

# NEWS RELEASE



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## **Appellate Court Rules Conclusively in Favor of Mobility Authority and TxDOT**

***Federal appellate court denies plaintiff's efforts to halt three key mobility improvement projects***

**(Austin, Texas)**— The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals issued an affirmation yesterday of the ruling previously provided by the U.S. District Court for the Western District in early 2017 in favor of the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (Mobility Authority) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). The lawsuit filed attempted to prevent the agencies from advancing three key mobility improvement projects in south Austin. The suit was filed two years ago in federal court by Save Our Springs Alliance and other plaintiffs in an effort to stop construction of two projects that had already received environmental clearance, the SH 45SW Project and the MoPac Intersections Project, as well as the environmental study of the proposed MoPac South Project.

“Delivering on our agency’s mission requires an unwavering commitment to the environment and the community at large,” said Mike Heiligenstein, executive director for the Mobility Authority. “This conclusive ruling confirms the credibility of the environmental study processes and the planning procedures that guide our work. With this suit behind us, we will continue to implement forward-thinking mobility solutions.”

The Mobility Authority and TxDOT have studied each project separately because they appear as stand-alone projects in the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization’s 2035 Plan which forecasts all transportation planning for the region. Each of these projects has independent utility, meaning each would benefit drivers and would be considered a reasonable expenditure, even if no additional transportation improvements in the area were made. Additionally, the projects were studied according to robust federal environmental documentation guidelines. TxDOT had previously issued environmental clearance for SH 45SW and MoPac Intersections to move into construction. The environmental study process for MoPac South is currently on hold as transportation agencies discuss project funding.

Construction continues on SH 45SW and MoPac Intersections projects. The Mobility Authority anticipates opening SH 45SW to traffic in 2019. TxDOT anticipates opening the MoPac Intersections project to traffic in 2021.

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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, 290 Toll in east Austin, the 71 Toll Lane in east Austin, and the MoPac Express Lane in Central Austin. The agency is also finishing construction of the eight-mile 183 South Project in east Austin, and constructing the four-mile SH 45SW toll road between FM 1626 and MoPac in southern Travis and northern Hays counties. For more information about the Mobility Authority, visit [www.MobilityAuthority.com](http://www.MobilityAuthority.com).