



Median Barriers Approved by Texas Transportation Commission - Bexar County

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, July 7, 2005

SAN ANTONIO - The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is giving Texans something to celebrate this summer – the Texas Transportation Commission awarded \$14 million to install median barriers in the San Antonio District.

The median barrier project, which is scheduled to begin this fall, is one of several projects under the largest single roadway safety program it has ever undertaken. At just over \$600 million, it will include 644 safety projects all across the state. Transportation planners say the highway improvements could save as many as 90 lives and prevent nearly 1,100 injuries every year.

"While relieving traffic congestion is important, motorists' safety should be the foremost concern of the Texas Department of Transportation," said Senator Jeff Wentworth. "I am pleased that the Texas Transportation Commission has placed a priority on safety by awarding \$14 million to install medians to help prevent deadly head-on crashes."

Bonds authorized by voters in 2003 will be used to pay for widening narrow two-lane roadways, installing barriers in the medians of divided highways, adding left turn lanes at highway intersections and building new overpasses around the state.

According to Senator Frank Madla, "I am pleased that the median barrier safety project are among the first to be constructed. The Texas Transportation Commission is to be commended for their forward thinking by approving needed bonds toward the safety of our highways. It is imperative that we continue to study and aggressively utilize preventative and innovative measures to protect the lives of our citizens and travelers, not only in this county and throughout the San Antonio District but across the state."

The bond program will pay for projects that safety experts say have the most potential for reducing the number of traffic crashes on state-maintained highways. TxDOT will spend \$295 million to widen narrow, two-lane roads in 90 Texas counties to lessen head-on collisions and crashes involving vehicles that run off the road. New concrete or cable barriers in the medians of heavily-traveled divided highways are expected to decrease head-on collisions.

"Crashes in rural counties often have tragic results because of the long distance that separates residents from trauma care," said Senator Judith Zaffirini. "I often have referred to this as the 'geography of dying' because victims who are closer to trauma

centers have higher survival rates than those who live far from them. These median barriers will prevent many crashes and help save lives."

In Bexar County, the following median barrier projects will improve safety:

- I-10 from 1.3 miles south of Boerne Stage Rd. to 3.1 miles south of Boerne State Rd. - \$281,408
- I-10 from .3 miles west of I-410 to .2 miles east of FM 2538 - \$1,987,507
- I-10 from Country Road 127 to 1.3 mile south of Country Road 127 - \$127,169
- I-10 from Kendall County Line to 1.3 miles south of Boerne Stage Rd. - \$1,161,188
- I-35 from SH 132 to Benton City Rd.- \$1,683,185
- I-35 from .4 miles west of LP 353 to .1 miles east of LP 353 - \$41,240
- I-35 from .5 miles west of Median River to .1 miles north of I-410 - \$463,377
- US 90 from Montgomery Rd. to .3 miles east of Medio Creek - \$804,244
- US 90 from Hunt Lane to I-410 - \$108,581
- SH 16 from .1 miles north of LP 1604 to .1 miles north of Smith Rd. - \$317,032
- SH 16 from .7 miles north of Ranch Pkwy. to .3 miles south of Ranch Pkwy - \$175,130
- I-410 from .9 miles east of Chavaneaux Rd. to SH 16 - \$590,423
- I-410 from I-35 to Valley Hi - \$649,007
- I-37 from 1.2 miles south of Priest-Mathis to Southton Rd. - \$961,347
- US 281 from Comal County Line to Marshall Rd. - \$667,799
- LP 1604 from Babcock Rd. to Regency Blvd. - \$103,072

Each year, more than 3,500 people are killed and more than 340,000 are injured in motor vehicle crashes in Texas. The Texas Transportation Institute's Center for Transportation Safety estimates the annual economic cost of crashes in the state exceeds \$19.7 billion.

San Antonio and the Yoakum district were the first to have the median barrier projects go to let. The Yoakum district were awarded 9.7 million for their median barrier projects that go from west of Sealy, in Austin county through Colorado and Gonzales county. A small portion of Caldwell county is also included in the median barrier project.

"The 2005 Safety Bond Program provided over \$600 million for 644 critical safety construction projects on the state highway system representing the largest safety initiative in TxDOT's history. I'm very pleased that these projects in the San Antonio and Yoakum areas have been able to be awarded so quickly. The projects will help reduce traffic crashes, improve highway safety and save lives," according to Carlos Lopez, Director of Transportation Operations Division.

In 2003, voters gave the Texas Transportation Commission authority to issue up to \$3 billion in bonds to pay for state highway improvement projects. The unprecedented number of safety projects approved in Austin are the first to be funded under this new financing option.

According to David Casteel, District Engineer for the San Antonio District, "The

Statewide Highway Construction

legislature gave TxDOT new funding tools to address safety issues in a more aggressive way. We have \$14 million in median barriers awarded to our district with another \$40 million in left turn lanes and pavement widening coming this fall. My staff is thrilled at being able to reduce crashes and help save more lives with these projects. We say thank you to the legislature and state leadership for these funds."

For a complete list of the statewide project, log on to www.dot.state.tx.us.

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