route by issuing a Record of Decision (ROD), tentatively scheduled for 2013. At that time, the route will be known for the project.*



**What is the probability that the protected corridor will end up being the corridor selected for implementation after the environmental study?**

Because it has been shielded from residential and commercial development, the protected corridor is a strong candidate for final route selection; however, federal law requires that equal consideration be given to a range of reasonable alternatives in the study area.

**Where will access to the toll facility be provided?**

Interchange locations will provide access on and off of the toll facility. These locations are identified in the regional long range transportation plan as follows:

- NC 55 Bypass
- Holly Springs Road (SR 1152)
- Bells Lake Road (SR 1386)
- US 401
- Old Stage Road (SR 1006)
- NC 50
- Interstate 40/Clayton Bypass
- White Oak Road
- US 70
- Rock Quarry Road
- Auburn Knightdale Road
- Poole Road
- US 64 Bypass

**When will a decision be made on which cross roads will go over the toll road versus which cross roads will go under the toll road?**

These decisions are generally known once a route is selected and designs are completed for the selected route. An initial evaluation will be included in the Draft EIS.

**STUDY PROCESS ■**

**Will there be public meetings during the development of the project?**

There will be several public workshops and public hearings during the project study, as well as numerous periodic meetings with smaller stakeholder groups. Public meetings will be advertised in advance and will be held at multiple locations throughout the study area to afford interested citizens an opportunity to participate in the project development process.

**When will construction of the road begin?**

A construction date has not yet been determined. Construction will not begin until the Turnpike Authority completes its environmental planning and financial feasibility, expected in 2014. It is anticipated that the project would be funded in two phases. The estimated construction timeframe once funding is secured would be 4-5 years for Phase I (between NC 55 in Holly Springs and Interstate 40 near the Wake/Johnston County line).

**How much will the project cost?**

The project cost is not known at this time and will be determined during the project development process.

*The photos above depict various locations within the study area.*

## TOLLING ■

### Will the project include tolls?

The Turnpike Authority plans to study the feasibility and impacts of developing the proposed Southeast Extension as a toll road. Current legislation requires the tolls to be removed once the project's debt is repaid.

There is local support for including this project in the overall transportation plan for the region, but traditional highway funding is not presently included in state and local plans.

### Why is this part of the Raleigh Outer Loop being tolled while northern sections are not?

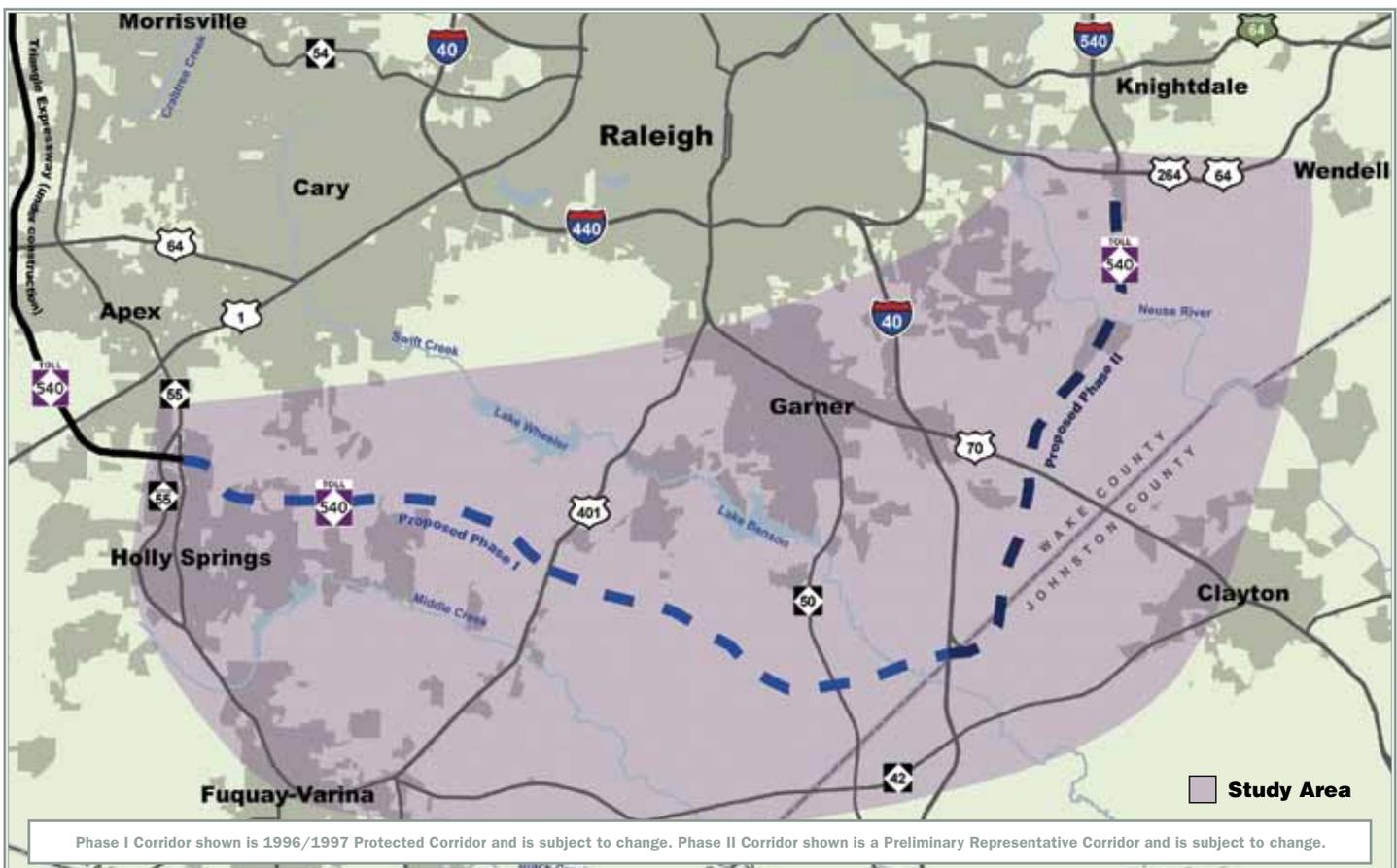
Decisions regarding funding for transportation projects are made at the local level by regional transportation planning organizations, in this case the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO). In 2005 CAMPO requested that the Turnpike Authority evaluate and construct the remaining sections of the Raleigh Outer Loop (western, southern and eastern sections) as toll facilities.

