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Regional Transportation Authority marks second anniversary of \$2.1 billion transportation plan approval **Construction begins on Sun Tran bus storage and maintenance facility**

More than 100 Regional Transportation Authority projects are under development at the two-year anniversary of the passage of the \$2.1 billion RTA plan.

To-date, 163 projects have been approved for funding. Of those, 38 projects are completed and 8 transit services have been implemented. For all the approved projects, \$219.4 million in RTA funding has been committed.

Currently, eight projects are under construction

The 20-year regional transportation plan, approved by voters on May 16, 2006, includes road, transit, safety and environmental and economic vitality projects.

"Projects from the RTA plan are well under way," said RTA Chair and Oro Valley Mayor Paul Loomis. "We have three major road projects that will go to bid this fall for construction and several major road projects will begin construction in mid-2009."

However, Loomis said that the RTA plan is not without its challenges. Among the items the RTA will need to address with changes in the economy include project and material costs, as well as possible delays that are a result of environmental permitting constraints.

"We remain committed to the Pima County voters who overwhelmingly approved this plan

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two years ago," Loomis said. "We will work with the jurisdictions to ensure that projects are moving forward as scheduled."

Planning continues for the RTA's largest road project, Grant Road. Several public planning sessions were conducted in January and early May to help identify possible alignment and design suggestions for the project.

Today, a groundbreaking event celebrated the construction start of a new bus storage and maintenance facility for Sun Tran buses on a 25-acre site on 3920 Sun Tran Blvd., just north of Prince and east of Interstate 10. The \$30 million project, including \$22 million from RTA funds, will be managed by the city of Tucson. The first phase of the project will include:

- An operations building
- A maintenance building
- 150 bus parking spaces
- A fueling station
- A bus wash and tire shop
- A central plant and fare retrieval facility

Other funding for the project includes \$8 million the City of Tucson has invested to date with 1994 bond funds and Federal Transit Administration funds.

"I am very pleased to be moving forward with this critically important project," said RTA Board member and Tucson Mayor Robert Walkup. "Leaders across the region are supporting transit as a response to high gas prices. This new facility will ensure that transit is a viable solution for our citizens now and into the future."

General contractor for the project is D.L. Withers of Phoenix, GLHN Architects of Tucson is the design firm and the project manager for the City of Tucson is R. Bruce Woodruff, A.I.A, General Services Department A&E Division.

Future improvements will include an additional 100 bus parking spaces, an administrative building and an expanded maintenance facility.