



**CENTRAL TEXAS  
Regional Mobility Authority**

## AGENDA ITEM #12 SUMMARY

---

Quarterly Briefing on the MoPac  
Improvement Project.

Strategic Plan Relevance: Regional Mobility

Department: Engineering

Associated Costs: None

Funding Source: N/A

Board Action Required: No

Description of Matter:

The report is an account of the activities on the MoPac Improvement Project from April through June, 2012.

Reference documentation:

GEC Quarterly Activities Report and Board Presentation

Contact for further information:

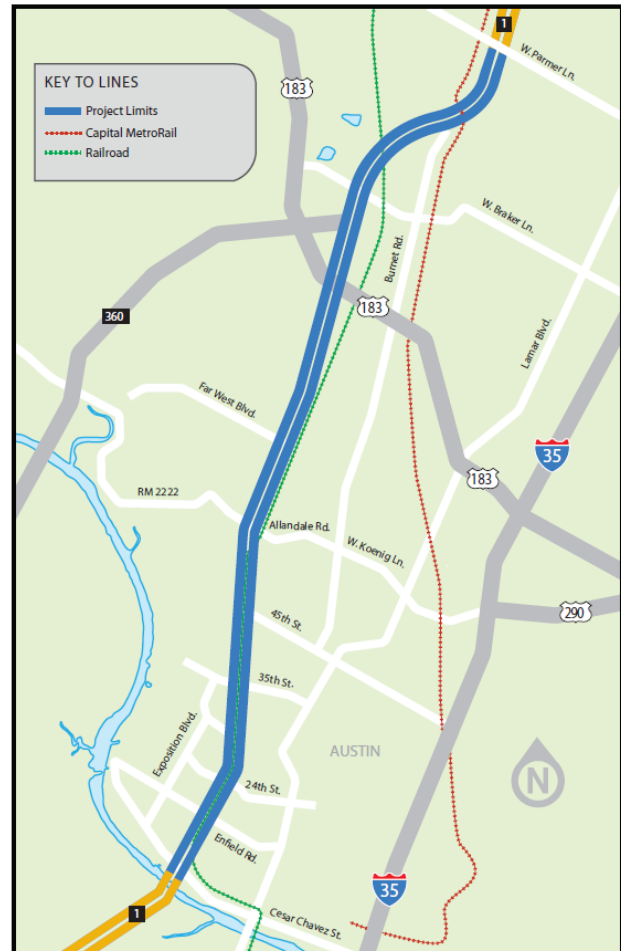
Wesley M. Burford, P.E., Director of Engineering

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The 11-mile stretch of MoPac between Parmer Lane and Cesar Chavez Street is one of Austin's most important arteries, serving as a key route to downtown and points beyond. As a primary alternative to Interstate 35, MoPac moves more than 180,000 cars and trucks each day. This stretch of MoPac is currently seeing high levels of congestion and unreliable operations. At the urging of local and state leaders, the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (Mobility Authority), the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the City of Austin, and Capital Metro (CapMetro) have teamed up to develop a reasonable solution to the mobility problem in this corridor that takes into account the needs of drivers, transit riders, pedestrians, bicyclists, and the concerns of surrounding neighbors.

Any proposed improvements would require approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). TxDOT and the Mobility Authority are currently working together to complete schematic design and environmental studies following the requirements set by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (also known as "NEPA"). The schematic design and environmental phase is scheduled to be completed by the summer of 2012. If the approved Project has a toll component, the Mobility Authority will take responsibility for the financing, design, construction, operations, and maintenance of the facility.

This report describes the status of the MoPac Improvement Project and documents the activities accomplished from April 2012 through June 2012.



# ACTIVITIES

The following activities have been accomplished by TxDOT, the Mobility Authority, and their consultants during the reporting period.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA)

- **Environmental Process Schedule:** As of the date of this report, the environmental process is currently on schedule. An environmental finding from Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is anticipated in August 2012.
- **EA Document Status:** After considering public comment from the Public Hearing and finalizing the document, TxDOT intends to submit the Final EA to FHWA in mid-July.