CAMPO's current long range transportation plan (*available at [www.camponc.us](http://www.camponc.us)*) does include tolling the existing northern sections of the Raleigh Outer Loop to pay for needed improvements.

### How much would tolls cost?

Toll rates have not yet been determined. Rates will be based on a number of factors, including the cost of the project, distance traveled and vehicle type. All revenues from tolls would be used to cover the cost of financing, constructing, operating and maintaining the road. Tolls on similar facilities across the nation currently average \$0.10 to \$0.20 per mile. Current legislation requires the tolls to be removed once the project's debt is repaid.

## Study Area Map



Detailed maps of the protected corridor for Phase I are available at <http://www.ncturnpike.org/projects/southeast/documents.asp>.

### **How would tolls be collected?**

Tolls would be collected electronically using the system currently being implemented on the Triangle Expressway, which eliminates the need to stop at toll booths. The system uses radio frequency to read information from a transponder attached to the inside of a vehicle's windshield, allowing the tolls to be collected at highway speed.

Drivers with transponders pay for their tolls in advance and the system automatically deducts the tolls each time they use the road. Because transponders are the most efficient form of toll collection, drivers who elect to use them may pay up to 35 percent less than those who choose not to use a transponder. Motorists who do not have transponders will have a photograph of their license plate taken and will be sent a bill.

### **Will there be a discount on tolls for residents that have to live next to the highway?**

No, there will not be discounted rates for nearby property owners. As outlined above, there will be a reduced rate for customers who choose to use an electronic transponder to pay tolls.

## **RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION ■**

### **Where can I find out about right-of-way acquisition procedures?**

Information about right-of-way acquisition and relocation procedures is available in two brochures published by The Turnpike Authority on The Turnpike Authority's website ([www.ncturnpike.org/projects/southeast/documents.asp](http://www.ncturnpike.org/projects/southeast/documents.asp)).

### **Would damages be paid to a property owner in the protected corridor if The Turnpike Authority locates the highway in a different corridor?**

The property owner has received tax relief on the reserved property, so damages would not be paid in this circumstance.

### **If a property owner in the protected corridor needs to sell before a route is selected, what process would be followed to purchase the property in the protected corridor?**

In certain hardship cases, the Turnpike Authority and the NCDOT Right-of-Way Branch will consider acquiring properties in the protected corridor prior to final selection of a route.

### **Will there be compensation for depreciation in property values adjacent to the protected corridor?**

Compensation will not be provided in this circumstance.

## **NOISE IMPACTS ■**

### **How are the noise impacts associated with the planned road analyzed and how does North Carolina Department of Transportation determine the need for sound barriers?**

A noise impact analysis will be performed for all detailed study alternatives included in the project's Draft EIS. Once an alternative is selected, further analysis of noise impacts will be completed. Noise impacts are determined based on site conditions, proximity of nearby homes and other establishments, and traffic volumes.

When noise impacts are above the acceptable levels set by federal standards or result in a substantial increase in noise over current conditions, NCDOT will evaluate the effectiveness and feasibility of installing sound barriers as outlined in its Traffic Noise Abatement Policy ([www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/pe/ohe/noiseair/abatement.html](http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/pe/ohe/noiseair/abatement.html)). NCDOT is currently reviewing public comments on its existing noise abatement policy and anticipates adopting policy changes by early 2011.