

December 20, 2004

New El Paso Mission Valley specialty plate now available

A new specialty license plate that will raise funds to restore the Socorro Historic Mission is now available for purchase.

The Socorro Historic Mission, located south of El Paso along the Texas-Mexico border, is one of the nation's earliest missions and is considered to be one of the most outstanding examples of Spanish mission architecture. Established in 1680, the mission was destroyed by flood in 1829 and was rebuilt in 1843. Preservation and restoration efforts have been ongoing for the Socorro Mission, as well as other sites within the Mission Trail Historic District, also known as the El Paso Mission Trail.

"Our Mission Valley plates will put El Paso's Mission Valley on the map," said State Senator Eliot Shapleigh, who unveiled the new plate during a ceremony in El Paso. "I hope everyone buys them to promote our missions and to invest in restoration."

The El Paso Mission Valley license plate design features an image of the mission on the left side of the plate with the words "Mission Valley" running along the bottom. The plates are now available for passenger vehicles and light trucks and cost \$30 annually, plus \$40 if personalized, in addition to regular registration fees. Of the \$30 annual fee for each plate, \$22 will be used by the Texas Historical Commission to fund grants for preservation and rehabilitation efforts for the Socorro Mission.

Applications for the specialty plate are available at the county tax office, on TxDOT's Web site (www.dot.state.tx.us), by calling the TxDOT Help Desk at (512) 465-7611, or TxDOT's Fax-On-Demand forms line at (888) 232-7033. Customers requesting orders for specialty license plates through the fax service should enter the code 0999 to receive the form for the license plate they are ordering.

TxDOT started its specialty license plate program in 1965. Today, there are more than 100 different plate designs, many of them benefiting a particular group, organization, college or university.

- 30 -

For more information, contact Darah Waldrup in TxDOT's Vehicle Titles and Registration Division, 512-302-2076. Ordering information is at: <http://www.dot.state.tx.us/vtr/spplates/allplates.htm>