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Messaging, Information, and Meetings

- **Stakeholder Meetings and Elected Official Briefings:** The Project Team continues to coordinate with stakeholders and elected officials. Various meetings held in the second quarter of 2012 include:
  - A project status briefing was given to Austin Fire Department Chief Rhonda Kerr
  - A series of project status briefings were conducted with Austin City Council Member Chris Riley and his staff
  - A project status meeting with Travis County Commissioner Sarah Eckhardt's office
- **Public Hearing:** On May 23, TxDOT and the Mobility Authority held a Public Hearing for the proposed project. Following an open house session, a formal presentation was given with information on the environmental process, the express lanes alternative, sound walls, project aesthetics, and bicycle/pedestrian mobility improvements. A total of 157 members of the public attended, and feedback on the project and its various elements was received by the Team. Of the 322 total comments received, 152 comments stated support for the proposed project and 97 opposed the proposed project. The remaining 73 comments primarily concerned several issues or questions regarding the proposed project. The issues involve excluding the toll road component of the proposed project, concerns over the Express Lanes connections to downtown, funding sources and concerns, and support for other alternatives.
- **Informational Workshops:** Informational Workshops are anticipated to be held with the purpose of providing general information to key stakeholders on express lanes and dynamic pricing. In connection with these workshops, the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) is coordinating with the Mobility Authority to sponsor a Managed Lanes Network Workshop in Fall 2012. This workshop would focus on the planned network of managed lanes in the region.
- **Project Updates:** The Mobility Authority distributes Project Updates via e-mail on a regular basis to several key stakeholders. These Project Updates provide a short summary of the progress achieved on the Project over the previous weeks. Project Updates were e-mailed on May 2.

- **E-Newsletter:** A sixth project e-Newsletter was sent out to project stakeholders on April 26 to update the public on the Project's latest developments and to provide date, time, and location of the Public Hearing.

## DESIGN/BUILD (D/B) CONTRACTOR PROCUREMENT

- **Request for Qualifications (RFQ):** On April 13, the Mobility Authority issued a RFQ to solicit responses from teams interested in pursuing the development of the Project through a D/B contract. On April 23, the Mobility Authority conducted a RFQ pre-submittal conference at the Education Service Center Region XIII for interested parties. The purpose of the conference was to provide information on the Project and to clarify the process for submitting responses to the RFQ. Following the conference, the Mobility Authority hosted a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) networking session to help facilitate team formation. The Mobility Authority received seven (7) responses to the RFQ on May 14. All seven submittals were reviewed by Mobility Authority Staff and consultants and three Teams were recommended to advance to the Proposal stage. Abrams-Lane Joint Venture, CH2M HILL, and DWCo-Sundt were the short listed Teams approved by the Board of Directors on May 30.
- **Draft Request for Detailed Proposals (RFDP):** On June 6, the Mobility Authority provided a draft version of the RFDP to the shortlisted Teams, TxDOT and FHWA for industry review. The industry review process includes Workshops and One-on-One meetings with the Proposing Teams to discuss the Project requirements and the Contract terms. Two Workshops were offered by the Mobility Authority in June to review important aspects of Project including: Maintenance of Traffic, Roadway Design, Utility Coordination, and Railroad Coordination. The first round of One on One meetings were held on June 28. One on One meetings provide a confidential setting for each Proposing Team to privately ask questions and present ideas that may provide value to the Project. Two more rounds of One on One meetings will occur in July and August. Comments received during the industry review phase will be assessed for potential incorporation into the draft RFDP.
- **Official Issuance of RFDP:** It is anticipated that in September the RFDP will be finalized and, after FHWA and TxDOT concurrence, the Mobility Authority will officially issue the RFDP to the Proposing Teams. The Proposers will have approximately three months to prepare their Technical and Price Proposals. Continued coordination and One on One meetings will occur during this time. The Teams' Proposals are due in December. Mobility Authority Board approval of the recommended design/build contractor is expected to occur in January 2013.
- **D/B Notice to Proceed (NTP):** With no bond sale anticipated, NTP for design and construction can occur as soon as the D/B contract is finalized and approved by TxDOT/FHWA. This anticipated to occur between February and May 2013.

