

TEXAS TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

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PETITION OF THE CITY OF EL PASO
FOR AUTHORIZATION TO FORM THE
CAMINO REAL REGIONAL MOBILITY AUTHORITY

TO THE TEXAS TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION:

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 370 of the Texas Transportation Code and 43 Texas Administrative Code §26.01 *et. seq.*, the City of El Paso (the "Petitioner") hereby tenders its "Petition and Request for Authorization to Form the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority" to the Texas Transportation Commission. As required by 43 TAC 26.11, Petitioner submits the following, in support of this petition:

1. City Council Resolution.

On the ____ day of _____, 2006, the City Council of the City of El Paso adopted a resolution approving the creation of the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority, and authorizing the submittal of a petition to the Texas Transportation Commission requesting the creation of the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority. This fully executed resolution is attached hereto and incorporated herein for all purposes as **ATTACHMENT 1**.

2. Description of Improvement to Regional Mobility.

The City of El Paso continues to experience significant growth in recent years, and is poised for an additional, exponential amount of growth. A number of factors are involved in this additional growth, including the impending Ft. Bliss expansion related to recent Base Realignment and Closure procedures. The City of El Paso is also seeing significant growth in its neighboring communities including, by way of example, both Santa Teresa and Sunland Park, New Mexico. El Paso's prime location for international transportation trade routes also heavily impacts the regional transportation system through the continued growth in international trade. Currently, El Paso is the fifth largest city in the State of Texas, and with its sister city of Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico, makes up the largest urban area along the Texas-Mexico border. Further, El

Paso continues to grow in the east and west directions. This growth demands additional cross-town travel routes and additional transportation infrastructure. The geography of the region requires much of the cross-town traffic to be funneled into the major corridors feeding into and out of the downtown area in order to bypass the Franklin Mountains, which divides the City into its East and West sides. Accordingly, additional reliever routes are desperately needed. Yet, significant portions of the planned reliever routes are not currently funded. In fact, the gap between the planned and funded transportation projects that are required for the area is significant. This funding gap is illustrated within the Project Funding Status map, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein for all purposes as **ATTACHMENT 2**. El Paso's unique situation as a major international border city, home to the expanding Ft. Bliss Military Installation, and being divided by the Franklin Mountains, each add to the city's mounting transportation issues. This dynamic growth for a City in such a unique geographic situation demands innovative funding solutions for El Paso's transportation issues. The creation of the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority is intended to assist in achieving the transportation needs of the region. Through the creation of such a regional mobility authority, desired regional mobility improvements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Increased mobility for the region through quality transportation infrastructure that allows for choices in reaching the region's transportation destinations;
- Enhanced value of the region's key commercial infrastructure and increased value of the region as a world class "just-in-time" port, thereby positioning the region as the preeminent North American trade corridor and transportation hub;
- Increased revenues to build key commercial infrastructure faster and permit the leveraging of existing State funding sources to better use within the local State highway system without tolling existing capacity;
- Increased regional economic development efforts with safe, enhanced mobility options through projects sponsored by the regional mobility authority; and
- Improved region-wide mobility that gets people and trade to their destinations more efficiently without wasting time, energy, and resources.

Additional goals to be achieved through the creation of the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority include the following:

- A need to control the region's transportation destiny with a local entity driving mobility decisions that best serve the needs of the region focused on expanding regional mobility, reliability, safety, and relieving congestion;

- A need to use new legislative tools and funding options to accelerate the design, financing, and construction of regional transportation infrastructure that would otherwise take decades to realize;
- A need to create new revenue sources to fund and maintain future transportation projects without raising taxes; and
- A need to enhance the area's regionalization focus by fostering economic development, job growth, safety, and quality of life across the region.

