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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The passing of House Bill (HB) 3588 by the Texas Legislature in 2003 brought about major innovative reform in how essential transportation projects can be funded. The traditional methods of financing to develop local transportation systems, particularly the gas tax and local tax base can no longer be relied upon to keep pace with rising transportation costs. The Texas Legislature approved the establishment of Regional Mobility Authorities (RMAs) as an innovative transportation tool to accelerate projects and create new revenue streams for local transportation system projects. The Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) approved the creation of the Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority (CCRMA) on September 30, 2004, to promote and improve regional mobility within Cameron County, South Texas and internationally with the northern Tamaulipas region of Mexico. In 2013 and 2015 the Texas Legislature again carried major reform with new transportation funding later to be known as Proposition 1, and Proposition 7, respectively. This new funding was not a result of increase in taxes, rather a redistribution of oil and gas revenues, sales tax, and rental and vehicle sales tax. Voters overwhelmingly approved both propositions again making a bold statement of the importance and need for transportation improvements in the State. In November 2021 the Proposition 2 amended Texas Constitution Art. 8, sec. 1-g(b) to authorize counties to issue bonds or notes go raise funds for transportation infrastructure in underdeveloped areas. Already, cities and towns have the authority to fund projects with this financing method. Counties would repay these bonds by pledging increased property tax revenues, but these funds cannot be used for construction, maintenance, or acquisition of toll roads. This Proposition 2 allows counties to use a vital financing tool to develop more transportation projects.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The CCRMA Board is composed of a Chairman appointed by the Governor of Texas and six (6) members appointed by the Cameron County Commissioner's Court.

Current Board Members:

Frank Parker, Jr., Chairman
Michael F. Scaief, Vice Chairman
Al Villarreal, Treasurer
Arturo A. Nelson, Secretary
Mark Esparza, Board Member
Dr. Maria Villegas, M.D., Board Member
Leo R. Garza, Board Member

POSITIONING FOR 2026

Cameron County and neighboring Hidalgo County are two of the fastest growing Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in the nation, at around 40% increases per 10-year cycle. Across the border, the metro areas of Mexico are increasing by 80% per 10-year cycle. Cameron County doesn't just have more people in cars; there's a continued increase in the travel of goods. Critical commerce access is provided through the County by means of the Gulf Intracoastal Canal (GICC) connecting the deep-water port in Brownsville, and the ports in Harlingen and Port Isabel. Access also is provided to deep-water ports north and south of the Rio Grande Valley (RGV), including Corpus Christi and Tampico, Mexico, respectively. Major freight rail access to Mexico for the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) is through Cameron County and can be expanded through various parts of the RGV for additional rail cargo access.

As the need for infrastructure increases, the CCRMA has a responsibility to respond with effective and sustainable solutions. With projects such as Interstate I-69E, I-169, SPI 2nd Access and East Loop, the CCRMA has been able to provide better and safer mobility of goods and services, as well as alleviate traffic congestion around the area. During this time the CCRMA has completed more mobility projects such as South Port Connector Road, the road will improve vehicular traffic safety by providing a connection between Ostos Road inside the port with SH 4, adding another entry and exit to and from the Port as well as convenient access to commercial lanes at Veterans International Bridge. South Port Connector Road is one of the latest infrastructural advancements at the port that will benefit surrounding businesses and support the space industry in South Texas. The CCRMA continues to demonstrate innovative methods to develop local transportation systems such as the Toll Collection System project for the Cameron County International Bridges and Parks that is to be completed during 2023. This Toll Collection System is designed to be interoperable with CCRMA's Fuego Tag that went live in October 2021 for the SH 550 Toll Road.

The CCRMA's ultimate goal is to have completed mobility and improvement projects such as the Veterans International Bridge POV Expansion, State Highway 550 Gap II, Morrison Road, Old Alice Road, FM 509, Dana Road, FM 1847-Williams Road, Harlingen Rail Improvements Project, South Parallel Corridor Phase II and Phase III, US 281 Connector, West Boulevard-Roadway, Whipple Road, FM 1847 and have a significant improvement in the construction of the East Loop Corridor and U.S. 77-169E. The CCRMA also expects to have expanded its Toll System Projects list and have launched the Cameron County International Bridge Toll Collection System, and Cameron County User Fee Collection System. Have significantly advanced in the planning of the SPI 2nd Access project, is one of the most ambitious and bigger projects of the State and we expect to have completed the Environmental Documentation Process.

