



TRANSPORTATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

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Memorandum to: Commissioners Court

From: Steve Manilla, P.E., County Executive –TNR

Subject: SE Travis County Roads Proposal
September 24 Voting Session Items 14 and 41

The following information and recommendations are for the Court's consideration at the September 24 Voting Session:

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Additional roadway capacity is needed in the area between US183 to the west, SH71 to the north, FM812 to the south, and the Bastrop county line to the east. This was considered to be a potential high growth area during the development of the 2011 bond referendum, primarily because it is in the SH130 corridor and there are several large developments already in planning stages. (see attached map showing proposed development).
2. With the exception of Kellam Road the roadways discussed at the September 17 Commissioners Court are arterials in the CAMPO Plan. Some improvements are more important than others to get completed as soon as possible, most notably improvements to FM812 from US183 to the Bastrop County line; a new connector road between SH71 and FM812; widening Pearce Lane from FM973 to Kellam Road; widening Elroy Road from McAngus to Kellam Road; and, widening of Kellam Road from Elroy Road to Pearce Lane. These roads are all recommended for improvements in the attached listing developed by traffic engineers from various agencies and COTA to help improve the roadway safety and level of service for the area residents and COTA patrons.
3. Kellam Road was designed and partially built as a collector roadway. It has narrower lanes and a thinner pavement structure than an arterial roadway. It was built with the understanding that it would be widened from its current three lanes with a bike-lane and sidewalk on one side to five lanes with a bike lane and sidewalk on both sides.
4. The County's policy is to include bike lanes and sidewalks on arterial roadways. They are especially important safety features in areas of high traffic, such as the COTA events center. Area residents have asked for these facilities before COTA as well. It would be especially beneficial for the area because a network of these facilities could tie into the nearby 22-mile Onion Creek hike and bike trail project that TNR is currently working on.
5. Given the high cost of transportation facilities and the large number of recommended improvements it is necessary to prioritize. TNR has worked successfully

with other local transportation agencies to partner and cost-share on projects and will continue to seek those opportunities. An acceptable cost share arrangement should include anticipated posting of boundary street fiscal by developers of adjacent properties.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Transportation and Natural Resources (TNR) recommends that improvements to FM812 between US183 and the Bastrop County line and the construction of a new connector road between SH71 and FM812 be recognized as the top two priorities for improving traffic safety, reducing traffic congestion, and incentivizing economic development in the SE Travis County region (see attached map).
2. TNR recommends seeking funding for the SH71 to FM812 connector; FM812 improvements between US183 and the Bastrop County line; and, the attached list of additional improvements in the region. Currently there is no specified fund source. Note that the County's policy for public-private-partnerships has been that the private party donate property within their control that is needed for the project right-of-way and also contribute funding. This concept will likely be discussed among project stakeholders that will be participating on a committee recommended in 3) below.
3. Due to the high cost of all of the improvements TNR recommends working with a committee of representatives from other public agencies having transportation facilities in the area, as well as private parties that benefit directly from the improvements. The Committee charge will be to identify projects, vet, prioritize, and phase them if necessary, and agree upon cost sharing.
4. TNR recommends taking advantage of the right-of-way donation offer obtained by Commissioner Gomez to complete the connector Road between SH71 and Pearce Lane. It is anticipated that the offer will be withdrawn if the connector between SH71 and Pearce is not funded.
5. TNR recommends phasing the SH71 to FM812 connector. The first phase should be three lanes between SH71 and Pearce Lane where it will temporarily connect with existing Kellam Road. The second phase should be three lanes from Pearce Lane to FM812. The third phase should be completing the fourth and fifth lanes from SH71 to FM812. A bike lane and sidewalk should be included on one side and added to the other side when the roadway is widened to five lanes in the future. The project will need County funding although contributions from others will be sought or exacted if it can be accomplished without excessive delay to Phase 1 in particular. Phase three should be paid for primarily with future development boundary street fiscal. Funding for segments of the road that abut property already developed should be worked out with the other transportation agencies in the area along with the private parties that benefit most directly from the improvements.
6. TNR recommends completing the SH71 to FM812 project on an expedited track to be managed by the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, and requests the Court consider funding at least Phase 1 as discussed below at an amount to be estimated by the CTRMA. Expedited in this recommendation means funding now rather than waiting for another bond referendum anticipated for 2016 or 2017. It does not mean paying a premium to CTRMA to fast track the project to meet the 2014 F-1 event date.

