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## TxTag



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## In the Spotlight

### Drivers Eligible for TxDOT Toll Violation Fee Reductions Until November 30th



Until November 30th, drivers may be eligible to take advantage of a temporary toll violation fee reduction program being offered by the Texas Department of Transportation. The program began on August 31st and allows drivers to have their outstanding violation fees reduced by 90% if they sign up for TxTag and maintain a valid account. In Central Texas, the program applies to tolls accrued on SH 130, SH 45 and Loop 1. The program does not apply to tolls and violation fees on the 183A toll road.

The Mobility Authority, which operates the 183A toll road, already offered a violation waiver program in May 2008 and has begun filing court cases against drivers who have not paid their toll bills. However, drivers with unpaid toll bills on 183A may still be able to avoid court and settle their outstanding bills by contacting Municipal Services Bureau (MSB) at 1-888-811-4565.

### Mobility Authority to Implement HERO Program



On June 8th the CAMPO Transportation Policy Board approved \$1.4 million in federal stimulus funds to restart the Highway Emergency Response Operators (HERO)

## 183A Update

### Construction Expected to Begin on 183A Phase II Northern Extension

The northern extension of the 183A expressway from FM 1431 to north of RM 2243 is scheduled to be under construction by March 2010. The Mobility Authority plans to sell bonds for the \$120 million, 5-mile project in



December. Efforts are currently underway to procure a contractor to construct the project. The 183A Extension is expected to open to traffic by 2012. With completion of the Northern Extension, drivers traveling northbound will be able to travel all the way from RM 620/SH45 to SH 29 in Liberty Hill without coming across a traffic signal. Southbound drivers will encounter one traffic signal at the intersection with US 183 in Leander.

[Learn more about the 183A Extension.](#)

### Toll Rate Adjustment Planned for 183A



The Mobility Authority is considering a number of changes to the toll rate schedule for 183A in connection with the Northern Extension project. The first change will involve implementation of a previously planned toll rate increase at the Park Street Main Toll Plaza. As provided for in the original 2005 bond documents for the 183A project, the toll at the Park Street Main Toll Plaza is slated to increase from \$1.35 to \$1.55 for TxTag customers on January 1, 2010. The increase would only be temporary as the Mobility Authority is proposing to adjust its entire rate schedule when the 183A Extension opens in about two years.

Under the proposed changes, the toll rates at the Park Street Main Toll Plaza would decrease from \$1.55 to \$1.25 when the extension opens. The Mobility Authority is also planning to implement annual inflation-based toll rate increases beginning in 2013. Annual increases of a few cents each year eliminate the need for larger one-time increases such as the one scheduled for the first of the year. The Mobility Authority Board is expected to consider the proposal at their November 18th meeting. [For more information about the proposal click here \(PDF\).](#)

## Manor Expressway Update

### Stimulus Funding Gives Manor Expressway Project a Boost

program on IH35 from Round Rock to Buda. The two-year program will be implemented and overseen by the Mobility Authority, in conjunction with TxDOT and the Texas Transportation Institute.

The HERO program is a cost-effective strategy to help reduce congestion and improve safety by helping disabled motorists, clearing debris from the roadway and assisting with traffic control at accident scenes.

### In Depth

#### 183A Drivers Save Money and Help the Environment



Earlier this year, the Mobility Authority commissioned a study to determine the environmental benefits of driving on 183A versus US 183. As part of the study, scientists drove two test vehicles up and down the 183A toll road and US 183. They then measured the differences between vehicle emissions and fuel consumption on the two roads. The results were dramatic. The study found that an average vehicle driving on 183A used 26% less fuel. When calculated over the course of a year, the average savings amounted to 108 gallons with a cost savings of more than \$281. Meanwhile, vehicles using 183A emitted less carbon (- 37%), which has been associated with global warming, and less nitrogen oxide (-56%), a chemical that contributes to the formation of unhealthy ground level ozone. The findings point out the significant benefits achieved by eliminating stop and go traffic conditions.

### Quick Contact



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The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority expects to break ground in March 2010 on the first phase of the 6.2-mile Manor Expressway project. Using a combination of federal stimulus funding, a State Infrastructure Bank Loan, bond debt and a potential loan from the federal TIFIA program, the Mobility Authority anticipates being able to raise the more than \$245 million necessary to fund the first 1.4 miles of the project, including the direct connect flyover ramps at US 183 and US 290. The Mobility Authority is currently procuring a contractor to construct the flyover ramps and is acquiring property between US 183 and Chimney Hill Drive to make room for the new expressway. The project is expected to generate up to 2,200 local jobs.



For more information about the Manor Expressway, visit [www.ManorExpressway.com](http://www.ManorExpressway.com).

### Mobility Authority News

#### New Mobility Authority Chairman Takes the Reins



A new Chairman is now leading the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority. Travis County resident Ray Wilkerson was recently appointed by Governor Rick Perry to serve a two-year term as Chairman of the Mobility Authority Board. Wilkerson takes over for Bob Tesch, a Williamson County resident who led the agency since its founding in 2002.

“Chairman Wilkerson is a highly respected regional leader who will bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Board,” said Mike Heiligenstein, Executive Director of the Mobility Authority. “His impressive record of regional service will be of tremendous value as we work to solve the transportation funding crisis facing our region.”

Wilkerson previously served as Chairman of the Lower Colorado River Authority Board. Under his leadership, LCRA completed improvements to the flood management infrastructure and promoted water conservation through the Water IQ campaign. Wilkerson also supported development of the Redbud Center. In January 2009, he was honored by LCRA for his leadership and stewardship of the Colorado River through dedication of The Wilkerson Center for Colorado River Education.

Wilkerson also served as a member and Vice Chairman of the Texas Rehabilitation Commission from 1988 - 2001. He is a board member of the Heartgift Foundation, a charity that provides lifesaving heart surgery to disadvantaged children from around the world. He is also a founding member of the Tributary League, which supports the Colorado River Foundation.

[Click here for more information about Ray Wilkerson and the Mobility Authority Board.](#)

## Central Texas Loses Longtime Business and Civic Leader Lowell Lebermann



On July 9, 2009, longtime Central Texas business and civic leader, Lowell Lebermann, passed away at the age of 70. Appointed by Travis County in January 2003, Lebermann served as the Vice-Chairman for the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, playing an important role in the start-up and establishment of the agency, as well as the planning and development of the 183A toll road in Williamson County.

In addition to his role with the Mobility Authority, Lebermann was a contributor to the arts and the environment and an advocate for non-profit and philanthropic causes. He was a former member of the Austin City Council, the Board of Regents of the University of Texas, Chairman of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, and a Director of Valero Energy.

Travis County is currently looking for a qualified individual to fill Lebermann's position on the Mobility Authority Board.

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