THE PLAN

The CCRMA has embarked on an exciting and ambitious program, focusing on several capacity projects and highway network improvements. The adoption of a long-range Strategic Plan in the early stages of formulation of the CCRMA's proposed System was critical to the success of its program. The Plan not only outlines the basic elements of the System, but also serves to focus the efforts of public information and involvement and serves to guide the sequencing, development, and implementation of all the anticipated projects within the region in the future. The new Strategic Plan for 2022-2026 is compiled of major goals. These goals are intended to be broad and flexible with the understanding that Transportation planning is always confronted with new and unforeseen challenges. The CCRMA is poised for these changes and is ready to work with the new Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as well as any changes resulting from the next Texas Legislative Sessions.

OUR VISION

The CCRMA will continue to be recognized as the Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) leader in Texas implementing transportation projects that achieve a sustainable, world-class regional transportation network in South Texas going places, fast.

OUR MISSION

The CCRMA will provide transportation that promotes safe and effective mobility, improves the quality of life for area residents and visitors, creates quality economic development, jobs and generates revenues to sustain a regional transportation network, internationally.

OUR PURPOSE

The CCRMA will give Cameron County control to make mobility decisions with the community, to accelerate needed transportation projects, and to enhance economic vitality and the quality of life for the residents of Cameron County and South Texas in a sustainable fashion.

GOAL OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives represent the CCRMA's proposed long-term strategies covering a five (5) year period. The 2022- 2026 Strategic Plan presents **the CCRMA's major initiatives, strategies, and goals**, which will provide the critical foundation for addressing the future of transportation needs in Cameron County, South Texas and the northern Tamaulipas regions. Achievements of these goals will help the CCRMA to move towards realization of its purpose and vision.

INITIATIVE: Regional Mobility

The CCRMA will continue developing its current system projects and develop schedules and budgets that ensure sustainability, timely and cost-effective project delivery.

Goal: develop projects that support economic development and promote quality of life for citizens of the region well into the future of our next generation with efficient modes of regional multimodal transportation options.

- Develop a planning and financing process that results in the creation of short and long-term plans of the current system projects.
- Be on the vanguard of emerging technology, to implement more efficient modes of transportation that provide greater mobility options.
- To provide a highly reliable and appropriately maintained regional roadway network.
- Identify opportunities to develop a consistent and seamless toll road network.

Goal: provide a high reliable and appropriately maintained regional roadway network.

- Design and construct transportation facilities that provide reliability and safety.
- Develop and implement reliable and efficient maintenance strategies that continue to protect the initial investment.
- Manage transportation capacity available in the region through the use of technology.

INITIATIVE: Economic Vitality

A strong, reliable, and efficient mobility network is a significant component to a successful regional economy. The CCRMA will utilize financing options that leverage funding sources and promote timely project completion is a significant component of a successful regional economy.

Goal: develop projects that support federal, state, and local economic development strategies.

- Coordinate with local entities and organizations to participate in and promote the economic development of the region.
- Develop transportation project priorities based on current and future international trade, housing and employment.
- Adopt a process to evaluate projects based on their value in providing a greater mobility given available resources.

Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026

Goal: continue partnering with regional entities to facilitate economic development initiatives driven by mobility and transportation identifying potential funding.

- Continue involvement in regional planning activities with community partners such as business, transportation, logistics and manufacturing associations.

INITIATIVE: Sustainability

Utilize technology and innovation to continue creating better quality of life by planning, implementing, operate and maintain transportation facilities using efficient and environmentally sustainable methods.

Goal: avoid or minimize potential impacts to the environment, to the extent possible through sensitive and proactive consideration of the human and natural environment.

- CCRMA will continue to apply policies to ensure the environmental effects if its actions are considered at all levels of the organization and during all aspects of project development, delivery, and implementation.
- Continue developing optimal solutions that will be functional, efficient, and effective for years to come – balancing the protection of our natural resources and regulatory requirements with innovative, reliable, and cost-effective solutions that facilitate community and industrial growth.
- Continue to take a comprehensive approach to utilization of innovation and technology to achieve environmental excellence.
- Identify and coordinate with key community stakeholders to obtain invaluable input and direction on the preservation of environmental, scenic, cultural, aesthetic, and historic resources while achieving safety and mobility.
- Continue to plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain projects strictly in accordance with local, state, and federal environmental policies.

Goal: utilize technology and innovation to continue developing high-quality technological solutions.

- Develop a comprehensive Information Technology (IT) Plan, which will enable CCRMA to provide reliable and innovative solutions to mobility issues throughout the region.
- Continue working with vendors to provide high-quality technological solutions to develop and implement toll operations.
- Continue to manage new Fuego Tag to ease the use of the toll road for its users; continue discussions on possible interoperability with other toll roads and international bridges, including the Harris County Toll Road Authority.
- Facilitate travel for toll tag users while increasing user market by launching the toll road toll collections system interoperable with the toll collections system on Cameron County International Bridges and Parks.