TNR RESPONSES TO AGENDA ITEMS 41 A thru E

A. Re: construction of five lane road from Pearce Lane to SH71 (Kellam Road extension):

TNR recommends building two through lanes and a continuous center left turn lane with a bike lane and sidewalk on one side to tie into the same cross section of Kellam Road at Pearce Lane. The remaining two through lanes for the ultimate five lane cross section should be built by the developers of adjacent property.

B. Re: Expansion of Elroy Road to four lanes from McAngus to Kellam:

TNR does not recommend making this improvement at this time. The improvements should be considered along with proposed improvements to several other area roads and prioritized for funding, design, and construction.

C. Re: A Resolution for an Interlocal Agreement with CTRMA for planning, design, engineering, and construction of the roads:

TNR recommends approving a Resolution to enlist the services of CTRMA for completion of the connector road between SH71 and FM812.

D. Re: The County's intent to issue CO's to fund improvements to the SH71 to Kellam Road improvements and the widening of Elroy Road:

TNR defers to Planning and Budget on a recommendation to the Court however TNR does not recommend funding the Elroy Road improvements at this time but recommend providing funds for the SH71 to FM812 connector.

E. Re: Designating Commissioners Todd and Gomez as leads on cost-sharing discussions with the City of Austin:

TNR supports the Commissioners efforts and is available to provide assistance if needed.

SUMMARY

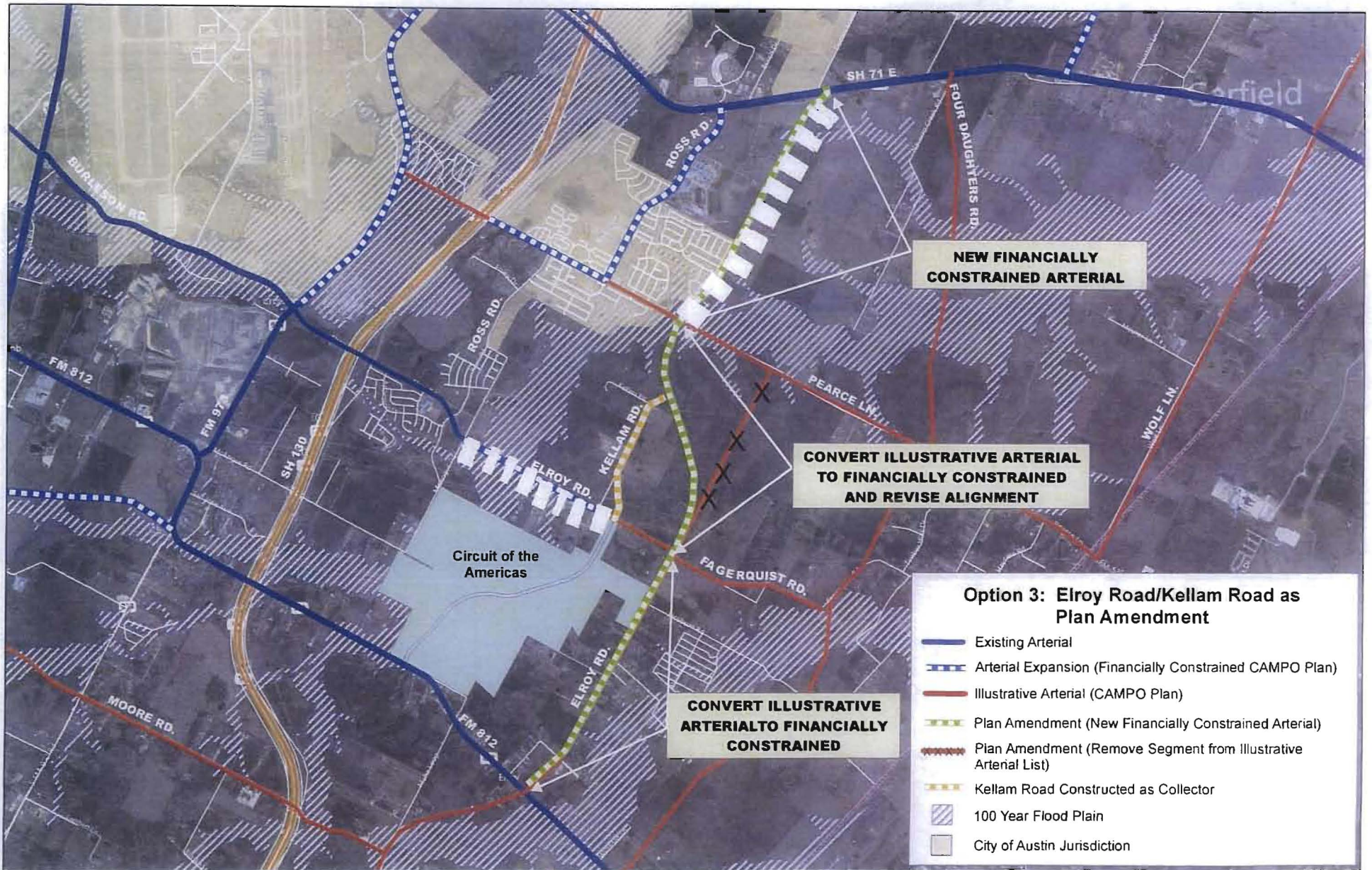
If TNR's recommendations are approved we would enter into an agreement with CTRMA to design and construct a three lane road from SH71 to FM812. The project may be broken into phases to allow CTRMA to complete the segment of this road that lies between SH71 and Pearce Lane first. TNR will seek funds from other sources but the County will likely need to be the funding agency for Phase One in order to complete it within a time frame that comes close to that desired by Commissioner Gomez. Funding for the balance of the project could take up to a year or more as it relies upon boundary street fiscal posted by developers, contributions from other agencies and private parties that may not have ready-access to funds, the next County bond referendum, and/or an innovative funding mechanism such as a Transportation Reinvestment Zone.



