



**CENTRAL TEXAS  
Regional Mobility Authority**

## AGENDA ITEM #13 SUMMARY

Quarterly briefing on the environmental assessments for the Bergstrom Expressway, the Oak Hill Parkway, the MoPac South Project, the 183 North Project, and the SH 45 Southwest Project.

Strategic Plan Relevance: Regional Mobility

Department: Engineering

Associated Costs: N/A Briefing Only

Funding Source: Toll Equity Grants, Rider 42, STP MM (CAMPO)

Board Action Required: No

Description of Matter: The Director of Engineering will provide a summary of project activities for the following projects:

- Bergstrom Expressway
- Oak Hill Parkway
- MoPac South Project
- 183 North Project
- SH 45 Southwest Project
- SH 71 Express Project

Reference documentation:

GEC Quarterly Activities Reports and Board Presentation

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**CENTRAL TEXAS  
Regional Mobility Authority**

**ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

**Quarterly  
Progress  
Report**

**August 2013**

BERGSTROM EXPRESSWAY

OAK HILL PARKWAY

SH 71 EXPRESS PROJECT

MOPAC SOUTH ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

MOPAC INTERSECTIONS ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

US 183 NORTH ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

SH 45SW ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY



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# Bergstrom Expressway

## INTRODUCTION

This report documents and describes the Bergstrom Expressway Project (US 183 South) for the period through July 15, 2013. This Project is currently in the environmental clearance phase of development which requires the completion of an Environmental Assessment consistent with the regulations contained in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The Environmental Document is currently being developed in house by Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Austin District staff and supported by the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, with the Public Outreach being led by the Mobility Authority. In addition, the Project has been authorized by legislation to use a Comprehensive Development Agreement (CDA) project delivery method. This process promotes innovative financing methods that will allow the Project to be funded and constructed much earlier than traditional methodologies.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project corridor begins just south of the Manor Expressway and extends to SH 71 East; the corridor includes seven grade separations, and connects to three major interchanges at the Manor Expressway, Airport Boulevard, and SH 71 East. The corridor includes two pedestrian bridges and a continuous shared use path connecting local communities. The Project can be considered the Gateway to Austin from the Airport and is depicted in the location map below.



The US 183 South Corridor from US 290 East to SH 71 East is one Austin's most significant arteries. Since US 183 was constructed in the mid 1960's, the roadway has been a four-lane, divided highway with minor improvements. As the primary route to and from the Austin Bergstrom International Airport and points beyond, it attracts numerous motorists per day. In recent years, this vital corridor has grown increasingly congested as the region's population has expanded. The situation is projected to get even worse in the future. Meanwhile, funding challenges at the federal and state levels have made it increasingly difficult to finance the corridor.

As part of the NEPA process, the identified needs are to reduce congestion, improve safety and utilize innovative funding and financing processes to expedite project development and construction. Along with the NEPA process, the Mobility Authority is utilizing a Public Involvement and Outreach Program that includes hosting "brown bag" lunch and one-on-one meetings to obtain agency and stakeholder buy-in along the corridor. The Environmental Assessment document is currently being prepared by the TxDOT Austin District. The Mobility Authority, with Atkins under their General Engineering Consultant contract, is supporting and coordinating closely with TxDOT as the document is being developed.

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

The Project Development process is currently focusing on four major elements: Environmental Assessment (EA), Schematic Development, Public Outreach and Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS).

The Mobility Authority is currently working with TxDOT and other agencies to identify ways to expedite the environmental processes and clearance date.

The first Project Open House was held in September with over 100 attendees. The second Open House, held on March 7, 2013, was another great success with over 70 attendees and an additional 200 online participants. The third Open House and CSS Process is tentatively scheduled for September 2013. Following the third Open House, TxDOT will host the Formal Public Hearing (required by NEPA) in mid-2014 which will show the proposed final design and include the results of the CSS process.

As part of the Project efforts, the results of a Value Engineering (VE) Study completed for the corridor have been incorporated into the design and continue to be incorporated into the NEPA Document. Cost saving are currently estimated to be in the range of \$30 to \$50 million. The Public Involvement team will be presenting the updated design to the public through the outreach program established to focus on the community and stakeholders along the corridor.

