



**CENTRAL TEXAS
Regional Mobility Authority**

AGENDA ITEM #19 SUMMARY

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:

Executive Director's Monthly report

A. Project Updates

Reference documentation:

Executive Director's report

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CENTRAL TEXAS
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REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OCTOBER 29, 2014

Mike Heiligenstein – Executive Director

Bond Rating Upgraded; TIFIA Green Light to Pursue Master Credit Agreement

The Mobility Authority received some great news this month--the bond rating firm Standard & Poor's announced it is upgrading our bond ratings. S&P's upgrade demonstrates the growing recognition that Central Texas has a real need for transportation infrastructure and that the Mobility Authority is meeting that need effectively and efficiently with a fiscally-sound approach.



As stated in the report, S&P raised its long-term and underlying rating to 'BBB' from 'BBB-' on outstanding senior lien revenue bonds. S&P also raised its long-term rating to 'BBB-' from 'BB+' on the Mobility Authority's subordinate lien revenue bonds.

In an October 10 letter to the Mobility Authority, Standard and Poor's reported a stable outlook on all ratings and attributed the recent upgrade to a high regional demand for Mobility Authority roads.

Another factor was the Manor Expressway project, completed on time and on budget, which continues to surpass initial revenue and traffic projections. S&P's Assessment of the Mobility Authority's credit-worthiness also found a good operating history of the existing toll road's open sections, and significant growth in traffic and revenue despite the last economic recession.

"The stable outlook reflects our view of the toll road system's strong underlying demand provided by the Austin region," the Standard & Poors report said.



The Mobility Authority also has received a letter from the U.S. Department of Transportation advising that the 183 South (Bergstrom Expressway Project) has been approved for the next phase of obtaining a TIFIA loan concurrently with developing a Master Credit Agreement.

The Master Credit Agreement would be the first of its kind in the country and if approved, could be used for financing not only for the Bergstrom Expressway Project, but also the MoPac South, 183 North and Oak Hill Parkway projects.

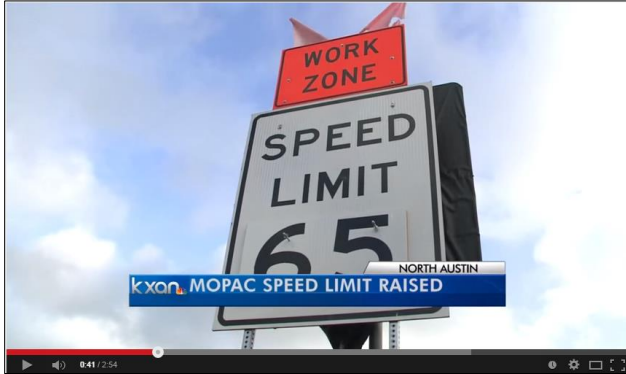
The TIFIA loan amount may not exceed 33 percent of eligible project costs.

The TIFIA credit assistance provides improved access to capital markets, flexible repayment terms, and potentially more favorable interest rates than can be found in private capital markets for similar instruments.

TIFIA can help advance qualified, large-scale projects that otherwise might be delayed or deferred because of size, complexity, or uncertainty over the timing of revenues.

Many surface transportation projects - highway, transit, railroad, intermodal freight, and port access - are eligible for assistance. Each dollar of Federal funds can provide up to \$10 in TIFIA credit assistance - and leverage \$30 in transportation infrastructure investment.

MoPac Improvement Project Speed Limits Raised to 65 MPH north of US 183



TV news coverage of the speed limit change

On October 9th, I participated in a news conference with Austin Police Chief Art Acevedo announcing that we are raising the speed limit on MoPac Expressway to 65 MPH between Parmer Lane and US 183 when workers are not present in the roadway. In the news conference, the chief urged the public not to speed in the construction zone in order to ensure that work crews remain safe. The posted speed limit south of 183 to Cesar Chavez will remain at 55 MPH. The news conference generated considerable coverage in the news media.

183A Frontage Road Mill and Overlay Project Continues



Mill and Overlay crew on 183A

Construction crews continue to work overnight to on the 183A Mill and Overlay project. The project will remove and replace the top two inches of the 18-inch thick pavement along the frontage roads. The resurfacing process is expected to be finished by the end of November. Various lanes and ramps have been closed during evening hours to accommodate the activity on the project

Signal Light Installed at Scottsdale Drive and 183A Frontage Road

The Mobility Authority tomorrow will activate a newly installed four-way traffic signal at the intersection of the 183A frontage road and Scottsdale Drive in Cedar Park.



Traffic signal activated at 183A frontage road and Scottsdale Drive

Electronic message signs are in place to alert drivers of the new signal which will become fully operational on Tue. October 28.

The signal will improve safety and traffic flow at the intersection after a traffic warrant study determined the need for the new signal. The Mobility Authority and Williamson County jointly paid for the study

