



**For Immediate Release
November 2, 2021**

Smith County Road Bond Approved by Voters

The \$45 million Smith County Road Bond passed with 62.4 percent of the vote Tuesday, November 2, 2021, according to complete but unofficial voting totals.

Smith County ballots showed 6,759 people, or 62.4 percent voted for the issuance of bonds for road and bridge construction and major improvements. There were 3,962 people, or 36.58 percent, who voted against the bond.

“I am so excited for the citizens of Smith County,” Precinct 1 Commissioner Neal Franklin said. “The Phase 2 road projects will make such a positive difference for everyone.”

Smith County Judge Nathaniel Moran said he was proud of what Smith County has done so far in the Road and Bridge Bond Program and is excited to see it continue.

“In 2017, the voters approved the first phase of our Road and Bridge Bond, and since that time, we have worked to improve about 200 miles of roadway,” Moran said. “Now that the citizens have approved the second phase of the bond program, we will continue working hard to reconstruct or repave another 283 miles of roads over the next several years.”

“We want to thank the citizens for voting, and we look forward to improving their roads,” Precinct 4 Commissioner JoAnn Hampton said.

The process of developing a Road and Bridge Capital Improvement Plan began in 2015, when Smith County hired Atkins Engineering to analyze the condition of each road in the county. That study resulted in the identification of up to \$98 million in road projects in Smith County.

Phase 1 of the bond was approved by voters for \$39.5 million, which will have paid for about 200 miles of road being repaved or reconstructed by 2022. The \$45 million Phase 2 Bond will pay for another 283 miles of road improvements. Smith County has also used budgeted funds and cash reserves to pay for road and bridge projects, and it continues to increase road and bridge funding annually so that future projects involving existing roadways will not need bond funding.

The Commissioners Court held a series of citizen input meetings in each precinct this past summer to receive additional information and comments from citizens in each geographic region of the county regarding road and bridge conditions and needs. County officials also solicited and received Citizen Feedback Forms from county residents, and presented the plan for Phase 2 to dozens of civic and community organizations.

“The passing of this second bond makes it possible to continue the next phase of rebuilding our roads that we told our citizens we needed after the first one was completed,” Precinct 2 Commissioner Cary Nix said. “We are thankful for the support they have given us.”

Now that the bond has been approved by voters, the \$45 million in bonds will be sold over a three-year period beginning in June 2022. The money received from the bonds will be used to pay for major county road and bridge projects over three years, which is Phase 2 of a two-phase, six-year Road and Bridge Capital Improvement Project. Projects from Phase 1 will continue into the first half of 2022, while projects in Phase 2 will begin later in 2022.

The bonds are anticipated to increase the debt portion of the tax rate by 0.76 cents for FY2023 per \$100 valuation. That means the owner of a \$200,000 home will pay about \$15 more in property taxes each year.

The working draft of the six-year plan that covers both maintenance and construction items needed throughout the county can be found at: www.smith-county.com/i-want-to/view/county-road-projects

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