The Mobility Authority is currently supporting TxDOT in the development of the EA:

- Development of exhibits required by NEPA for the document
- Facilitating and coordinating meeting with other Agencies
- Developing, updating and tracking with Primavera scheduling software
- Evaluating impacts and addressing issues relevant to project development
- Supporting in recovery plans in order to meet critical dates

The Mobility Authority is advancing planning and funding activities:

- Advancing right-of-way & utilities with long lead times including coordination and funding
- Evaluating phasing schemes and financing models
- Developing a Maintenance Responsibility Matrix for CTRMA, TxDOT and City

The Mobility Authority is currently updating the Design Schematic:

- Completed 90% Design Schematic, working to complete Final Schematic
- Evaluating and addressing design issues and community inquiries
- Designing Value Engineering Study results
- Facilitating and coordinating meeting with other Agencies

The Mobility Authority’s Stakeholder and Outreach is comprehensive and currently includes:

- Agencies: FHWA, TxDOT, City of Austin, Travis County
- Businesses: Misc. Land Developers / Property Owners, Freescale , YMCA, AT&T
- Home Owners Associations: Knollwood , Senate Hills , University Hills
- Interest Groups: Gateway Oaks, Heritage Tree Foundation, PODER, El Concilio

The Mobility Authority’s Context Sensitive Solution process is currently focusing on:

- Integrating the facility with the area’s built environment to enhance community and in particular the area’s economical quality of life
- Integrating the natural environment in order to maximize the facilities scenic, recreation and aesthetic qualities
- Incorporating aesthetics that fit the facilities physical setting and preserve the scenic, aesthetic, neighborhood, historic and environmental attributes of the area
- Including innovative design elements including considerations from the Green Mobility Challenge

**SCHEDULE**

The Environmental Assessment process was launched in late 2011 and is anticipated to be complete in 2015. A detailed schedule discussion, including the tracking of intermediate milestones, will be provided in upcoming Quarterly Reports. Below is a summary of the anticipated timeline that is being communicated to the public.

US 183 South Project (Bergstrom Expressway)														
Activity	Duration (Mo)	Begin	End	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Environmental (EA)	30	12/1/2011	1/1/2015		█									
Pre - ROW / Utility	36	6/1/2014	6/1/2017				█							
Litigation	6	1/1/2015	7/1/2015					█						
Procurement (CDA)	18	9/1/2014	3/1/2016				█							
Design (CDA)	12	3/1/2016	3/1/2017						█					
Right of Way (CDA)	24	3/1/2016	3/1/2018						█					
Utility (CDA)	24	3/1/2016	3/1/2018						█					
Construction (CDA)	48	3/1/2016	3/1/2020						█					



# Oak Hill Parkway

## INTRODUCTION

This report documents and describes the Oak Hill Parkway Project for the period through July 15, 2013. This Project is currently in the environmental clearance phase of development which requires the completion of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) consistent with the regulations contained in the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The Project is currently being developed jointly by the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Austin District.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project encompasses the area surrounding the existing “Y at Oak Hill” intersection and includes the study of US 290 West from FM 1826 to Loop 1, including SH 71 West from Silvermine Drive to US 290 West. The study area is depicted in the location map below.



Currently this area experiences large-scale congestion while attracting more than 60,000 cars/trucks a day and serving as a corridor for statewide travel. As part of the NEPA process, several reasonable alternatives will be identified to address the issues currently plaguing the study area. These alternatives, along with a “No Build” scenario, will be screened to assess the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts such that environmental values are considered alongside the technical and economic factors. Another important element of the NEPA process, which is also consistent with the

Mobility Authority's approach to project implementation, is public involvement; throughout the entire Environmental Impact Statement process, input will be solicited from neighbors and drivers of the corridor that could potentially be affected.

The Environmental Impact Statement document is currently being prepared by a consultant team led by Rodriguez Transportation Group, Inc. (RTG) under a professional services agreement with the TxDOT Austin District. The Mobility Authority, supported by Atkins under their General Engineering Consultant contract, is coordinating closely with both TxDOT and RTG as the document is being developed.