INITIATIVE: Innovation

The CCRMA is a regional transportation leader and service provider that fosters a high level of trust from the public, elected officials and users of the transportation system through innovative practices, transparent process and an open communication.

Goal: advocate for increased transportation management and funding options.

- Maintain a close working relationship with elected officials to educate and enact legislation that ensures flexible options to achieve regional mobility, including funding mechanisms and effective construction methods.
- Lead efforts to increase all levels of funding for the regional mobility.
- Investigate and maximize the use of all potential funding tools.

Goal: implement the most efficient and cost-effective management of transportation facilities in South Texas while providing a great customer experience.

- Explore expansion of the Fuego Tag interoperability and toll tag users.
- Effectively increase the use of technology to support traffic management.
- Maintain leadership in utilizing innovative and industry best practices.
- Maintain system assets to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the system.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSPORTATION PARTNERSHIPS

The ultimate success of the CCRMA system requires strong partnerships. These partnerships include all local governmental agencies in Cameron County along with other South Texas communities and agencies and Federal officials in the U.S. and Mexico. Additionally, pertinent communication with various Mexican government representatives, such as the Secretary of Communications and Transportation of Mexico, the State of Tamaulipas and the City of Matamoros will continue to ensure effective coordination of CCRMA projects and existing and proposed Mexico Transportation Infrastructure. As the system moves from concept to reality, each agency must be prepared to accept various roles and responsibilities.

Understanding the importance of regional partnerships, Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) provided funding for startup projects and continues to work with the CCRMA on numerous projects on the System Map. The Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (RGVMPPO) is including the proposed system in the region's long range transportation plans so that state and federal funding will be available. As the tolled lane system continues to be operational and a revenue stream is established, the CCRMA will continue to be a locally controlled, and self-sustaining organization with its own project development, construction, operations, and maintenance capabilities.

THE IMPORTANCE OF JOB CREATION

The CCRMA has committed to aggressively promoting the economy of Cameron County by building the necessary infrastructure that will support the region's growth and economic development. Critical to today's economy is the ability to positively influence job creation and support existing employment in Cameron County. The FHWA estimates that approximately 30,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs are supported for every \$1 Billion that is invested in Transportation Infrastructure. Construction-oriented jobs are directly and indirectly supported by the opportunity offered to local construction firms working on CCRMA projects and those firms' providing supplies and support to those construction firms.

Additionally, creation and support of these jobs promote economic benefit to jobs dependent of consumer expenditures from the wages of workers. Using these assumptions, the CCRMA program of \$2 Billion is expected to support over 50,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs. Adding to the benefits of CCRMA's investment in our transportation infrastructure are improvements to quality development to the region and to the quality of life of our labor force.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Board's vision is to provide and lay the proper infrastructure for the next 30 years. In 2050, our success will be measured by our next generation on how we have prepared and developed our transportation infrastructure. We must make hard decisions now to meet the demands of our aggressive growth and economic vitality. Making the right decisions now ensures the right progress for years to come.

The 2022–2026 Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority (CCRMA) Strategic Plan is prepared under direction of the CCRMA Board of Directors and CCRMA Staff; and it has been adopted by the CCRMA Board of Directors.

The following Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority Board Members and Staff representatives assisted in the development of the CCRMA Strategic Plan:

- Frank Parker, Jr. – Chairman
- Michael F. Scaief – Vice Chairman
- Arturo A. Nelson – Secretary
- Al Villarreal – Treasurer
- Mark Esparza – Board Member
- Dr. Maria Villegas – Board Member
- Leo R. Garza – Board Member
- Pete Sepulveda, Jr. – Executive Director
- Eric Davila – Chief Development Engineer
- Lulu Mayorga – Executive Administrative Assistant
- Janett Huerta – Toll Operations Administrator
- Victor Barron – Controller
- Ericka G. Treviño – Marketing Director
- Francisco San Miguel – IT Toll Systems and IT Manager
- Alejandro Garcia – Construction Manager

APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Used Acronyms

CCRMA	Cameron County Regional Mobility Authority	RMA	Regional Mobility Authority
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration	SH	State Highway Designation
FM	Farm to Market Road Designation	TTC	Texas Transportation Commission
HB	House Bill	TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation
IT	Information Technology	U.S.	Federal (U.S.) Highway Designation
RGVMPO	Rio Grande Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization	UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad