



CENTRAL TEXAS  
Regional Mobility Authority

# NEWS RELEASE



Contact: Mike Heiligenstein  
Mobility Authority Executive Director  
512-996-9778

Contact: Maureen McCoy  
CAMPO Executive Director  
512-974-2275

## **CAMPO Approves \$230 million Plan to Finance Future Transportation Projects**

*Deal Includes Expedited Construction of MoPac Improvement Project*

(Austin, Texas) – The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) Policy Board has approved an innovative plan to generate new funding for future transportation projects in Central Texas. Under the plan, CAMPO will allocate \$130 million to the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority to help pay for construction of the \$200 million MoPac Improvement Project. In turn, the Mobility Authority will, over a 25-year period, deposit \$230 million into a Regional Infrastructure Fund, which can be used to fund other critical non-tolled and tolled transportation projects in Central Texas, such as improvements to Interstate 35.

“This is an incredible opportunity for the region,” says Will Conley, Chairman of the CAMPO Policy Board. “Central Texas has some of the worst traffic in the country, and we desperately need more money to improve mobility in critical corridors like MoPac and Interstate 35. This innovative response to the transportation funding crisis will pay off for Central Texas in the years to come.”

The financing plan will allow the Mobility Authority to expedite construction of the MoPac Improvement Project, which includes the construction of Express Lanes on an 11-mile stretch from Cesar Chavez Street in downtown Austin to Parmer Lane in north Austin. The arrangement will also allow the Mobility Authority to avoid a bond sale and save more than \$314 million in interest and principal payments that would have been due over the next 35 years. It also makes it easier for the Mobility Authority to finance future projects in the region.

**(more)**

“Our commitment to create the Regional Infrastructure Fund represents an unprecedented regional partnership for mobility solutions,” says Ray Wilkerson, Chairman of the Mobility Authority.

“Rather than using toll revenue from the MoPac Express Lanes to pay back bond investors, we’ll be able to allocate that money to critical transportation projects in Central Texas. At a time of tremendous uncertainty regarding future transportation funding, our local community is thinking out of the box and leading the nation when it comes to innovative ways to address local mobility challenges.”

The plan helps put the MoPac Improvement Project on the fast track, giving the Mobility Authority the ability to begin design and construction in 2013. The MoPac Express Lanes will use variable pricing to ensure traffic is always flowing and the lanes remain congestion free for transit buses and registered van pools. Under the variable pricing approach, toll rates will go up when traffic is heavy and down when traffic is light. In addition to Express Lanes, the MoPac Improvement Project will include the construction of sound walls, bicycle and pedestrian improvements and aesthetic enhancements. The Federal Environmental Study for the MoPac Improvement Project is in the final stages of completion and could be approved later this year.

Mike Heiligenstein, Executive Director of the Mobility Authority added, “This has been the Mobility Authority’s promise all along, re-connecting the region and creating local sources of funding for needed mobility improvements.”

### **About the Mobility Authority**

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority is a local, independent government agency created to improve the regional transportation system. Our mission is to implement innovative solutions that reduce congestion and create transportation choices that enhance quality of life and economic vitality. The Mobility was created in October 2002 to serve Travis and Williamson counties. The Mobility Authority operates the 183A toll road in Williamson County, is constructing the Manor Expressway and plans to add Express Lanes to Loop 1 as part of the MoPac Improvement Project.

**(more)**

**About CAMPO**

The Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Travis and Williamson Counties in Central Texas. CAMPO was established in 1973 and is governed by the Transportation Policy Board (CAMPO Board) comprised of regional and local officials. The purpose of CAMPO is to coordinate regional transportation planning with counties, cities, local transportation agencies and the Texas Department of Transportation and to approve the use of federal transportation funds within the region.

**(end)**