### PREVIOUS EFFORTS

As part of the Public Involvement Initiation, several critical elements were advanced in the previous quarter:

- An Environmental Workgroup meeting was held January 31<sup>st</sup> to ensure the study team understood the community concerns and ideas specifically related to water quality, flood plains, trees and vegetation, historical, cultural and other environmental issues. During this workgroup meeting the participants expressed the following project environmental desires (the highlights):
  - preserve the historic oaks along the corridor and replace impacted trees
  - protect and enhance Williamson Creek
  - design aesthetically pleasing and effective water quality protection facilities
  - minimize noise using strategies such as pavements which reduce tire noise
  - protect historic resources such as the Austin Pizza Garden
  - prevent / minimize additional light pollution
  - address greenhouse gas emissions
  - minimize impervious cover
- A subsequent Design Workgroup meeting was held February 19<sup>th</sup> to hear community ideas and gather ideas for alternative design concepts that meet the purpose and need for the project and best address the concerns and desires gathered at the environmental workgroup meeting. The following thoughts and ideas are a sampling of the ideas / concepts gathered in this workgroup meeting:
  - limit the height of any future roadway improvements and depress portions of US 290, specifically the section starting at the "Y" intersection with SH 71 and moving west
  - possibly building William Cannon over US 290
  - separate through traffic from local traffic / toll through traffic (but not local traffic)
  - maintain a narrow roadway footprint
  - possibly installing High Occupancy Vehicle lanes
  - improve access to businesses and include green space in the design by including hike/bike facilities and environmental improvements
  - consider a boulevard / parkway design without frontage roads or limited frontage roads
  - including transit in long-range planning
- Our latest workgroup meeting was focused on bike/pedestrian facilities and access and was held on March 19<sup>th</sup>. This meeting provided an opportunity to identify community priorities and to learn about city and neighborhood plans and the Oak Hills Trails plan. Notable events from this workgroup meeting included:

- A presentation from the Oak Hill Trails Association which highlighted current plans for the “Y” to Barton Creek (YBC) Trail, Williamson Creek Trail, Violet Crown Trail and several other spurs to those trails.
- Priorities included building the YBC Trail, ensuring safe routes to schools and connecting trails to major destinations (neighborhoods / business centers / retail).
- Responding to multiple choice questions:
  - nearly 83 percent of the workgroup participants said bike and pedestrian improvements should be a part of the Oak Hill Parkway
  - 35 percent said the top priority was connecting the Barton Creek multi-use trail to the “Y” intersection
  - 60 percent said bike/pedestrian improvements should be paid for through toll revenue from the US 290/SH 71 West improvements when given a list of funding options

Comments from participants also included making safety a priority, separating bicycles/pedestrians from highway traffic, building grade separated highway crossings (over or under), coordinating with the city and neighborhoods regarding connections to the trails and making Oak Hill more pedestrian and cycling friendly.

- On February 18<sup>th</sup> our first e-newsletter was issued which highlighted the November 15<sup>th</sup> Open House, the history of the project, the process we are going through and how interested individuals can get involved.
- The valuable input from the public has aided the project team in identification of constraints and public desires for the project which has allowed us to initiate the development of concepts.
- More detailed notes for all of our workgroups can also be found on the project website [www.oakhillparkway.com](http://www.oakhillparkway.com).

## RECENT ACTIVITIES

The implementation of the Project is currently focusing on actively engaging the public to help us identify the project constraints and initiation of early concept development through the use of citizen workgroups. This quarter’s activities include:

- On May 2<sup>nd</sup> our second e-newsletter was issued which highlighted the series of Workgroup meetings we facilitated last quarter and what we heard from the community. This issue also highlighted our May 23<sup>rd</sup> Open House where we shared our initial project concepts and described the Virtual Open House which was available on-line for those who could not attend or wanted to ask additional questions regarding the concepts. Our third Quarterly report is due for release in early August.
- On May 16th the project team hosted a design concept preview for all citizens that expressed an interest in being a part of the workshop series. All stakeholders that have indicated an interest in or were identified by the project team as having a potential interest in, or who have participated in previous workgroup meetings were invited to attend. Attendees were asked the following questions:
  - What do you like about each concept?
  - What don’t you like about each concept?

