



CENTRAL TEXAS
Regional Mobility Authority

NEWS RELEASE

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Project Bids Promise Jobs, Value and Better Travel for Central Texas

(Austin, Texas) — Two key Austin-area expressway projects, the Manor Expressway and the 183A Northern Extension, are expected to cost less to construct thanks to a highly competitive bidding process that has resulted in construction bids that are lower than originally estimated.

Bids were opened Monday, November 23rd for the first phase of the Manor Expressway, the largest transportation project in Central Texas to be funded by the federal stimulus bill, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Six firms bid to construct Phase 1 of the Manor Expressway project, which will involve building direct-connect flyover ramps between U.S. 183 and the Manor Expressway. The bids came in well below engineer estimates and ranged from a low bid of \$52 million to a high of \$63 million. Future project phases will involve constructing the rest of the 6.2-mile Manor Expressway from U.S. 183 to Parmer Lane in an expanded median of U.S. 290 East.

The 183A Northern Extension project, for which bids were opened Wednesday, November 25th, is the second phase of the Mobility Authority's first toll road. The 183A extension is being constructed more than seven years ahead of schedule — creating another important stimulus to the local economy. Six bids were received for the project, which will involve extending the existing 183A toll road an additional 5-miles from FM 1431 to a point north of RM 2243 in the City of Leander. The bids for the 183A Extension ranged from a low bid of \$75 million to a high of \$79 million and were also well below the engineer's original estimate. The project will be funded through the sale of toll revenue bonds.

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The two vital projects will not only improve travel in these fast-growing corridors, but also create 2,300 jobs and invest \$423 million back into the local economy.

“These competitive bids are good news as the region continues to try to meet its growing transportation needs with shrinking resources and challenging conditions in the financial markets,” said Mobility Authority Executive Director Mike Heiligenstein. “We’re greatly pleased that the Mobility Authority can move these projects forward, create jobs and investment that Central Texas needs, and deliver the benefits of improved mobility.”

The Mobility Authority was able to expedite the projects and take advantage of competitive market conditions thanks to the solid performance of the existing 183A toll road and the support of the Texas Transportation Commission, which authorized federal stimulus funding for the Manor Expressway project and has approved a \$31.6 million State Infrastructure Bank loan to buy property needed for the next phase of the Manor Expressway project.

“Thanks to our tremendous partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation we have been able to move these important regional transportation projects forward despite the growing transportation funding crisis,” says Ray Wilkerson, Mobility Authority Chairman. “These projects emphasize how important it is for various agencies to work together cooperatively to overcome difficult challenges.”

Construction contracts for the Manor Expressway and 183A North Extension projects will be awarded at a meeting of the Mobility Authority’s Board of Directors on December 17, 2009. Construction work is expected to begin in spring 2010.

About the Mobility Authority

The Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority is a local, independent government agency created to improve the regional transportation system. Our mission is to implement innovative solutions that reduce congestion and create transportation choices that enhance quality of life and economic vitality. The Mobility Authority is the state’s first Regional Mobility Authority, created in January 2003 to serve Travis and Williamson counties. The Mobility Authority

currently operates the 183A toll road in Williamson County and is working to extend the 183A project and construct the U.S. 290 East (Manor Expressway) project in Travis County.

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