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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Council Authorizes Submission of Application for Funding to Enhance Local Transportation Corridor**

TEMPLE, TX – (November 15, 2012) Tonight, the Temple City Council authorized staff to submit an application for funding through the Texas Department of Transportation, Transportation Enhancement Program in the amount of \$2.2 million, with \$1.65 million reimbursed to the City through federal funding. This project would develop landscaped urban trails and improvements along State Highway 53 (Adams Ave.) and Central Avenue.

The Transportation Enhancement Program focuses on non-traditional transportation projects that expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience. Funding is allocated to enhancement projects that are identified as serving a statewide benefit and providing for the safe, effective, and efficient movement of people and goods.

Proposed project improvements are along TxDOT roadways SH 53 (Adams Ave.) and Central Ave., leading to downtown from IH 35 to Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. The enhancements encompass the installation of an on-street bike lane travelling east on Central Ave. and west on SH 53 / Adams Ave., as well as a six foot wide off-street pedestrian sidewalk traversing the length of SH 53 / Adams Ave. Improvements include landscaping, retaining walls, handrails, irrigation, pedestrian crossings, designated bike lanes, ADA ramps, sidewalks, pavers, benches and other streetscape.

“This project will provide residents with an attractive, and more inclusive and integrated community development,” states Sustainability and Grant Manager Ashley Williams. “It centers on improved and increased transportation options that encourage livability, connect housing to jobs, build a clean energy economy, reduce transportation costs and provide safer conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists. Accessibility will be increased to a variety of downtown agencies as well.”

This project is part of the City’s overall master plan for hike/bike trails and greenways, which is also coordinated with the regional thoroughfare plan.

The award announcements are scheduled to be made in July of 2013. Should the City of Temple be awarded these funds through the matching funding program, the 23 month project would commence immediately to begin with the engineering and design phase. It is anticipated that the project would be complete by the summer of 2015.

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