- What suggestions do you have for improving each concept?

To conclude the meeting, attendees participated in a “live poll” exercise, where they were asked to rate each concept on a 1-5 scale. Attendees were also asked if they felt the Oak Hill Parkway project team was headed in the right direction. 87% of respondents answered that they strongly agreed or agreed with that statement. Expanded Poll results can be found in the Public Input section of [www.oakhillparkway.com](http://www.oakhillparkway.com).

- The Public Open House for the initial concepts was facilitated on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at Clint Small Middle School from 6:00-8:00 p.m. The project team attended and brought six new concepts for the corridor as well as an option to potentially extend the transition of the project to the west past Circle Drive. The 2007 Mediation and No-Build concepts were also presented. Each concept also included a board showing the benefits of that concept and the specific public comments the concept was trying to address. Boards were also available which outlined the process the team is going through as well as the project timeline and environmental constraints.



Citizens reviewed concepts and completed project surveys at the Public Open House on May 23<sup>rd</sup>

With the goal to ensure all members of the public have the opportunity to be actively engaged in more detailed elements early in the project development, the project team worked closely with TTI to launch a Virtual Open House that same day. A link was provided from our project website allowing online participants to access a similar experience to the live open house.

The Project Team facilitated four hours of Q&A with on-line participants as part of the Virtual experience



The Open House official comment window closed on June 3<sup>rd</sup> and the project team is compiling comment responses which will be posted on the project website. At the same time, the team is evaluating the comments to determine what revisions need to be made to the existing concepts and what new concepts need to be developed for our next Open House planned for this fall. The screening criteria that will be used to evaluate the concepts will be shared at our next open house as well.

- More detailed notes for all of our public involvement activities to date can be found on the project website [www.oakhillparkway.com](http://www.oakhillparkway.com).

### **PROGRESS STATUS**

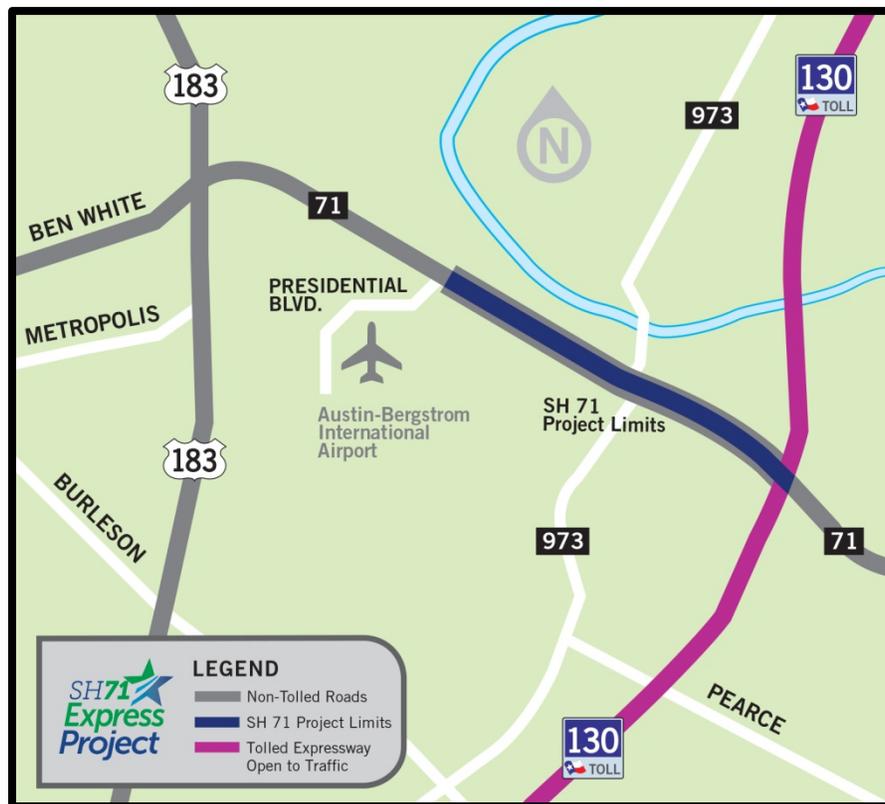
The Environmental Impact Statement process is still in the first nine months of development and is anticipated to take approximately four years to complete. To date, the project team has performed consistent with the project schedule. A detailed schedule discussion, including the tracking of intermediate milestones, will be provided in upcoming Quarterly Reports.

