Federal Fund Cutbacks May Leave Tennessee Hard-Pressed To Finish Expressways By '72

Availability of federal funds is the crucial question in whether Shelby County's expressways can be finished by the 1972 target date.

"As of now, I would say we can finish by 1972. But it all depends on whether we get the money on time," said J. W. Bennett, resident engineer for the Tennessee Highway Department.

Federal allocations, which pay 90 per cent of interstate highway costs, were cut this fiscal year for all states. Tennessee's funds were trimmed from 101 to 88 million dollars.

A similar cut, from 42 to 37 million dollars in federal funds to Arkansas has led to postponement of contract fetting on the superstructure of the Interstate 40 bridge across the Mississippi River.

"If Tennessee's funds continue to be lower than we expected in the next few years, then we would have a hard time finishing in Shelby County by 1972," Mr. Bennett said.

The President ordered the cutback of federal aid to all states for interstate highways as an antiinflationary maneuver, demanded in part by Congress. But motorists, of course, are still paying federal gasoline taxes each time

they buy gas.

In Washington, Albert B. Kelley, a spokesman for the federal Highway Administration and the Bureau of Public Roads, said the gas taxes are being held in highway trust funds. He said the money cannot be spent for any other

funds. He said the money cannot be spent for any other purpose but can be borrowed by other federal agencies.

Officials in charge of preparations for expressway construction here say they are encountering no delays. V. A. Rawlings, director of the state right-of-way office in Memphis, said land acquisition for the remaining expressis on schedule.

Bill Stinson, associate designer with Harland Bartholomew & Associates, which is doing practically all of the design in the county, said, "We are keeping our design work well ahead of construction."

"If there are any major delays, I think it will be in getting construction funds on time," Mr. Bennett said.

No Shelby County expressway contracts have been postponed other than the one on the bridge.

The original goal of 1956 act of Congress was to build 41,000 miles for 41 billion dollars by October, 1972. Con-

41,000 miles for 41 billion dollars by October, 1972. Congress recently extended the program to 1974.

Of the 72.8 miles of interstate routes planned in Shelby County, 45.2 are now open. Costs are about 3 million dollars for 9 miles in the county, far above the national average because of the high cost of city land.

The hub of the system will be the giant midtown interchange which is under construction. It will link the sast-west expressway west of its emergency from Overton Park with the north-south route.

The interchange bridges with 14 different ramps required purchase of 275 parcels of land. Work on the connecting roads is the next step.

Most of the land of the east-west expressway has been

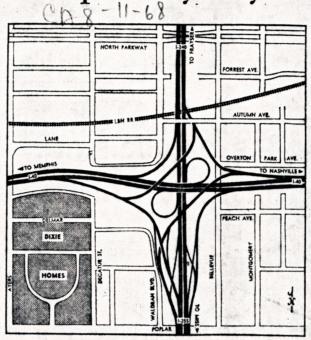
Most of the land of the east-west expressway has been acquired by the state. From the planned interchange with -240 eastward to Waring, 193 of 194 parcels have been equired. Only 6 of 375 parcels from Waring to Holmes emain to be bought.

On the stretch eastward to Collins 103 of 233 parcels

nave been acquired. From Collins to McLean, the stretch hich is to bisect Overton Park, 159 of 185 parcels have een purchased. From McLean to Claybrook, the estate is ppraising the land and has not acquired any.

Jumping over the mid-town interchange, all the land om Ayers to High has been acquired. Plans are not implete from High to the new Mississippi River bridge.

On the north-south expressway, construction has begun



TRANSFER POINT--This is the completed look of the midtown expressway interchange—the only point in the metropolitan freeway system where 1-240 (circumferential), 1-255 (trans-city) and 1-40 (east-west mainway) will

on the stretch from Lamar to Poplar, where it connects with the midtown interchange. North of the interchange to the Wolf River, the expressway is under construction. From the Wolf River to the Illinois Central Railroad, 16 of 21 parcels have been acquired.

Construction began Wednesday on the half-mile stretch just north of Lamar. It includes bridges over Lamar and Peabody and under Union, Eastmoreland and Linden.

There would be exits at Union and Lamar and a pedestrian crosswalk at the Lamar exit. The contract for the project allows 325 work days.

Plans are being developed for the stretch from the railroad to Summer.

Talk is already underway on extensions of the express-way system in the county. One proposal would have a riverfront route connecting the Memphis-Arkansas Bridge with the new I-40 bridge. Another would have a second east-west expressway parellel to and south of I-40 but city officials have not determined a definite path and no money is now available.

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