

TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

HARRIS County

MINUTE ORDER

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HOUSTON District

The US 290/Hempstead corridor in the northwest portion of Harris County is one of the most highly congested and mobility-constrained corridors in the region and includes multiple segments on the state's 100 most congested roadway segments. It has retained its basic configuration for through-lanes since the late 1960's and early 1970's original construction, and although adjacent development has increased, the roadway's capacity has remained unchanged.

The proposed improvements in the US 290/Hempstead corridor will replace the functionally obsolete and deteriorating infrastructure, as well as add capacity to the corridor. Improvements to this corridor are critical to the region's continued mobility and economic vitality. The goals of the project are to facilitate the replacement of existing infrastructure that has reached or exceeded its design life; add additional capacity to an extremely congested corridor; utilize pricing as a mechanism to operate and fund parts of the project; and provide an additional link in the growing toll road and managed lane network to offer transportation options for optimizing mobility.

The proposed US 290 improvements are a phased approach to constructing the ultimate planned improvements in the US 290/Hempstead corridor as identified in the approved environmental document. In the initial phase, US 290 from Interstate 610 to State Highway 99 will be reconstructed, including building a two to three-lane reversible managed lane facility to accommodate both High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) and toll traffic, as well as adding one general purpose lane in each direction (US Highway 290 Managed Lanes Project).

On April 10, 2012, Harris County (County) approved a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Texas Department of Transportation (department) relating to the development, funding, construction, operation, and maintenance of improvements in the US 290/Hempstead corridor. In the MOU, the County agreed to waive its primacy development rights and declined to develop a toll facility along the US 290/Hempstead corridor.

Under the MOU, the department committed to construct the US 290 Managed Lanes Project. The County will provide \$400 million towards the development of this facility in mutually agreed upon payments. As part of this funding, the County will pay the 10 percent local match required for the purchase of right of way needed for the development of the facility. The County will install and operate toll equipment, collect tolls, and process violations on the managed lanes. The County will operate and maintain the managed lane facility, including the barriers designating the managed lanes. The department will maintain the remainder of the facility. The County will retain all toll revenues for use on projects at the County's discretion.

Under the MOU, the department, in conjunction with the Houston Galveston Area Council (HGAC), will provide the balance of the funding needed to complete the development of the facility. As part of the development of the project, the department will rehabilitate Hempstead Road from east of Washington Avenue to west of Beltway 8 in order to provide for a safe and efficient alternative route while the US 290 facility is under construction. Should the initial improvements for US 290 and Hempstead exceed \$1.4 billion, the department and the County agreed to either reduce the proposed scope of the projects or to identify additional funding for the improvements.

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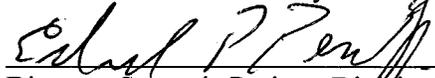
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HOUSTON District

The improvements will provide increased capacity through the use of congestion pricing on new managed lanes and the addition of one new general purpose lane in each direction and frontage road lanes which are critical to the region's continued mobility and economic viability. Increasing the capacity of the corridor will relieve congestion, reduce travel time, and improve air quality as well as provide social and economic benefits, locally, regionally, statewide, and nationwide. The US 290 Managed Lanes Project will also provide a transportation system that will meet the travel needs of people, goods, and services safely, efficiently and economically.

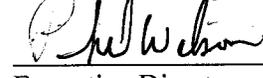
IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED by the commission that the department is authorized to develop, finance, construct, and operate toll lanes in the US 290/Hempstead corridor from Interstate 610 to State Highway 99 in Harris County, and the US 290 Managed Lanes Project is authorized with CONSTRUCT authority.

Submitted and reviewed by:



Director, Strategic Projects Division

Recommended by:



Executive Director

113076 APR 26 12

Minute	Date
Number	Passed