# SH 71 Express

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is working with the Mobility Authority to develop proposed improvements to SH 71 between Presidential Blvd and SH130. The project will add two additional toll lanes (one in each direction) through the length of the project by widening SH 71 between Presidential Blvd and FM 973 and constructing bridges over FM973 and SH 130. An Environmental Assessment (EA) is currently being prepared for the project.

The SH 71 Express Project is one of several improvements intended to complete a highway upgrade to SH 71 between I-35 and SH 130. The project is dedicated to improving mobility along SH 71 in a safe, efficient, and reliable manner. This project also includes improvements to make the area more pedestrian and bicycle friendly.



This report describes the status of the SH 71 Express Project and documents the activities accomplished through the second quarter of 2013.

### **PROJECT STATUS**

- TxDOT's Special Projects Division and Environmental Affairs Division along with the Austin District are leading the project. The Mobility Authority is supporting TxDOT with community outreach activities.
- The environmental studies, schematic development, and procurement process were initiated in late spring and are currently underway.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- The first project newsletter (describing the project, its benefits, background information, related SH 71 projects, and schedule) will mail in August.
- The first public meeting will occur on August 13, 2013. A second public meeting is anticipated to be held in October.
- A Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Advisory Group has been formed to provide direction during the CSS process. The first CSS Workshop is scheduled for August 29, 2013.

### **SCHEDULE**

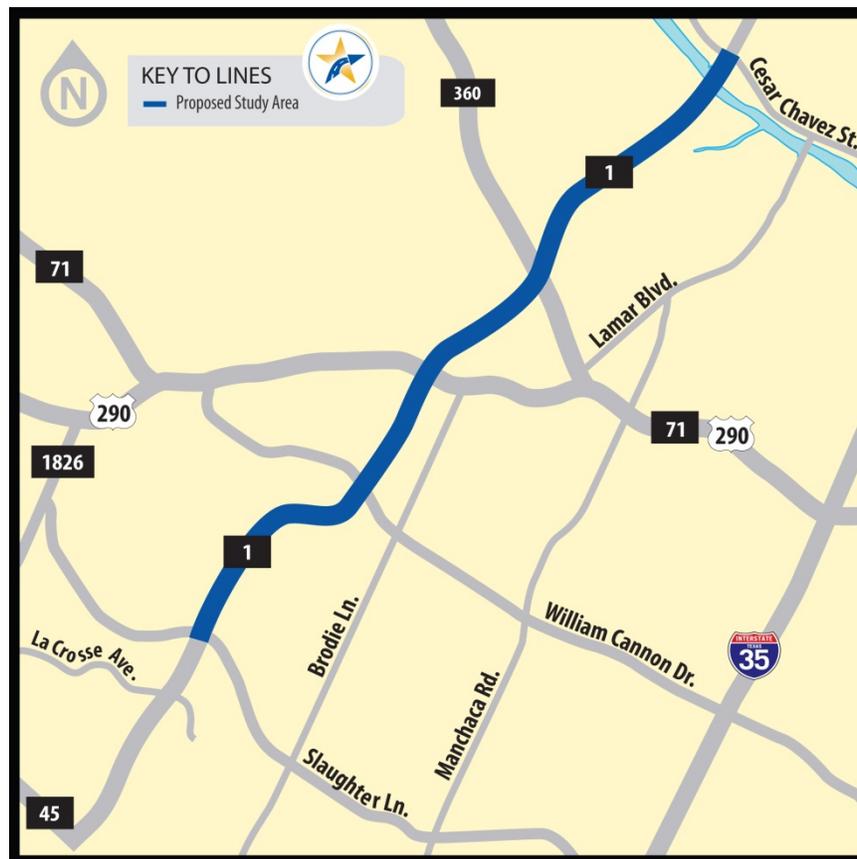
The environmental process is anticipated be completed in summer of 2014, with construction beginning in winter of 2014 and ending in winter of 2016.