3. Initial Transportation Project.

The initial project to be pursued by the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority is the proposed extension of Loop 375 Cesar Chavez Highway, also known as the Border Highway West Project. A map of the proposed Border Highway West Project is attached hereto and incorporated herein for all purposes as **ATTACHMENT 3**. The purpose of the proposed Border Highway West extension is to complete the outer Loop 375 by extending the existing terminus of the Loop 375 at the downtown area westward to Interstate Highway 10 (I-10) at the US85/NM273 Interchange. The project is also a major segment of the proposed I-10 Southern Relief Route currently being studied by the Texas Department of Transportation - El Paso District's Mobility and Funding Program. The proposed Border Highway West extension, as part of the I-10 Southern Relief Route, is proposed as an express toll, four-lane elevated freeway facility connecting the proposed I-10 express toll lanes on the west side of El Paso and the proposed Loop 375 express toll lanes at the Cesar Chavez Border Highway until they reach the I-10/Loop 375 (Americas) Interchange on the East side of El Paso. The proposed Border Highway West project is approximately seven (7) miles in length. Tolls will apply only to new capacity.

The Border Highway West Project will:

- Help relieve congestion on I-10;
- Complete the outer Loop 375;
- Improve mobility;
- Become part of the City's Incident Management Plan; and
- Provide additional access to the Central Business District (CBD), the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP), and existing medical facilities via Schuster Avenue.

The Border Highway West Project's planning history includes the following:

- *Value Engineering Study Summary Report (January 28, 1994)*. This Value Engineering Study recommended an elevated four-lane roadway.
- *I-10 West Corridor Major Investment Study (1999 - Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade and Douglas, Inc.)* This report recommended that US85 (Paisano Drive) be

converted to a four-lane freeway with an elevated connection to Loop 375 Border Highway West.

- *Preliminary Route Study and Route Refinement Concept Report (Route Refinement Report) (July 2005 - URS and Blanton & Associates)*
- *Loop 375 Cesar Chavez Highway (Border Highway West) Extension Study (July 2005 - URS and Blanton & Associates)*
- *Environmental Constraints Report Loop 375 Cesar Chavez Highway (Border Highway West) Extension (July 2005 - URS and Blanton & Associates)*
- *TxDOT – Texas Turnpike Authority (TTA) – Conceptual Toll Feasibility Studies (2004-2005 - PBS&J)*
- *Draft I-10 Southern Relief Route Mobility and Funding Study – (September 2005-Present – HNTB)*

A. Consistency with the Texas Transportation Plan and the El Paso MPO Plan.

The Border Highway West Project has been included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, the Unified Transportation Program, and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan approved by the El Paso Metropolitan Planning Organization.

B. Description of Known Environmental, Social, Economic, or Cultural Resource Issues.

The Border Highway West Project is being developed and prepared in accordance with the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA, Code of Federal Regulations Title 23 Highways Part 771 Environmental Impact and Related Procedures, FHWA Technical Advisory T 6640.8A, and the Texas Administrative Code Title 43 Part 1 Chapter 2 Subchapter C Environmental Review and Public Involvement for Transportation Projects. Although this project is in the early planning stages, at this point in the process, the Petitioner is not aware of any environmental, social, economic, or cultural impacts that would preclude the completion of the project.

C. Known Opposition to the Initial Transportation Project.

At this time, the Petitioner is not aware of any opposition to or controversies related to the completion of the initial transportation project, noted above as the Border Highway West Project.

D. Preliminary Financing Plan.

At this time only preliminary financing estimates are available, with regard to the completion of the Border Highway West Project. As preliminary estimates, the actual project costs may vary once additional studies are completed, and additional information about the completion of the project becomes available. However, current financing estimates for the Border Highway West Project are as noted within **ATTACHMENT 4**, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein for all purposes.

All possible funding plans for the Border Highway West Project will be investigated and pursued by the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority. Such financing plans could include any combination of the following: State Infrastructure Bank loans, local, state and federal grants, revenue and general obligation bonds, Texas Department of Transportation funding, private funding, and any other funding tools available to the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority.

