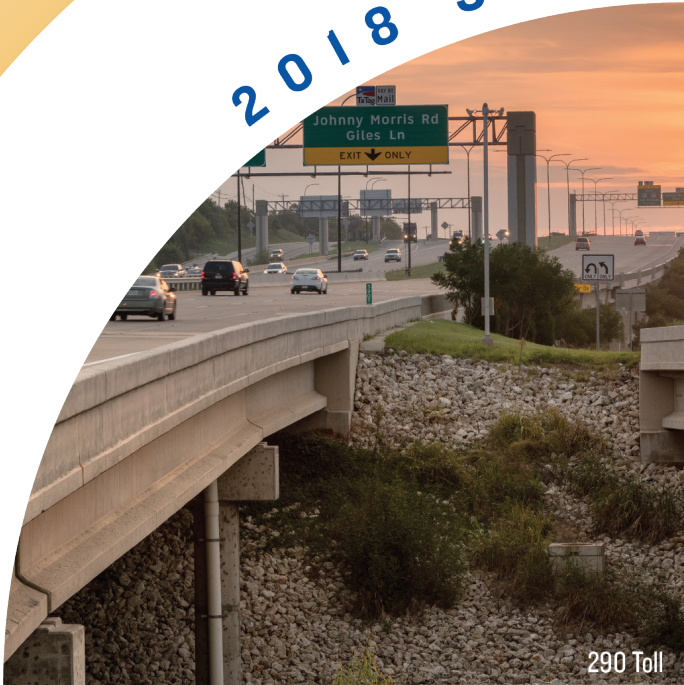


# 2018 STRATEGIC PLAN



290 Toll



71 Toll Lane



MoPac Express Lane



183A Toll



CENTRAL TEXAS REGIONAL  
**MOBILITY AUTHORITY**

# INTRODUCTION

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**T**he Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority (Mobility Authority) was established by Travis and Williamson counties in 2002 as the state's first regional mobility authority. The agency operates under Chapter 370, Regional Mobility Authorities, of the Texas Transportation Code, representing the Texas Legislature's vision to allow local communities greater flexibility in meeting their transportation needs.

Pursuant to Section 370.261 of the Code, the Mobility Authority updates its Strategic Plan on a biennial basis to reflect the agency's priorities for the five succeeding fiscal years. This plan considers the challenges, risks, and opportunities facing the regional transportation system in Central Texas and outlines a set of goals and strategies the agency will employ to achieve its vision of greater mobility through sustainable transportation solutions.

# MISSION STATEMENT

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**O**ur mission is to implement innovative, multi-modal transportation solutions that reduce congestion and create transportation choices that enhance quality of life and economic vitality.

# BACKGROUND

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**T**he Mobility Authority continues to evolve with the support and guidance of Travis and Williamson counties, and in collaboration with regional partners. Amidst a transportation funding crisis, the agency has delivered critically needed infrastructure for Central Texas in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The toll facilities owned and operated by the Mobility Authority provide the traveling public with reliable transportation options that enhance quality of life and economic vitality. The emergence of I83A Toll, 290 Toll, 71 Toll Lane, and MoPac Express Lane has laid the foundation for a comprehensive, regional roadway network that will continue to reduce travel and response times and spur economic development while reducing air pollution and fuel consumption.

To further expand mobility options for the traveling public, the agency has established a partnership with Capital Metro whereby Express buses operate toll-free in the MoPac Express Lane. This partnership has led to increased ridership and new transit routes across the region, and plans are in development for additional Park & Ride facilities to serve Mobility Authority customers. Looking forward, the agency is positioned to expand beyond toll roads. Leveraging our ability to deliver such projects in a faster, more cost-effective manner, we are developing non-tolled projects for Travis County and are exploring the feasibility of further broadening our portfolio to include additional mobility solutions.

# ALIGNING WITH THE CENTRAL TEXAS TRANSPORTATION LANDSCAPE

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: CHALLENGES, RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES

**T**he Central Texas region continues to evolve as one of our nation's strongest economies, and Austin consistently ranks as one of the best places to live in the United States. With a vibrant economy, great climate, and plentiful amenities and opportunities, it's no surprise that Austin was ranked among the top 10 fastest growing U.S. cities by *Forbes* in 2018.

With a population expected to reach three million by 2030, we are faced with the reality that our region is attracting large numbers of college graduates, families with children, and others pursuing the prospect of a better future. In fact, Williamson County's population is expected to grow by 200 percent between 2020 and 2050, and Travis County's population is projected to grow by 57 percent in the same timeframe. And yet the gas tax-supported funding stream dedicated to transportation improvements remains static. This primary source of transportation funding for our state has lost nearly half its purchasing power since it was last increased in 1991, and will continue to diminish.