# MoPac South Environmental Study

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Mobility Authority has initiated activities on the Environmental Study for improvements to MoPac from Cesar Chavez Street south to Slaughter Lane. Proposed improvements could include adding lane(s) along existing MoPac. Implementation of bicycle/pedestrian facilities and inclusion of park-and-rides will be evaluated as part of the project during the environmental study.

The project has been selected as one of the recipients of the Texas Legislature's Rider 42 funding allocation projects. As a Rider 42 objective, the project will utilize enhanced public engagement strategies and tools. The environmental study and community outreach program launched in April 2013. This will be the first environmental study led by the Mobility Authority.



This report describes the status of the MoPac South project and documents the activities accomplished through the second quarter of 2013.

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

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

### PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- The project launched in April 2013. Jacobs has begun preparation of the environmental assessment, primarily data collection and public involvement activities, as well as schematic efforts. CDM Smith has begun the Traffic and Revenue/Traffic Operations efforts. HNTB is providing management oversight. TxDOT is engaged with the project team and attends monthly meetings. There is ongoing coordination with TxDOT and TTI regarding public involvement strategy.
- Project controls have been put in place and a database for the administrative record is being developed.
- A detailed P6 schedule will be provided to the Mobility Authority for review in August.
- A series of environmental surveys are underway as part of the data collection.

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- In June, the public involvement plan was finalized. The team began preparation of a key stakeholder list and identified key individuals and groups to meet with this summer/fall. Also, the team began preparation of copy, graphics, and branding concepts for outreach tools (website, fact sheets, location map, timeline, and frequently asked questions).
- Members of the team attended Councilwoman Laura Morrison's neighborhood meeting with Circle C on the SH 45 SW project, which included some minor discussion about this study and the MoPac Intersections Environmental Study.
- The first open house is anticipated to occur in November 2013.

### SCHEDULE

The environmental process is anticipated to take two to three years. A detailed Project schedule will be prepared as an early action item with Jacobs, and milestones will be provided to the Mobility Authority Board next quarter.

# MoPac Intersections Environmental Study

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Mobility Authority, in coordination with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), will prepare a Categorical Exclusion (CE) for proposed improvements to the intersections of Slaughter Lane and La Crosse Avenue with MoPac. The environmental study launched in May 2013. If the proposed improvements are environmentally cleared, the project will be turned over to TxDOT to design, construct, and maintain.



This report describes the status of the MoPac Intersections project and documents the activities accomplished through the second quarter of 2013.

### **RECENT ACTIVITIES**

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

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT**

- The project launched in May 2013. Jacobs has begun preparation of the categorical exclusion, primarily data collection and public involvement activities. HNTB is providing management oversight. TxDOT is engaged with the project team and attends monthly meetings.
- A detailed P6 schedule is being developed and will be provided to the Mobility Authority for review.

### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

- The public involvement plan and key stakeholder list was finalized in July.
- A series of stakeholder meetings are being scheduled for this fall.
- Members of the team attended Councilwoman Laura Morrison's neighborhood meeting with Circle C on the SH 45 SW project, which included some minor discussion about this study and the MoPac South Environmental Study.