## FUNDING / AGREEMENTS

- **Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program:** USDOT reviewed and declined the Mobility Authority's December 2011 Letter of Interest (LOI) for the 2012 TIFIA credit program.
- **City of Austin Proposition 1:** The Mobility Authority continues coordination with city staff to develop the financial agreement to utilize the \$100,000 allocated in the 2010 Proposition 1 funds for the MoPac corridor. An agreement is anticipated to go before city council for approval in August 2012.
- **TxDOT Project Development Agreement (PDA):** The PDA continues to be refined and terms discussed with TxDOT. The PDA will clarify the roles of TxDOT and the Mobility Authority during the upcoming final design, construction, operations, and maintenance of the Project.
- **Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) Agreement:** On June 11, CAMPO Policy Board 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 Mobility Authority to help pay for design and 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. The Mobility Authority continues to work with the CAMPO Board Executive Committee to complete a financial agreement for these funds.
- **TxDOT Financial Assistance Agreement (FAA):** In July 2012, a FAA will go before the Texas Transportation Commission for approval. This agreement allows the Mobility Authority access to the \$67.6 million TxDOT allocated for the project from Category 2 funding, and to the \$130 million of TxDOT funds allocated by CAMPO.

# SCHEDULE

**The overall Project remains on schedule.** An environmental finding from FHWA is anticipated by August 2012. If the Express Lanes alternative moves forward as the FHWA-approved preferred alternative, procurement completion of the D/B Contractor is anticipated in early 2013. The anticipated start of design and construction is mid-2013 with a potential facility open to traffic in 2016.

## SCHEDULE RISK ASSESSMENT



Environmental Process / TxDOT & FHWA Coordination



Procurement of a Design/Build Contractor



Public and Political Opinion



Coordination with UPRR / City of Austin / CapMetro / Austin Energy



Traffic and Revenue - Financing

## UPCOMING MILESTONES

- FAA approval by the Texas Transportation Commission (July 2012)
- FHWA provides an Environmental Decision on the EA (August 2012)
- Mobility Authority issues official RFDP (September 2012)
- Shortlisted Teams submit proposals (December 2012)
- Selection of a Design/Build Contractor (January 2013)

## MILESTONES MATRIX

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
Restart Environmental Study and Public Involvement	Summer 2010	Complete
Market Valuation / Exercise Primacy	Fall 2010	Complete
Develop and Refine Preliminary Alternatives	Fall 2010	Complete
Conduct Open House Meetings (Round 1 & 2)	Fall 2010	Complete
Reasonable Alternatives Refinement	Winter 2010/ 2011	Complete
Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Schematic Complete - Initiate Review Process	February 2011	Complete
TxDOT Austin District EA Review Begins	February 2011	Complete
Restart Aesthetics Committee	March 2011	Complete
Complete Level 2 Traffic and Revenue (T&R)	May 2011	Complete
Context Sensitive Design Advisory Committee Meetings	March-May 2011	Complete
TxDOT Environmental Division EA Review	Spring 2011	Complete
Conduct Open House Meeting (Round 3)	May 2011	Complete
Conduct Sound Wall Workshops	Summer 2011	Complete
FHWA Resolution on Design Exceptions	Summer 2011	Complete
FHWA Begins EA Review	Fall 2011	In Progress
Conduct Community Open Houses	March 2012	Complete
EA is deemed "Satisfactory for Further Processing" by FHWA	April 2012	Complete
Conduct Public Hearings on the Draft EA	May 2012	Complete
Submittal of Final EA to TxDOT/FHWA	July 2012	Pending
Environmental Finding from FHWA	August 2012	Pending
Issue RFDP	September 2012	
Shortlist Teams Submit Proposals	December 2012	
Selection of a Design/Build Contractor	January 2013	