Our research shows that traffic congestion remains a top concern among people and industry, with 87 percent of Central Texans reporting that less time stuck in traffic would improve their quality of life. Increased demand for our already overburdened transportation network means our mission is more important than ever. We owe it to the traveling public, those who drive on our roads day in and day out, to explore all viable options. By leveraging the flexible financing options afforded to us as a regional mobility authority, we'll continue to facilitate the movement of people and goods throughout our region, bridge the gap between affordable housing and employment centers, connect our residents to everything they love about Central Texas, and reinvest in the region.

It is important to recognize that the vitality of our mobility future has more than population growth to contend with. Significant changes to the nature of mobility and every aspect of our regional landscape are inevitable, making how we move people and goods a growing challenge.

• **Growing distance between affordable housing, employment centers and health care:** Connecting the underserved communities outside Austin's downtown core with employment centers and state-of-the-art healthcare facilities is critical. Many of these services are clustered near central Austin, while affordable housing options are getting pushed farther and farther out due to high housing prices downtown. Suburban communities on the periphery will continue to rely heavily on the commute into Austin to stay connected to the services they need.

• **Freight rail traffic density:** As shown in the CAMPO 2040 Regional Transportation Plan, the freight rail traffic density in the region is significant, with 10.1 to 20 million gross tons per mile being carried through the Central Texas region. Optimal mobility along our regional freight corridors is critical to the continued movement of commerce as well as moving the workers responsible for production.



## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS: CHALLENGES, RISKS, OPPORTUNITIES

- **Environmental regulations:** There will be tougher air quality requirements, stricter environmental standards to comply with, and significant changes to our carbon-based economy as we look forward in planning our mobility future.

- **Technology advancement:** The emergence of transformational technologies that serve our industry will continue to change the nature of mobility as we understand it. While innovation inevitably brings interoperability and more sophisticated tolling equipment, as well as technologies such as automated and connected vehicles (AV/CV), self-driving cars, electric vehicles, and ride-sharing mechanisms within reach for a greater percentage of the population, we will be forced to adapt to an ever-evolving regional mobility landscape.

- **Shifting political priorities:** Competing priorities among policymakers in the Texas Legislature have impacted our ability to deliver critically needed infrastructure by limiting funding sources and project delivery methods. The way we finance and execute projects is changing, and we must be proactive in garnering local support and adapting to shifting political priorities.

- **Traffic demand management:** Adding smart capacity is a critical component to alleviating congestion. To solve the congestion crisis, however, we must use all the tools in our toolbox and promote and encourage broader engagement with all transportation alternatives.

Moving Central Texas forward despite the mobility barriers we face requires a strong foundation that is both future-oriented and rooted in the present. We are developing processes to systematically monitor, track, and apply industry best practices to the mobility solutions we are implementing. Keeping our finger on the pulse of the industry through public opinion research and collaborative partnerships ensures that our transportation solutions keep pace with technological and societal advancements.

We are ideally positioned to achieve our vision for the future. Our distinct structure, strong governance, and broad charter give us the authority to address a wide range of mobility problems and deliver multimodal solutions that extend beyond roadways. We apply that authority responsibly by collaborating with regional partners and engaging stakeholders to develop mobility solutions that preserve the community's cultural values and regional identity. We approach our challenge strategically and holistically, and in a manner that allows us to be uniquely flexible, efficient, and decisive.

# THE MOBILITY AUTHORITY AT ITS CORE



## OUR CORE VALUES

### Transparency

We are committed to open, honest and fair business practices; visibility into our processes; and accessibility of information to the general public.

### Accountability

We are fiscally responsible and follow through on commitments to our founding counties, investors, customers, constituents, and partners.

### Credibility

We work to earn and sustain public trust through dependable public service, two-way communication, partner collaboration, and fair and appropriate solutions.

### Service

We provide customer service that is defined by efficiency and responsiveness. We seek to improve quality of life for our users by acting as environmental stewards and supporting our community.

### Integrity

We are committed to honest communications, transparent transactions, ethical decisions, and forthright behavior.

### Innovation

We have an entrepreneurial spirit that nurtures new ideas and embraces opportunities to implement transformative technology.

# A FORWARD-THINKING MOBILITY VISION

**W**e are creating a new lens through which we view all things mobility. By optimizing the use of our current infrastructure, best practices and new technology, we are affecting real change within our transportation network that will serve our region for decades to come.

