

OPE 28-04

State Again Pressing Ahead On I-40 Plaza Park Routing

From The Commercial Appeal
Nashville Bureau

NASHVILLE — The state once again is proposing that Interstate 40 be routed through Overton Park in Memphis with a \$33-million design calling for a sunken plaza-type roadway, state Transportation Commissioner Eddie Shaw said Thursday. Shaw said his deputy, William Goodwin, has been in Washington since Tuesday discussing the matter with federal officials.

Shaw set no timetable, but he indicated formal "nuts and bolts" talks with federal representatives on the suggested routing will come within a month.

State officials submitted the \$33-million plaza design to complete I-40 through the park to then Transportation Secretary William Coleman last fall.

However, the state withdrew the request on Nov. 16, apparently sensing that it was doomed under the Ford administration and that the prospects for approval would be brighter once President Carter was in office.

Coleman had disqualified himself from the issue and assigned the case to a deputy, John Barnum, who was regarded as an environmentalist who would probably disapprove the idea.

Presumably, a public hearing will be scheduled in Memphis after the proposal is formally resubmitted to Washington officials.

The Overton Park expressway route has been in and out of court for 20 years and so far conservationists have won all the important rounds.

CA.

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