4. Commitment by the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority to Secure All Environmental Approvals.

As noted above, the Texas Department of Transportation has completed an Environmental Constraints Report related to the Border Highway West Project, which shall be provided to the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority. The Texas Department of Transportation will also be responsible for the completion of the Schematic Phase of this project, including all related environmental documentation. However, to the extent not otherwise undertaken by the Texas Department Transportation or any other applicable agency, the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority shall be responsible for identifying and securing all required federal, state, and local environmental reviews, investigations, permits, and other approvals required for the completion of the Border Highway West Project.

5. Additional Transportation Projects.

In addition to the Border Highway West Project, Petitioner has identified the following additional projects as other potential projects that could be developed by the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority:

- Northeast Parkway Project; and
- Countywide Transit.

6. Board Representation Criteria and Appointment Process.

All appointments to the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority Board shall be residents of the City of El Paso and shall adequately represent all areas encompassed within the El Paso city limits.

The initial board of directors for the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority shall consist of seven (7) members. The Governor of the State of Texas shall appoint the Chairperson of the board, while the City Council of the City of El Paso shall appoint the remaining six (6) board members. With regard to the initial board of directors, the Mayor of the City of El Paso shall submit the names of three (3) persons eligible for each of the City's six (6) board appointments. By majority vote, the City Council shall appoint one (1) of the eligible persons identified by the Mayor for each of the board positions. In the event that the City Council rejects all three names submitted by the Mayor for an appointment, the Mayor shall submit three (3) new names of eligible appointments. All board appointments shall comply with the staggering and term length requirements of applicable state statutes. Future vacancies in the board shall be filled in like manner.

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEARING AND APPROVAL

Petitioner believes that this Petition sets forth all information required by 46 Texas Administrative Code §26.11. Accordingly, Petitioner respectfully requests that the Texas Department of Transportation review this Petition and conduct a public hearing as required by 46 Texas Administrative Code §26.12, as soon as reasonably possible. Further, and upon the conclusion of such public hearing, Petitioner respectfully requests that the Texas Transportation Commission review the Petition and any supplemental information related to public support obtained from the public hearing, and that it issue a minute order authorizing the City of El Paso to create the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority, in accordance with 46 Texas Administrative Code §26.14.

EXECUTED this _____ day of _____, 2006.

THE CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS

John F. Cook
Mayor

ATTEST:

Richarda Duffy Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Raymond L. Telles
Assistant City Attorney

ATTACHMENT 1

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, on January 13, 2005, a Legislative Review Committee of the City Council of the City of El Paso held a public meeting in which the creation of a regional mobility authority for the El Paso area was discussed; and

WHEREAS, at the conclusion of the Legislative Review Committee's discussion of the regional mobility authority, a motion was made, seconded, and approved to recommend that the City Council of the City of El Paso submit a petition to the Texas Transportation Commission, authorizing the City of El Paso to create a regional mobility authority; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Paso seeks to establish a regional mobility authority in order to directly benefit the State of Texas, the City of El Paso, and the traveling public through the improvement of the state's transportation systems in and around the City of El Paso; and

WHEREAS, the City of El Paso is required by Chapter 370 of the Texas Transportation Code and Section 26.11(b) of Chapter 26 of Title 43 of the Texas Administrative Code to petition the Texas Transportation Commission of the Texas Department of Transportation for the approval to create a regional mobility authority; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a regional mobility authority by the City of El Paso requires the prior approval of the Texas Transportation Commission in response to said petition;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

1. That the City of El Paso hereby expresses its interest, approval, and support of the creation of the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority for the El Paso region, in accordance with Chapter 370 of the Texas Transportation Code and Title 43, Chapter 23 of the Texas Administrative Code; and
2. That the Mayor of the City of El Paso is hereby authorized to execute the "Petition and Request for Authorization to Form the Camino Real Regional Mobility Authority", which seeks approval from the Texas Transportation Commission to commence with the creation of such Regional Mobility Authority.

