



Press Release

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WSP USA Joins in Unveiling New Toll Road in Austin *Improved Highway Aims To Alleviate Congestion, Provide Better Route to Austin's City Center*

AUSTIN — The completed 45 Southwest Toll Road (45SW), spanning 3.6 miles from State Loop 1 (MoPac) to FM 1626, was unveiled here on Saturday, June 1. WSP USA, a leading engineering and professional services consultancy, played a leading role in its completion.

“45SW is a modern, environmentally-conscious solution for residents seeking a fast and safe connection to Austin,” said Gregory A. Kelly, president and CEO of WSP USA. “We are honored to have been given this opportunity to improve transportation for local commuters, while supporting the efforts of the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority.”

The improved toll road aims to alleviate heavy commuter congestion in South Austin. WSP estimates that commuters will save an estimated average of 9-17 minutes in total travel time by driving on the 45SW Toll Road, while those who continue to commute on local roads will also experience a time savings of about 6-7 minutes.

Between 1990 and 2010, the Austin population increased by 241 percent. Without the new roadway, WSP estimates that motorists would eventually experience 89- to 97-percent longer commutes in the morning.

“With the 45SW Toll Road now in place, Central Texas can better accommodate the tremendous growth anticipated in the decades to come,” Kelly said.

WSP USA provided construction management and oversight services for the Mobility Authority. In addition to compliance and contract management, WSP USA provided technical support, utility and engineering coordination, and public involvement services.

“We are proud to turn this new road over to the community,” said Ray Wilkerson, Mobility Authority board chairman. “Residents have long demanded a faster, more reliable

connection into Austin. This new road delivers, bringing improvements to travel times, safety, and quality of life for drivers, neighbors and pedestrians alike.”

Proximity to the Edward’s Aquifer Recharge Zone, a sensitive resource that is home to diverse fauna and provides drinking water for surrounding Central Texas communities, necessitated design and construction of the roadway with the utmost environmental mitigation. A combination of structural and non-structural best management practices – including permeable Friction Course pavement, water quality ponds, vegetated controls and vegetated filter strips – removes 92 percent of total suspended solids from the stormwater that flows off the project into adjoining waterways.

“The project was designed and constructed with best management practices meant to protect the environmentally sensitive Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone,” said Mike Heiligenstein, executive director for the Mobility Authority. “Through our mindful construction practices and 24/7 on-site environmental compliance monitoring, we have exceeded industry standards for water quality and created a model which future projects will follow.”

The project includes a 4.5-mile long, 10-foot wide shared use path, connecting two segments of the planned Violet Crown trail – the first regional urban trail system in Central Texas. When completed, the trail will be 30 miles in length and will include trailheads and an area known as the “Hill Country Classroom”—a section where cyclists and pedestrians can view educational signage.

The 45SW Toll Road will also be the first road in the region to feature wrong-way driving detection equipment. The Mobility Authority prioritized integration of this technology into the project as way to reduce the likelihood of serious accidents caused by motorists entering the wrong lane.

The 45SW Toll Road officially opened to the traveling public on June 1.

About WSP USA

WSP USA is the U.S. operating company of WSP, one of the world's leading engineering and professional services firms. Dedicated to serving local communities, we are engineers, planners, technical experts, strategic advisors and construction management professionals. WSP USA designs lasting solutions in the buildings, transportation, energy, water and environment markets.

With more than 9,500 employees in 150 offices across the U.S., we partner with our clients to help communities prosper. wsp.com

About the Mobility Authority

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority is a local, independent government agency created in 2002 to improve the regional transportation system in Travis and Williamson Counties. The Mobility Authority implements innovative and sustainable transportation options to enhance quality of life and economic vitality in Central Texas. The Mobility Authority operates 183A Toll in Williamson County, 290 Toll in east Austin, the 71 Toll Lane in east Austin, and the MoPac Express Lane. The agency is also finishing construction of the eight-mile 183 South Project in east Austin and constructing the four-mile 45SW toll road between FM 1626 and MoPac in southern Travis and northern Hays counties. For more information about the Mobility Authority, visit www.MobilityAuthority.com.

About the SH 45SW Project

The 45SW Project is an innovative environmentally sensitive 3.6-mile toll road between State Loop 1 (MoPac) and FM 1626 that includes extensive water quality protection measures and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Construction of the project commenced in November 2016 and will be completed in 2019. More information about the project can be found at www.SH45SW.com.

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