To fully realize our potential, the Mobility Authority board and staff have determined that establishing the following goals will help us achieve our vision:

## GOAL

### Deliver Multi-Faceted Mobility Solutions

We will continue developing a comprehensive regional transportation network that adds value to the community and provides our customers with the reliable transportation choices that enhance quality of life.

#### STRATEGIES

- Implement tolled and non-tolled mobility projects that give Central Texans more reliable travel options and reduced travel times, and deliver them on-time and within-budget.
- Incorporate additional features into our projects to maximize available capacity and enhance personal mobility, including traffic and incident management, vehicle connectivity, safety elements, special aesthetics, enhanced landscaping, and other added-value benefits.
- Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian accommodations such as shared use paths, sidewalks, and bike lanes into our projects to serve the diverse needs of the traveling public.

## GOAL

### Employ a Collaborative Approach to Implementing Mobility Solutions

We will work closely with state, regional, and local leaders; business community, environmental community, neighborhoods; and partner agencies to responsibly develop mobility solutions critical to our region's continued economic vitality.

#### STRATEGIES

- Build on our current relationships and partnerships with TxDOT; Williamson, Travis, and Hays counties;

the cities of Austin, Cedar Park, Leander, Manor, and others; Capital Metro; CAMPO, and other partners.

- Continue involvement in regional planning activities with community partners and support initiatives of partner agencies.
- Support the enactment of legislation that ensures flexible options to develop regional mobility projects.

## GOAL

### Invest in Efforts that Extend Beyond Roadways

We will continue optimizing our region's overburdened transportation network. These efforts extend beyond simply building new capacity, and include programs and partnerships to enhance the quality of life for Central Texans by optimizing existing corridors.

#### STRATEGIES

- Foster a continued partnership with Capital Metro whereby Express Buses are given toll-free access to our express lanes.
- Study Park & Ride opportunities throughout the region in collaboration with Capital Metro and the relevant counties.
- Explore the feasibility of transportation and infrastructure projects, programs, and initiatives allowed within our enabling legislation, including transit support services, airports, and public utility facilities.
- Launch a Workforce Development Program to bridge service gaps while enhancing the region's workforce and spurring economic growth.
- Partner with organizations that provide information and technology solutions that incentivize adoption of smarter commuting habits, such as Commute Solutions.

**GOAL****Explore and Invest in Transformative Technology and Adopt Industry Best Practices**

We nurture promising new ideas and processes, embrace industry best practices, and explore new technologies to achieve our mission.

**STRATEGIES**

- Employ innovative financial strategies to expedite and make viable the transportation projects critical to our region.
- Explore the incorporation of smart-road technology for enhanced safety and operations, including wrong-way driver detection and prevention, Automatic Vehicle Identification (AVI), and dark fiber.
- Monitor our facilities through our Traffic & Incident Management Center to promote safe and efficient operations and efficient deployment of resources.
- Prepare our transportation corridors for the eventual shift to AV/CV technology.

**GOAL****Deliver Responsible Mobility Solutions That Respect the Communities We Serve**

We foster positive relationships with our community, stakeholders, and customers to understand expectations and develop projects that meet diverse needs.

**STRATEGIES**

- Provide exemplary customer service for drivers on our open facilities.
- Exceed the minimum public involvement requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act to ensure the project design is reflective of community values and needs.
- Be a good neighbor to residents and businesses adjacent to our construction projects as well as the traveling public.

**GOAL****Invest in Initiatives That Protect Our Environment**

We are committed to preserving the natural resources that make Central Texas an attractive place to live and work.

**STRATEGIES**

- Incorporate design principles into our projects that reduce our overall footprint, such as permeable friction course pavement, measures to meet or exceed water quality standards, and other environmentally sensitive elements.
- Pursue certification from third-party sustainability rating agencies where feasible.
- Engage in partnerships with environmental groups and non-profit organizations whose mission mirrors our desire to protect the environment, such as TreeFolks.

**GOAL****Deliver on Commitments to Our Customers and Our Investors**

We are committed to serving our region for decades to come, and seek to ensure the long-term viability of the agency through smart business practices and efficient delivery.

**STRATEGIES**

- Hire, invest in, and retain a highly qualified team.
- Preserve assets and investments through execution of a Master Trust Indenture (guiding financial document), which sets forth a detailed plan for roadway maintenance and inspection practices.
- Increase toll tag penetration among toll road users to decrease costs to the consumer.
- Develop, implement and measure exceptional customer service practices and procedures.
- Analyze costs from a long-term sustainability perspective.
- Increase efficiency of roadway, traffic, and toll operations.
- Maintain standards for financial and operations reporting, consistent with the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board.
- Respond to all Open Records requests and customer inquiries in a prompt, thorough, and respectful manner.



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