(SIGNATURES BEGIN ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE)

APPROVED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 2006.

THE CITY OF EL PASO

John F. Cook
Mayor

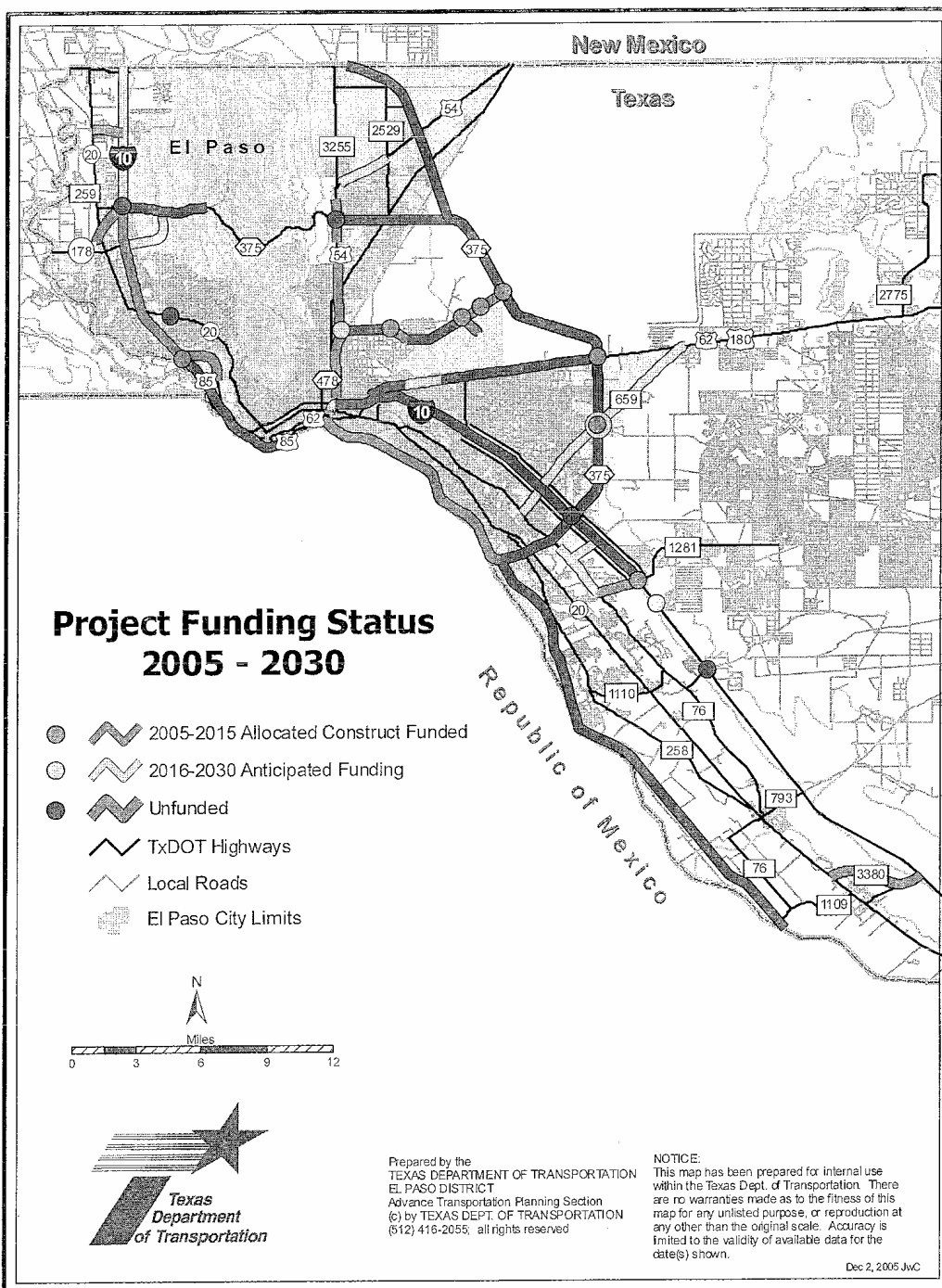
