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In the Spotlight

Heiligenstein Elected to Board of International Toll Association

Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority Executive Director, Mike Heiligenstein, has been elected to the Board of Directors of the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA). IBTTA is the worldwide association for the owners and operators of toll facilities and the businesses that support them.



"As the dynamic leader of an innovative and highly successful start-up toll agency, Mike Heiligenstein has been a tireless advocate for addressing transportation funding challenges," says Patrick Jones, Executive Director and CEO of IBTTA. "With his knowledge, experience and vision, Mike will be a tremendous addition to the Board."

Heiligenstein joined the Mobility Authority just months after its creation and oversaw the successful financing and construction of the agency's first toll road, 183A, which opened in March 2007. Heiligenstein has worked tirelessly to gain community acceptance of a regional transportation plan that includes six toll road projects, including managed lanes on Loop 1, and has advocated innovative funding mechanisms to overcome a \$1.5 billion regional transportation funding shortfall.

Heiligenstein's term on the IBTTA Board will extend through 2012.

183A Update

Mobility Authority Moving Forward with 183A Extension Plans

With usage of 183A far exceeding original projections, the Mobility

Latest News

183A Toll Road to go Cashless

On June 25th the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority Board of Directors voted to eliminate cash toll collection on the 183A toll road. The transition to cashless toll collection is expected to take place as early as November 2008 and will save the agency more than \$1 million annually in operating costs. 183A will be the fourth toll road in Texas to go cashless.

"With roughly 80% of our customers paying with TxTag, it no longer makes economic sense to operate cash toll booths," says Mike Heiligenstein, Executive Director of the Mobility Authority. "With so few people paying cash, we are spending almost as much money to collect cash as we are collecting. In addition, cashless toll collection eliminates the need to stop at a tollbooth thereby increasing mobility and improving safety while reducing fuel consumption and vehicle emissions."



TxTag remains the easiest, most cost-effective way to pay tolls on 183A and other Texas toll roads. To accommodate drivers who do not have a TxTag, Tolltag or EZ-Tag, the Mobility Authority has implemented a "Pay-By-Mail" program.

[Click here](#) to download a news release with more information about the Mobility Authority's decision to eliminate cash toll collections on 183A.

Pay-By-Mail - A New Option for 183A Customers

In May of this year, the Mobility Authority began offering 183A customers a new way to pay their tolls. Tourists and drivers who prefer not to use TxTag can pay their tolls using a convenient Pay-By-Mail option. There's no need to prepay or register. Simply use the toll road and wait for your bill to show up in the mail.



Authority is moving forward with plans and activities to build a northern extension of the roadway. The approximately 4.5 mile extension will run from FM 1431 north to FM 2243.

The Mobility Authority is in the process of selecting a firm to perform the design work. A total of 21 firms have submitted proposals. The Mobility Authority expects to award a contract for design in July and could have the project under construction by 2009.



"Many of our customers live north of FM 1431," says Mike Heiligenstein, Executive Director of the Mobility Authority. "That section of 183A consists of frontage roads with traffic signals at all of the intersections. By extending the tolled mainlanes further north we can eliminate the need to stop at traffic signals and make 183A even more convenient for our users."

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Pay-By-Mail customers are charged a slightly higher rate than TxTag customers and incur a \$1.00 convenience charge per bill. Customers have 30 days to pay their bill either in person, via check, online or over the phone. If the bill is not paid additional fees are assessed and the customer can ultimately be charged with a misdemeanor.

For more information about Pay-By-Mail tolling, [visit our Web site](#).

This Month's Feature

Effort Underway to Finance More Central Texas Expressway Projects

The Mobility Authority has selected JP Morgan Securities to help find funding for more than \$1.5 billion worth of expressway projects in Central Texas. The top priority on the project list is the Manor Expressway, a 6-mile project that would be built in the middle of US 290 between US 183 and Parmer Lane.

Construction is scheduled to begin in late 2009.



The Mobility Authority has recently completed work on a new tool to help show Central Texans what the Manor Expressway and other planned expressways in the region will look like. [Click here to check it out!](#)

In Depth

Energy Crisis Expected To Make Transportation Funding Crisis Even Worse

With higher gas prices causing people to cut back on driving and to buy smaller cars, gas tax revenues are expected to decline. At the same time, higher fuel costs are pushing up the cost to maintain and expand our highways and operate our mass transit systems. Record high gas prices will make it even tougher for elected officials to raise gas taxes. In Texas the gas tax hasn't been increased since the early 1990's and has already lost significant ground to inflation.



[Click here](#) to access an article that includes more information about the transportation funding crisis.

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