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### Freeway may not be free

By **DON JACOBS**, [jacobs@knews.com](mailto:jacobs@knews.com)  
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The proposed Knoxville Regional Parkway, also called the Orange Route, could become the state's first toll road under new legislation pending before lawmakers.

Tennessee Department of Transportation Commissioner Gerald Nicely said next week the agency plans to release a study reviewing the feasibility of three potential toll roads.

One possible toll candidate is a bridge over the Cumberland River near the Old Hickory Dam to provide commuters from Hendersonville access to Nashville.

A second is a road from Interstate 40 at Strawberry Plains to carry traffic to Gatlinburg.

The third is the planned 28-mile-long parkway that will connect Interstate 75 in Loudon County with I-75 in Anderson County near Wolf Valley Road. The four-lane, divided-median parkway would slash through Hardin Valley.

Of the potential toll roads, the parkway is farthest along the planning process, Nicely said.

TDOT is examining tolls as a way to offset the increasing costs of road building and the decreasing revenues collected from gasoline taxes. TDOT estimates it faces a \$2 billion shortfall in the next 10 years, raising questions about where it will find the funds to meet transportation needs.

Get a preview of the study's findings Sunday online and in the News Sentinel.



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