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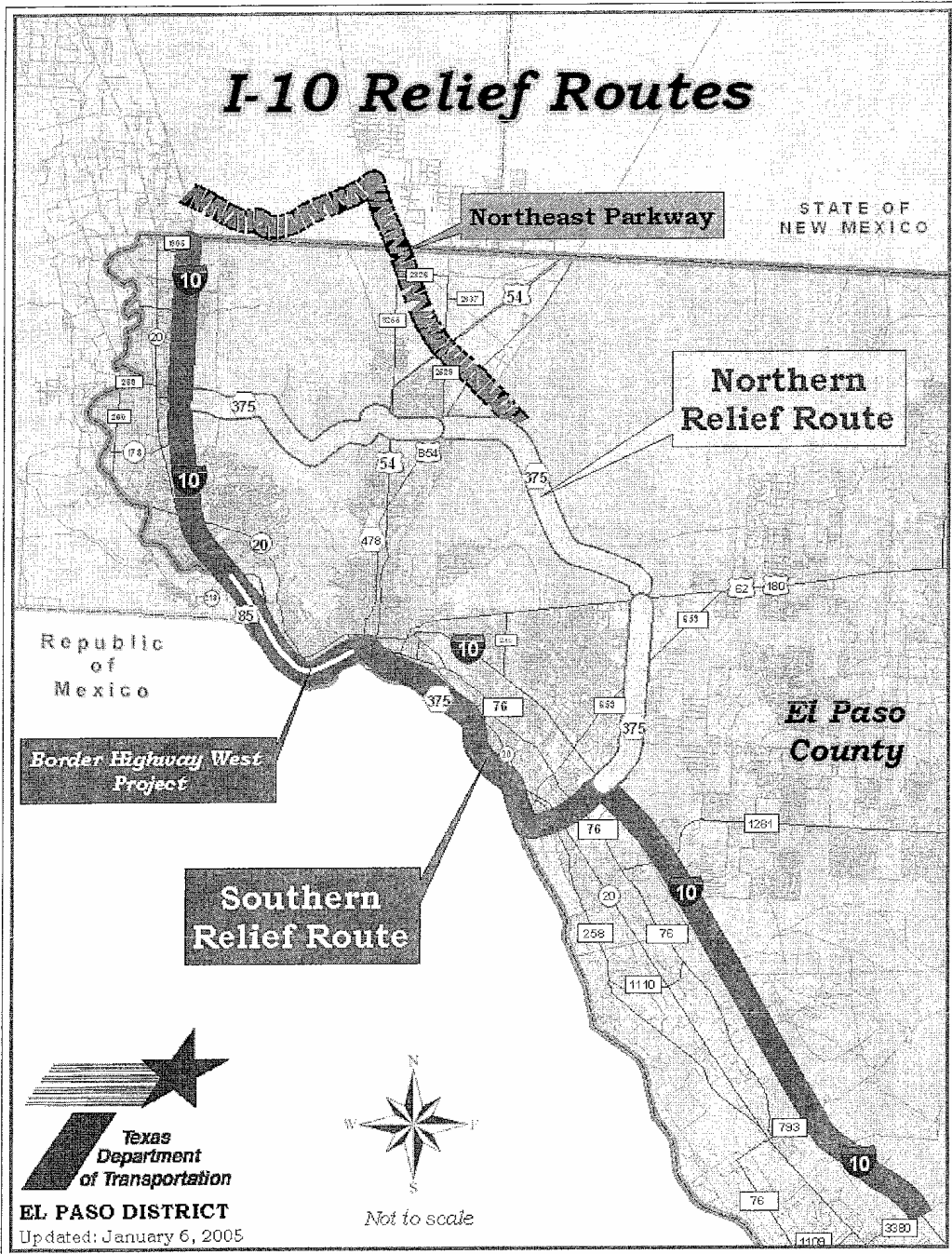
Richarda Duffy Momsen
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Raymond L. Telles
Assistant City Attorney

