



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
February 27, 2013
Contact: Steve Pustelnyk
512-996-9778 (office)
512-680-9997 (cell)

Construction Firm Hired for MoPac Improvements

(Austin, Texas) – CH2M Hill, an international engineering and construction firm, has been selected to design and build Express Lanes on MoPac from downtown Austin north to Parmer Lane. The company has agreed to complete the project by late 2015 at a construction cost of \$137 million. Drivers can expect survey work and utility relocation to begin almost immediately. Roadway construction is expected to begin late this year.

“Improving MoPac as quickly as possible has been a top priority for us,” says Ray Wilkerson, Chairman of the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority. “In a little over two years, we’ve completed the environmental process and selected a company to build the project. It’s quite an accomplishment, and something we couldn’t have achieved without the support of the Federal Highway Administration, the Texas Department of Transportation, the City of Austin, State Senator Kirk Watson and many others.”

The 11- mile MoPac Improvement Project will involve constructing and widening the existing pavement and bridges to accommodate the addition of one Express Lane in each direction. All of the widening will occur within the existing corridor, so no additional property acquisition will be needed. The project includes construction of 7 miles of sound walls to buffer nearby neighborhoods from roadway noise. The Mobility Authority is also spending more than \$5 million to upgrade bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the corridor.

(more)

“This project is going to transform the MoPac corridor,” says Mobility Authority Executive Director Mike Heiligenstein. “Express Buses and van pools will be able to get to their destination on schedule, and individual drivers will have the ability to by-pass congestion when they really need to be somewhere on time.”

The Mobility Authority will use variable toll rates that go up when traffic is heavy and down when traffic is light to help keep the Express Lanes free flowing even during rush hour. The existing travel lanes on MoPac will remain toll-free.

Construction in the narrow, heavily populated and heavily traveled MoPac corridor is going to be a challenge. To reduce impacts to traffic, the Mobility Authority is limiting lane closures to nighttime hours and prohibiting lane closures during special events and on holidays. With hundreds of homes immediately adjacent to the corridor, the Mobility Authority is also concerned about construction impacts to nearby residents. An aggressive public outreach effort is under development to keep residents informed about the project and to minimize construction noise and other impacts as much as possible.

For more information about the project or to view conceptual videos of the Express Lanes visit www.MoPacExpress.com.

About the Mobility Authority

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority is a local, independent government agency created to improve the regional transportation system. Its mission is to implement innovative solutions that reduce congestion and create transportation choices that enhance quality of life and economic vitality. The Mobility Authority was the state’s first Regional Mobility Authority, created in October 2002 to serve Travis and Williamson counties. The Mobility Authority operates the 183A toll road in Williamson County, is constructing the 6.2-mile Manor Expressway east of Austin and is developing a regional express lane network. For more information about the Mobility Authority, visit www.MobilityAuthority.com.

-end-