



**CENTRAL TEXAS  
Regional Mobility Authority**

**AGENDA ITEM #12 SUMMARY**

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Executive Director's report.

Strategic Plan Relevance: Regional Mobility

Department: Executive

Associated Costs: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

Board Action Required: No

Description of Matter:

A. Project Status Updates.

B. Update on Maha Loop project with Travis County.

Reference documentation:

Executive Director's report

Contact for further information:

Mike Heiligenstein, Executive Director



CENTRAL TEXAS  
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# REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NOVEMBER 20, 2013

Mike Heiligenstein – Executive Director

## Bergstrom Expressway Financing



The Mobility Authority and its financial advisors have scheduled a meeting with TIFIA on Thursday, Nov. 21. The purpose of the meeting is to familiarize TIFIA with the Bergstrom Expressway project in anticipation of making a formal application for a TIFIA loan in 2014. While the Mobility Authority has previously submitted a Letter of Interest for the project, we hope to gain a better understanding of the new application process and timeline associated with the MAP-21 changes to the TIFIA program. In addition, it will be an opportunity to discuss past success of the TIFIA program for the Mobility Authority and potential future projects that may be eligible for the loan program.

## MoPac Improvement Project



*Meet the Contractor Open House took place on Nov. 12 at O'Henry Middle School*

- The MoPac Improvement Project is on schedule. CH2MHill will begin construction on the first of four segments in December from US 183 to RM2222. Activities include:
  - Restriping the main lanes to 11' lanes with reduced shoulders. This will occur during night operations.
  - Creating construction zones with concrete traffic barriers on the edge of pavement.
  - Installing tree protection and erosion control measures.

- Adding temporary safety lighting.
- Preparing the medians for pavement widening.
- Conducting public outreach via 75,000 postcards with magnets which features the 24/7 hotline.

## MoPac South & MoPac Intersection Environmental Studies

- The study's first open house took place Nov. 7 at Bowie High School. More than 100 people attended.
- Ongoing collaboration is taking place between the MoPac South, 183 North, SH 45SW, and Oak Hill Parkway teams to create an approach to traffic modeling and other activities.
- An Origin and Destination study is underway.

## 183 North Mobility Project

- Stakeholder outreach began this month, and planning continues for the first open house in January.
- The website will launch in December.

## SH 45 SW Environmental Study

- An Environmental Listening Workshop was held Nov. 14 at Elm Grove Elementary in Buda .
- The team is working on the second Open House scheduled for December.

## Manor Expressway Phase II Project

- Traffic has been placed in its final configuration at both the Springdale and Tuscan Way intersections.
- The Giles Road intersection was re-opened to traffic.
- The final asphalt surface course being laid on portions of the frontage roads and intersections.
- CTMC's focus is currently on completion of the retaining walls at the Giles Road and the Parmer Lane intersections.
- Concrete paving on the main lanes is expected to be complete by mid-December.

## US 183 Bergstrom Expressway Project

- The team has completed the second round of stakeholder and public outreach meetings and is currently evaluating the final results of the Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) Open House held in October.
- The team has submitted the Final Design Schematic and Draft Environmental Assessment and is working with TxDOT, FHWA and other agencies to establish the best project financing and delivery approach.

## US 290W/SH 71W Oak Hill Parkway Project



- The second Open House was held on Oct. 22 with 150 people in attendance. Input is being sought from participating agencies on the proposed screening criteria in order to narrow the alternative concepts. The public weighed in on the criteria at the Open House and can continue to comment on the criteria until we begin the screening process in the early part of next year
- A Funding Workshop is being planned for the early part of next year to help educate interested parties on how projects are funded.

### Industry News

## 'Life Is Worth More Than \$10 an Hour': Dr. Gridlock Tells the Story

In his Nov. 9 column, *Washington Post* reporter Robert Thomson came up with the ultimate winning narrative for congestion management projects like Virginia's 495 Express Lanes.

Thomson, a.k.a. Dr. Gridlock, produced a first-year review of the 495 project, where average weekday trips have increased nearly 43% since the beginning of the year. In one sentence, attributed to a satisfied commuter from Manassas, VA, he captured the arguments for congestion relief and driver choice at the heart of the call for a more permissive approach to tolling the Interstate highway system.



"My life is worth more than \$10 an hour to me," said Adam Epling, whose 46-mile daily commute from Manassas to Tysons Corner was reduced from 90 minutes in each direction. It now takes him 45 minutes in summer, and an hour the rest of the year. The cost? About \$5.10 per ride.

"They're selling time," Thomson said of Transurban, the toll road operator. "And he's buying."

Thomson had an instructive response for highway users who see tolling as a form of price gouging.

"While the tolls may look high to drivers in a region unaccustomed to paying tolls, this doesn't meet the common definition of 'gouging,'" he wrote. "For that to apply, a customer must have no choice but to pay an artificially inflated rate for a product.

"On the Beltway, a driver who thinks the trip isn't worth the toll takes the free lanes."

*-Excerpt from the IBTTA Tolling Points Blog*

## Upcoming Events & Activities

### SH 45 SW Environmental Study Open House

- Dec. 10, 5 – 8 pm, Bowie High School

### 183 North Mobility Project Open House

- Jan. 28, 5 – 8 pm, Anderson High School

### Texas Transportation Forum

- January 6-8, San Antonio