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Shaw Favors

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Original Plan On Park Route

Tennessee's commissioner of transportation said yesterday if he had the final decision he would "knock the trees down like it was originally planned" and build Interstate 40 through Overton Park.

Commissioner Eddie Shaw said that if court decisions had not blocked it he would "take the original plan and go with it because I feel it would be the best solution for the people of this state.

"I know that's a strong statement, but that's exactly how I feel and I say that as an environmentalist," Shaw said. "I'm in sympathy with the environmentalists, but I also represent four million Tennessee citizens."

Earlier, Shaw told newsmen at a press conference at the Rodeway Inn that the state could afford \$2 million to \$3 million as its share of such construction but could not afford 10 per cent of the cost of a slurry wall tunnel.

He said he felt estimates of \$119 million for the slurry wall cut-and-cover tunnel were "very low" and that he felt the cost would be about \$180 million.

"Our people closest to it in the department say there is no way it can be done for \$119 million," Shaw said.

He said the private consulting firm — Singstad, Kehart, November and Hurka — had not included approaches to the tunnel in its cost estimates.

Shaw said he would be briefed by officials who made the study "within 10 days" and that he planned to meet with U. S. Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman to discuss the matter "probably within 30 days."

Federal officials are still evaluating a feasibility study of the slurry wall technique, but spokesmen have indicated they believe the cost estimate will be between \$80 million and \$100 million.