

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**TRANSGUIDE OFFICIALLY LAUNCHES
JULY 26 WITH VIP VISIT**

(San Antonio, TX)-- TransGuide, San Antonio's "smart highway" will officially go on-line on Thursday, July 26, 1995, during a ceremony with U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Federico F. Pena. This one-of-a-kind traffic management system utilizes high speed computer technology and artificial intelligence to help drivers anticipate transportation conditions--increasing safety and reducing congestion and carbon monoxide from vehicles.

The ceremony will center around the state-of-the-art TransGuide Operations Center located at 3500 NW Loop 410 and IH 10. The network of traffic sensors, computers and signs all connect inside the "NASA-like" center where a high speed computer will feed five giant video walls and individual computer stations with up to the second transportation information. The stations are manned by specially trained TransGuide operators along with dispatchers from the San Antonio Police Department and VIA Metropolitan Transit. The computer will be programmed with 128,000 traffic solution scenarios and allows the operators to react immediately to congestion caused by an accident, stalled vehicle or other roadway hazards and alert drivers to changing road conditions.

The first phase of TransGuide uses a sensor system installed in 26 miles of highway (IH 10, 35, 37 & US 90 & 281 in the downtown area) and will eventually expand to cover 191 miles of free-ways in San Antonio. The project was developed by the San Antonio District of the Texas Department of Transportation and is a model for other systems across the country.

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U.S. highway officials eager to see smart roads in action

By Adolfo Pasquera
Express-News Staff Writer

Federal Highway Administration officials eagerly await the fall inauguration of San Antonio's smart highway system.

San Antonio's project should be operating two years ahead of a similar one in Houston. But both will be a generation ahead of other cities.

The San Antonio and Houston systems will be the models on which the FHA will build smart highway networks in other cities, according to Texas Department of Transportation District Engineer John Kelly.

Stationed in Dallas 23 years, Kelly views his transfer to San Antonio last fall as a motorist's blessing.

"There's definitely greater congestion in Dallas. It's been such a relief

to come down here and be able to get around. You get on the freeway and it actually moves," Kelly said.

However, the transportation department's ability to expand highway capacity, usually by pouring more concrete surface, is increasingly limited by a lack of funds and residents' emphasis on quality of life.

Inside Interstate 410, 26 miles of highway will be wired to monitor traffic flow and react to congestion and emergencies. The smart highway can automatically reroute oncoming traffic, enabling the department to maximize existing lane capacity.

The cost to install lane sensors, video-cameras, message signs, fiber-optic connections and the base computer will be about \$800,000 per mile.