

**AGENDA**



**Recommendation for Council Action**

Austin City Council	<b>Item ID</b>	27935	<b>Agenda Number</b>	48.
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<b>Meeting Date:</b>	10/24/2013	<b>Department:</b>	Transportation
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**Subject**

Approve a resolution authorizing negotiation and execution of an advance funding agreement between the City and the Texas Department of Transportation for the Planning and Environmental Linkages Study along the I-35 Corridor between SH45 to the north and SH45 to the south, for a future transportation corridor in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000. Related to Items # 49 and # 50.

**Amount and Source of Funding**

Funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 is available in the Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Capital Budget of the Austin Transportation Department.

**Fiscal Note**

A fiscal note is not required.

<b>Purchasing Language:</b>	
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<b>Prior Council Action:</b>	
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<b>For More Information:</b>	Gary Schatz, 512-974-7189; Allison Dietzel, 512-974-7098; Gilda Powers, 512-974-7092
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<b>Boards and Commission Action:</b>	Reviewed by the Urban Transportation Commission on October 8, 2013.
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<b>MBE / WBE:</b>	
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<b>Related Items:</b>	
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**Additional Backup Information**

Traffic congestion within the Austin region is recognized by many as one of the major challenges to the future economic, environmental, and social health of the city. Residents are affected daily by long commutes, congested freeway corridors, and a general lack of alternative travel routes. I-35, running south to north through the center of the community, is now the most congested in Texas and the 17<sup>th</sup> worst in the U.S., according to the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI).

This Advance Funding Agreement originates from the I-35 Corridor Development Program, initiated with 2010 Mobility Bond funds, to evaluate creative solutions to reduce congestion and improve safety and mobility along and across I-35. The initial investment by the City generated a 100% return on investment when the Texas Transportation Commission provided additional funds to extend the original project limits. The State's portion was funded by Rider 42 appropriations from Proposition 12 General Obligation Bond Proceeds for Bridge, Safety, Connectivity, and Congestion Relief Projects. (The State's Proposition 12 had no relation to the City of Austin's Proposition 12 included in the November 2012 Bond Program election.)

The City of Austin is offered an opportunity to leverage its funds with State funds to efficiently and effectively analyze considerations, expedite improvements to I-35, and ultimately reduce congestion and improve safety and mobility for the traveling public. With this agreement and new investment of \$2,000,000, efforts to address the issues along I-35 will again benefit by leveraging an additional \$2,030,000 from State Rider 42. The total \$4,030,000 will support project development for a Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study required by U.S. Department of Transportation MAP-21 Legislation. The PEL “promotes accelerating project delivery and encourages innovation through the increased use of programmatic approaches and planning and environment linkages.” It requires a public comment process on the purpose and need and the range of alternatives; and encourages participation from more agencies and organizations.

The concept from the I-35 Corridor Development Program that will be analyzed with this agreement is the Future Transportation Corridor (FTC) which is envisioned to be one additional travel lane in each direction along the center of the existing I-35 corridor. The PEL will address the purpose and need for the FTC, mode choice for the FTC (general purpose, managed lane, transit and HOV etc.), and determine FTC segments of independent utility. The PEL will be complete in approximately two years.

The Advance Funding Agreement will be negotiated in a manner that protects the City of Austin’s financial contribution.