### **SCHEDULE**

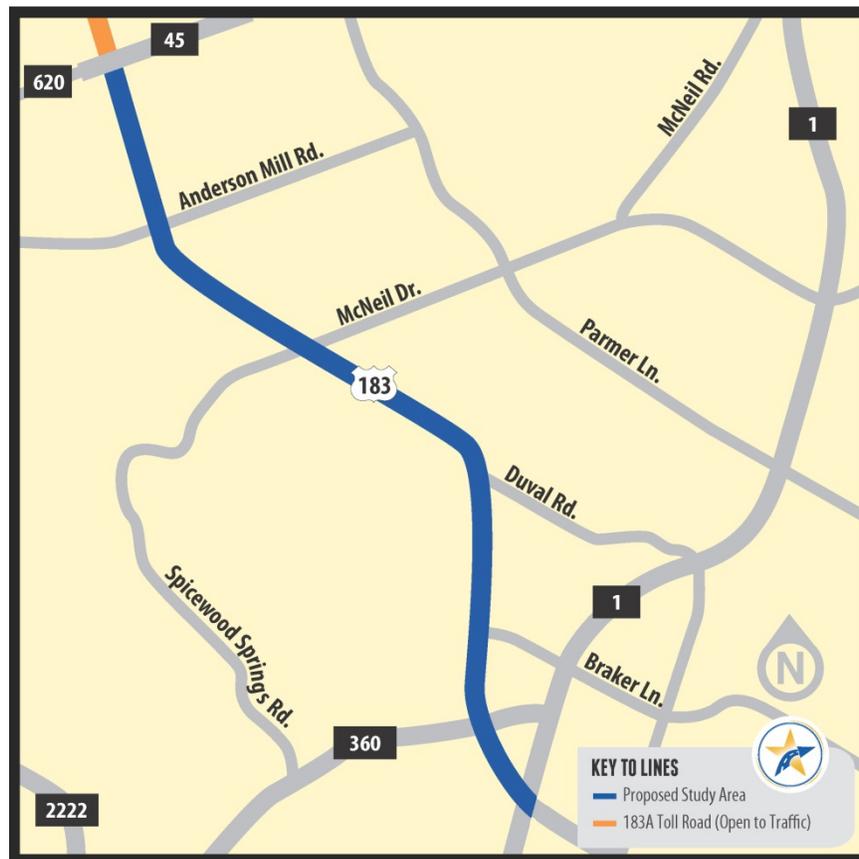
The environmental approval process is anticipated to take approximately one year. A detailed Project schedule will be prepared as an early action item with Jacobs, and milestones will be provided to the Mobility Authority Board next quarter.

# US 183 North Environmental Study

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In August 2013, the Mobility Authority launched the Environmental Study for improvements to US 183 North from RM 620 to MoPac. Proposed improvements could include adding lane(s) along existing US 183, as well as direct connectors from US 183 and MoPac.

The project was selected as one of the recipients of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) Surface Transportation Program - Metropolitan Mobility (STP MM) funding program. The environmental study and community outreach program are initiated in August 2013.



This report describes the status of the US 183 North Project and documents the activities accomplished through the second quarter of 2013.

### **RECENT ACTIVITIES**

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

### **PROJECT DEVELOPMENT / PROCUREMENT**

- Contract negotiations with CP&Y as the Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Services Consultant for this project are complete, and the project will launch later this summer.
- The letter of Engagement with CDM Smith for Traffic & Revenue and operational analysis support services will go before the Board for consideration.
- The project will kick off in August.

### **SCHEDULE**

The environmental process is anticipated to take two to three years. The schedule for this project is in development.

# SH 45SW Environmental Study

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is working with the Mobility Authority, Hays and Travis counties, and regulatory agencies to study a possible solution for improving mobility in the rapidly growing area of northern Hays and southern Travis counties. This combined effort includes an environmental study of an area between MoPac and FM 1626. The study will consider environmental impacts, constraints, the needs of drivers, and concerns of surrounding neighbors. The study, which will result in an Environmental Impact Statement, launched in June 2013.

This report describes the status of the SH 45SW Project and documents the activities accomplished through the second quarter of 2013.

## RECENT ACTIVITIES

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

## PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- TxDOT's Special Projects Division and Environmental Affairs Division are leading the project. The Mobility Authority is working with TxDOT to determine the agency's level of involvement and role in terms of project development. Community outreach will be led by the Mobility Authority.
- Community outreach tools, including Frequently Asked Questions and branding concepts, are under development in anticipation of stakeholder and elected official outreach this fall. An open house will be scheduled for October.
- An Origin and Destination study will likely be conducted this fall.

## SCHEDULE

The environmental process is anticipated to take two years.