

TEXAS SIDE

Locals announce transportation funding awards

Millions in unused bonds will ensure road projects

By **Sharon L. Chiswick**,
Staff Writer

The Arkansas Office of the Texas Department of Transportation is awarding more than \$2 million in state bond funding.

The allocations are coming from \$9 million in unused general obligation bonds, known as Proposition 11, approved by Texas voters in 2007.

The state's 21 TxDOT districts will receive a total of \$4.1 billion.

Area projects to be funded through Prop. 11 include:

- widening, resurfacing and adding shoulders to U.S. Highway 209 in Stone County. Area just north of the Oklahoma state line to just north of U.S. Highway 44 in DeKalb. The cost is \$4.4 million. The project lets for bid in July.

- reconstructing added left turn lanes on U.S. Highway 97 at Stone Lane Way in Clay County. The project is \$2.5 million and lets in July.

- reconstructing and widening state Highway 17 from Powell Creek to state Highway 6 in Grant County. The cost is \$2.6 million, and the project lets in August.

- widening the pavement on the outside of curves on U.S. Highway 71 near state Highway 41 in Monroe County. The cost is \$2.6 million, and the project lets in July.

- adding shoulders to Highway 17 from Highway 416 to the west end of U.S. Highway 47 in Madison County. The project cost is \$1.4 million and lets the bid in August.

- installing a turn traffic signal at Farm to Market Road 275 and Old Mills Road in Stone County. The project cost is \$1.2 million and lets in June.

- widening a left turn lane on state Highway 11 at Farm to Market Road 275 in Stone County. The cost will be about \$250,000, and the project lets in August.

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lets in June 2013.

- improving alignment and adding a left turn lane on Farm to Market Road 1403, a little more than a mile north of Interstate 30. The cost is \$2 million, and bids begin in August 2013.

The 25 Texas metropolitan planning organizations are receiving \$600 million in Prop. 11 funds. Texarkana's MPO will get \$2 million, which is being used to create a continuous center turn lane on Moores Lane between Richmond and Summerhill roads.

Because the Moores Lane project was expected to be let for bid next year, it lives up money, so be applied to its other projects, including overlaying part of Interstate 30. TxDOT Area Engineer Kenny Ickenbower said the department already has right-of-way for most of the project, even enough for eventual five-lane expansion.

"It doesn't really change anything," he said of the short-term widening. "This gives us something to relieve that traffic, but I don't think it will postpone anything."

Ickenbower said factors deter-



■ A truck uses a turn lane Oct. 13 to access Stoneridge Drive from Moores Lane. A \$2 million state-funded project begins in July to provide a continuous turn lane on Moores Lane from Richmond to Summerhill roads.

Staff photo by **Christina Downsell**

mining when the five-lane project begins include how much the three-lane widening alleviates congestion.

"The project should let for bid in July, and Ickenbower predicts

it will take two years.

"With the traffic changes needed to keep the road open during work, 'I don't think they can do it in one construction season,' he said.

Any bond funds left over from the widening will be applied to signaling on the Pavilion overpass at I-30.

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