- Austin Full Purpose
- Austin Development Agreement
- Subdivision
- Preliminary

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT





Approved Travis County/CAMPO ROADWAY ALIGNMENTS

PROPOSED LIST OF IMPROVEMENTS

COTA Area Traffic and Transportation Projects for Discussion (only FUNDED if Noted)

12-20-12

Near Term (1-10 yrs)

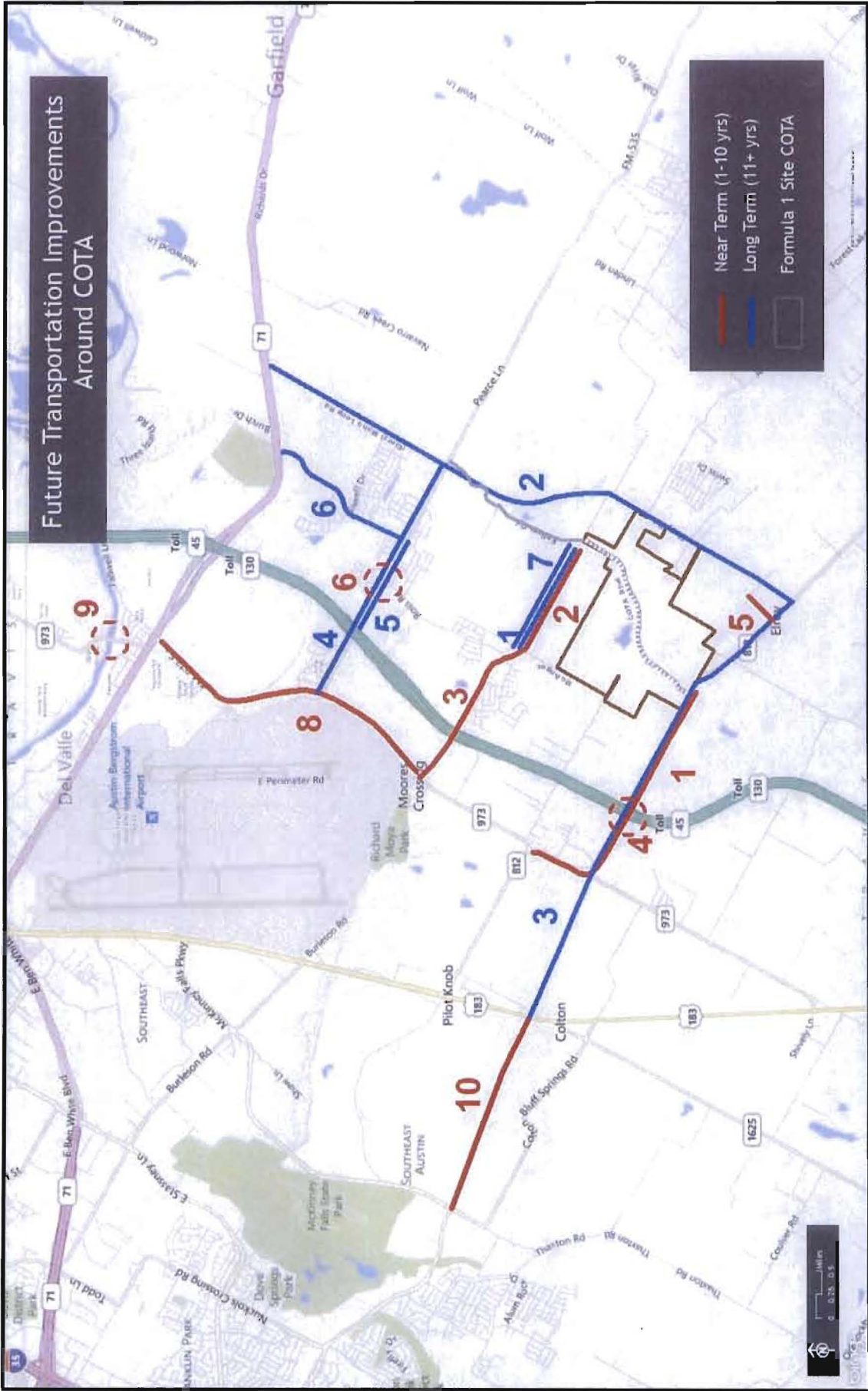
- 1.) Add pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure on FM812 near the track.
- 2.) Add pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure on Elroy Road (from McAngus to COTA Boulevard) and the east side of Kellam Road.
- 3.) Repave and restripe Elroy Road from FM973 to McAngus to allow for bike lanes.
- 4.) Make improvements to the intersection of SH130/ FM812 to allow for more pavement and capacity through that intersection with contraflow operations in mind.
- 5.) Widen Elroy Road as it approaches FM812 to allow for a southbound right turn lane.
- 6.) Make improvements to the intersection of the signalized intersection of Ross/ Pearce to allow for transition of the end of contra-flow. (reduce the limits of contraflow on Pearce, so we only contraflow from Kellam to Ross)
- 7.) Make improvements to the Exposition Center to allow for improved shuttle operations, parking, and future camping (Moto GP would utilize more camping and shuttling services)
- 8.) FM 973 (South of SH 71 - Burleson Rd.) Widen roadway to 4-lane divided. Funded May 2014 TXDOT
- 9.) FM 973 -Replace bridge over Colorado River. Funded June 2013 TXDOT
- 10.) William Cannon Drive (McKinney Falls Parkway – US 183) New 4-lane divided arterial with bike lanes and sidewalks. 2011 Bond funded with Public/Private partnership.

