



NEWS RELEASE

CENTRAL TEXAS
Regional Mobility Authority

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Mobility Authority Secures \$153 Million Commitment for Central Texas Transportation Projects

(Austin, Texas) – The Texas Transportation Commission has approved two grants totaling more than \$153 million to jump start a number of critical transportation projects in Central Texas. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority will use the money to complete the \$500 million Manor Expressway (US 290 East) project and to accelerate work on four other major projects including the MoPac Improvement Project (Loop 1), Oak Hill Expressway (US 290 West), Manchaca Expressway (45SW) and Bergstrom Expressway (US 183 South).

"These grants will accelerate a number of important projects in Central Texas, leading to improved mobility and creating a lot of job opportunities along the way," says Mike Heiligenstein, Executive Director of the Mobility Authority.

The Mobility Authority is already constructing the Manor Expressway interchange at US 183 and is in the process of hiring a contractor to complete the remainder of the 6.2 mile project (www.ManorExpressway.com). Construction is expected to be underway by the summer of 2011. The Mobility Authority will use a \$126.7 million portion of the TxDOT grant to help fund the \$500 million project. The rest of the Manor Expressway will be paid for through the issuance of toll revenue bonds or other creative financing methods. Due to funding limitations, TxDOT will provide the grant money over a three-year period between 2012 and 2014.

A \$5.4 million portion of the TxDOT grant money is being used to expedite development of the MoPac Improvement Project (www.MoPacExpress.com). The Mobility Authority has proposed constructing Express Lanes along an 11-mile stretch of MoPac from Cesar Chavez Street in downtown Austin to Parmer Lane. The TxDOT grant money will be used to complete an environmental study that was halted in 2007 due to funding issues. The Mobility Authority has committed an additional \$3.5

million in local toll revenue to expedite the environmental study, which is slated for completion in 2012. If the Express Lane concept is approved, the MoPac Improvement Project could be under construction by 2013. A series of public open houses for the project are scheduled for October 6th and 7th. Details about the open houses can be found at (www.MopacExpress.com).

"The Mobility Authority Board, the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and the Texas Transportation Commission all came together to prioritize funding for these vital Central Texas Projects," says Heiligenstein. "With so many unmet needs statewide, getting scarce dollars isn't easy these days. We made a good case that Central Texas was in critical need of these funds, and we came to the table with a promise of local funding in the form of toll revenue bonds. As a result, we were rewarded with \$153 million in grants."

In addition to the Manor Expressway Project and the MoPac Improvement Project, the Mobility Authority is also working with TxDOT and the City of Austin on improvements at the US 290 "Y" in Oak Hill. A study is already underway to look at a short-term fix that would improve traffic flow at intersections in the area. The TxDOT grant money will be used to complete a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement that would allow for construction of the Oak Hill Expressway, a permanent solution to traffic congestion that plagues that area.

"We are being very open minded in our approach to the issues in Oak Hill," says Heiligenstein. "There is a strong desire by the community to improve mobility while retaining the charm and character of Oak Hill. We want to help the community achieve those goals."

The Mobility Authority is taking a similar approach to the Manchaca Expressway (45SW). That 3.5-mile Expressway project has been the source of much debate for more than three decades. The TxDOT grant money will be used to complete an Environmental Impact Statement for that project, a process that will include extensive public input.

The Bergstrom Expressway (US 183 South) has been undergoing a required environmental study, which is nearing completion. TxDOT will use the grant money to finalize that environmental work, complete design plans and begin construction.

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 Authority is the state's first Regional Mobility Authority, created in January 2003 to serve Travis and Williamson counties. The Mobility Authority currently operates the 183A toll road in Williamson County and is currently working to extend the 183A project and construct the US 290 East (Manor Expressway) project.

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