



CENTRAL TEXAS  
Regional Mobility Authority

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Mobility Authority Identifies Interim Safety and Mobility Improvements at Intersection of US 290 East and SH 130**

*Agency authorizes solicitation of bids for construction contract*

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority today announced it will solicit bids for a contract to construct improvements at the intersection of US 290 East and SH 130. The Board voted unanimously to move forward with interim plans to address a safety and mobility issue at this intersection, and authorized procurement for design and engineering services for a permanent fix which will be implemented once funding sources are identified.

The Mobility Authority owns and operates the 290 East Toll Road, a 6.2-mile toll road in northeast Austin between US 183 and the City of Manor. The 12-lane roadway was completed in May 2014, tripling capacity of the previous roadway. It includes three tolled lanes and three non-tolled frontage lanes in each direction, offering drivers the option to bypass congestion by paying a toll. Since opening to traffic, the roadway has consistently exceeded traffic and revenue projections. As a result, the intersection of the US 290 East and SH 130 frontage roads, a TxDOT-operated toll road, has become congested, particularly during peak hours.

“The increase in traffic congestion at the US 290 East and SH 130 intersection demonstrates just how strong the need was for the 290 East Toll road,” said Mike Heiligenstein, executive director for the Mobility Authority. “Drivers recognize the benefits this roadway offers and its high demand has impacted traffic patterns at this major frontage road intersection. The Mobility Authority is committed to implementing interim safety and mobility improvements while we develop plans for a long term solution.”

The long-term solution to this intersection is to construct a direct connector bridge from southbound SH 130 to westbound 290 East Toll to provide a free-flowing connection. However, while the agency works to identify funding for this solution, the following interim upgrades will provide a viable short-term solution to traffic concerns:

- Widening the SH 130 southbound frontage road at US 290 East to allow two lanes to turn right onto the US 290 East westbound frontage road
- Widening the westbound on-ramp to 290 East Toll from one lane to two lanes

(more)

Southbound SH 130 drivers wishing to enter the westbound 290 East Toll lanes will now be able to accomplish this in the following two ways:

1. Take the SH 130 southbound frontage road to the US 290 East westbound frontage road and take the two right-turn lanes to the US 290 East westbound frontage road. Merge left and take the two-lane on-ramp to access the westbound 290 East Toll lanes.
2. Take the existing dedicated right-turn lane just north of the intersection from the SH 130 southbound frontage road to the US 290 East westbound frontage road. The dedicated right-turn lane will be separated from the US 290 East westbound frontage road with a raised median to prevent access to the existing westbound on-ramp and protect drivers from unsafe weaving conditions caused by heavy traffic on the frontage road. Drivers can then continue through the Harris Branch Parkway intersection and enter the westbound 290 East Toll lanes.

The final construction plans will be available to contractors in October, with the bidding process to begin later in the month. Construction of the interim intersection improvements are anticipated to begin in February 2016 and could be open to traffic as early as spring 2016.

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#### **About the Mobility Authority**

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority is a local, independent government agency created in 2002 to improve the regional transportation system in Travis and Williamson Counties. The Mobility Authority implements innovative and sustainable transportation options to enhance quality of life and economic vitality in Central Texas. The Mobility Authority operates 183A Toll in Williamson County and 290 Toll (Manor Expressway) in east Austin and is constructing Express Lanes on MoPac Expressway. For more information about the Mobility Authority, visit [www.MobilityAuthority.com](http://www.MobilityAuthority.com).