COTA's top 5

- 1.) Widen Elroy Road from 2 to 5 lanes from McAngus to Kellam.
- 2.) Pedestrian improvements on FM812 from SH130 to Piland Triangle
- 3.) Widen Elroy to add southbound lane from Lot P to FM812.
- 4.) Change lane assignments at the northbound frontage intersection of SH130/ SH71
- 5.) Make improvements (additional lanes) to intersection of Pearce/ Ross

Long Term (11+ yrs)

- 1.) Widen Elroy Road from McAngus to COTA boulevard from 2 lanes to 3 lanes with bike lanes
- 2.) Pursue "Maha Loop" from FM812 to SH71 as listed in the 2035 financially constrained plan. This would align Burkland Farms with Elroy Road at FM812 and improve Elroy Road and extend Elroy Road from FM812 to SH71.
- 3.) Widen FM812 by two additional lanes from US183 to Elroy Road. Also remove the "S" curve on FM812 near FM973.
- 4.) Widen Pearce Lane from 2 to 3 lanes with bike lanes from FM973 to Kellam lane.
- 5.) Pearce Lane (SH 130 – Eastern Ross Road at Pearce Lane) Widen 2 lane to 4 lane major divided arterial with bike lanes and sidewalks
- 6.) Ross Road (SH 71 - Pearce Lane) Widen 2 lane to 4 lane major divided arterial with bike lanes and sidewalks
- 7.) Elroy Road (Pearce Lane – Elroy Road) Widen 2 lane to 4 lane major divided arterial with bike lanes and sidewalks
- 8.) Elroy Road (Maha Loop Road) (FM 812 – SH 71 E) Construct new segments and widen existing 2-lane section to provide for a continuous 4-lane divided major arterial with bike lanes and sidewalks
- 9.) FM 812 (US 183 – FM 973) Realign FM 812 by constructing 4-lane divided major arterial with bike lanes and sidewalks



MAR LOCATIONS FOR PROPOSED LIST OF IMPROVEMENTS