Upcoming Meetings

Nov. 19 Board of Directors Meeting



PROJECT UPDATES

MoPac Improvement Project Construction

- The last approved schedule for the MoPac Improvement Project schedule continued to show completion of the project on-time. However, more recent information from the contractor indicates completion of the project may occur later than the contractual date. The Oversight Team is monitoring the schedule closely and working with the contractor to address slippage in start dates and durations for activities. CH2MHill is bringing on additional resources to help address schedule concerns.
- Final design is complete and plans have been released for construction in all segments. The permitting process with utilities and railroads continue.
- Work in Segments 1 & 2A (Parmer Lane to US183) included: drilled shafts, columns, and caps at Cap Metro bridge widening; drilled shafts at UPRR bridge widening; subgrade preparation continues on both northbound and southbound lanes; flexible base placement continues (preliminary activity to paving).
- Work in Segment 2B (US183 to RM 2222) included: forming and placement of median retaining wall footings and stems; storm drain installation; drilling for large guide sign foundations; construction of columns at RM 2222 bridges.
- Work in Segment 3 (RM 2222 to Enfield) included: bridge girders at Enfield Road completed; removal of existing rail and deck removals on Enfield bridges; girders placed on bridge widening for southbound lanes at 45th St.; embankment and select fill being placed along main lanes near Enfield.
- Work in Segment 4 (Enfield Road to Ladybird Lake) included: jack & bore operations continuing for storm drain to Johnson Creek; temporary ramp near Enfield Road paved; Traffic switch to the temporary ramp has occurred.
- Pre-casting of girders and sound wall panels continues.
- Mowing operations continue.
- CH2M HILL has been providing a courtesy vehicle (similar to HERO) during peak hours and during construction as well as handling the maintenance of the corridor (graffiti removal, garbage pick-up, guardrail repair). They will continue this until final acceptance of the project.

- MoPac Man continues to update the website daily with closure information and has responded to numerous e-mails and tweets. His 800 AM broadcasts are updated weekly with closure information as well as information about the upcoming express lanes.

183 North Mobility Project

- The project is on schedule for Public Hearing Aug. 2015.
- Open House #3 is being planned for mid-Feb. 2015.
- Project preliminary design development and traffic operational analysis is on-going. Initial assessment of ingress/egress locations along 183N to be completed by Oct. 15, 2014.
- Alternatives Analysis has been submitted; awaiting comments from TxDOT/FHWA.
- Draft Design Exception package for reduced lane and outside shoulder widths submitted to TxDOT for review and comments.
- Draft Biological Evaluation document and technical memos are being prepared.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian accommodations are being evaluated.

MoPac South Environmental Study

- The next public workshop is planned for early 2015.
- Initial draft EA submittal is planned for early 2015 with a Public Hearing planned for late 2015.
- Technical Memoranda continue to be prepared for social, economic, and environmental impact evaluations.
- A Technical Working Group meeting to review the reasonable alternatives is scheduled for November.
- Engineers continue to lay out alternatives to help identify operational needs and environmental impacts.
- Traffic analysis for operations and environmental evaluations is underway.

MoPac Intersections Environmental Study

- A public hearing is planned for early 2015.
- Environmental Finding is anticipated in mid-2015
- The Schematic Design and the majority of the technical memoranda have been submitted to TxDOT for review and comment.
- The funding agreement with TxDOT is being revised to accommodate increased effort related to EA production and providing a public hearing.
- Significant stakeholder outreach and public communication is planned over the next several months.

SH 45SW Environmental Study

- Initial notice to proceed on preliminary efforts is anticipated to be given this fall.
- Construction is anticipated to start in late 2015/early 2016.
- TxDOT is addressing public hearing comments and finalizing the environmental document.
- Staff is working with Rodriguez Transportation Group (RTG) to prepare a Master Contract and Work Authorization scope of services for survey and engineering in preparation for final design.
- The MoPac Improvement Project schedule continues to show completion of the project on-time. Oversight team is monitoring the schedule closely and working with the Contractor to address slippage in start dates for non-critical activities. Contractor is bringing on additional resources to help address schedule concerns.

Bergstrom Expressway Project

- The Environmental Assessment was cleared by the Federal Highway Administration allowing a Public Hearing to be set for Nov. 19, with an anticipated EA finding in spring 2015.
- Final Design Schematic is currently under review by Federal Highway Administration has been approved pending any modifications that may result from the Public Hearing.
- Public involvement activities continue as the team prepares for the Final CSS Open House on Nov. 13.
- Best Value Selection for a contractor is scheduled for spring 2015.
- Project programming activities continue as the team works to finalize Project Funding Agreements with TxDOT and FHWA.
- Financing activities continue as we develop the updates to TIFIA Application and begin the Investment Grade Traffic & Revenue Study.

- Outreach and status reporting activities continue as the team meets with the stakeholders including Public Officials, Agencies and Community Organizations.

Maha Loop/Elroy Road, Phase I Project

- Contractor is on schedule for the Mar. 2015 completion
- Subgrade, base work, box culverts and adjacent retaining wall construction has been completed.
- Bridge beams and deck panels have been placed. Concrete pours should be complete by the first part of December and sidewalk placements are underway.
- Travis County has requested that we begin designing traffic signals for the intersections with SH 71 and with Pearce lane and seek a change order to have them installed if feasible

Manor Expressway, Phase II Project (290E)

- The Mobility Authority is finalizing the non-conflict utility relocations required by the project to obtain Final Acceptance.

Oak Hill Parkway Project (US 290W/SH 71W)

- Following a stakeholder workshop with the Fix 290 group to address their comments from the Open House, the team advised stakeholders that Concept F would not move forward into the NEPA process.
- A response explaining why Concept F would not be carried forward was provided to the City of Austin in response to their resolution to continue assessing Concept F throughout the NEPA process.
- A Context Sensitive Solutions workshop was held on Oct. 9 to begin seeking input from the stakeholders. An online CSS survey was launched the day after the workshop.

SH 71 Toll Lanes

- TxDOT personnel and representatives from their construction contractor, McCarthy, have been making pre-construction preparations. A notice to proceed with construction is expected in November.
- Atkins and the Mobility Authority met with Schneider Electric to discuss roles and responsibilities regarding tolling facilities to be installed on the project.