DRAFT





ATTACHMENT 4

Mobility Funding Study
I-10 Southern Relief Route
Border Highway West Extension

I-10 SRR - Opinion of Probable Costs			
Alternative A			
Item	Units	Unit Cost	Segment 2-BHW
Prep ROW	Sta	\$ 10,000	\$6,977,800
Salv, Haul & Stkol Rcl Asph Pav and Base (Var Dpth)	SY	\$ 2	\$649,323
Remov Conc (Pav) and Base	SY	\$ 9	\$0
Remov Conc (Riprap)	SY	\$ -	\$0
Excavation (Rdwy)	CY	\$ 6	\$2,625,894
Embank(Final)(Dens Cont)(TY A)	CY	\$ 10	\$3,582,040
Remove CTB	LF	\$ 9	\$0
Embankment(Original)(Dens Cont)(Ty A)	CY	\$ 4	\$536,368
Curb (Type 1)	LF	\$ 4	\$335,042
Conc Pav (Cont Reinf Hy Stl)(13")	SY	\$ 48	\$14,260,608
HMA Ty B	TON	\$ 65	\$5,939,895
HMA Ty C	TON	\$ 52	\$1,583,920
HMA Ty D	TON	\$ 53	\$5,932,661
Cement Treated (Exist Matl) (6")	SY	\$ 2	\$0
Retaining Wall (MSE)	SF	\$ 40	\$17,155,800
Retaining Wall (Drilled Shaft)	SF	\$ 100	\$0
Rail (TY T501)	LF	\$ 18	\$1,117,116
Concrete Traffic Barrier (Safety Shape)	LF	\$ 40	\$669,160
Remove Structure (Large) (Bridge)	SF	\$ 5	\$1,861,940
Irrigation Channel Relocation	LF	\$ 1,500	\$5,400,000
Bridge - Type IV Beam	SF	\$ 40	\$50,355,200
Bridge - Steel Trapezoidal Box Girder	SF	\$ 160	\$77,376,000
Bridge - Straddle Bent	SF	\$ 60	\$94,662,000
Bridge - Special	SF	\$ 50	\$0
Bridge - Signature	SF	\$ 250	\$30,750,000
Railroad Crash Wall	LF	\$ 780	\$3,677,700
Sound Wall (14')	LF	\$ 167	\$0
Drainage (Open Ditch System)	MI	\$ 750,000	\$3,375,000
Drainage (Closed Storm Sewer System)	MI	\$ 2,000,000	\$22,260,000
Lighting - High Mast	MI	\$ 460,000	\$0
Lighting - Continuous	MI	\$ 116,000	\$1,444,200
Lighting - Underpass	MI	\$ 334,400	\$0
Traffic Signal (Single Intersection) (Mast Arms)	Int	\$ 160,000	\$480,000
Signing - ML	MI	\$ 20,000	\$255,000
Signing - Frg Rds	MI	\$ 20,000	\$184,200
Striping - Freeway- 4 lanes	MI	\$ 175,000	\$2,231,250
Striping - Freeway- 6 lanes	MI	\$ 200,000	\$0
Striping - Freeway- 8 lanes	MI	\$ 250,000	\$0
Striping - Frontage Road - 4 lanes	MI	\$ 26,000	\$245,700
Subtotal I			\$355,923,818
Mobilization		10% of Subtotal I	\$35,592,382
Traffic Control	MO	\$ 25,000	\$8,700,000
Landscaping/Aesthetic Enhancements		1% of Subtotal I	\$3,559,238
Subtotal II			\$403,775,437
Utility Relocations / Adjustments			\$ 17,798,191
GRAND TOTAL			\$ 421,571,628
ROW Acquisition			\$ 5,098,806
TOTAL (ROW)			\$ 426,670,434