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**NET RMA PASSES INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT, DISCUSSES
ECONOMIC STIMULUS PLANS DURING BI-MONTHLY BOARD MEETING**

Mount Pleasant, Texas – January 15, 2009 – The North East Texas Regional Mobility Authority (NET RMA) met Wednesday for its bi-monthly board meeting. Titus County Judge Sam Russell began the meeting by updating the Board of Directors about Titus County's priority projects, and pledging his support of the NET RMA. He said that Texas is facing a challenge when it comes to transportation funding.

"It will be slim pickings not only in Texas, but across the United States," Russell said during the meeting. "But maybe by working together we can get these projects accomplished."

The NET RMA Board of Directors authorized an Interlocal Agreement between the NET RMA and Rusk County for the continued development of Loop 571 around Henderson. The most recent construction on the project was completed in 1996, the remaining portion southwest of Henderson has been untouched since then. Led by NET RMA Rusk County Board Member John Cloutier, Rusk County and the City of Henderson have worked to revive the project through the designation of funding and political support. The approval of an Interlocal Agreement with the NET RMA allows Rusk County to access the NET RMA team of financial partners and engineers that can help secure funding and draw plans for the Loop 571 extension.

"We've done a lot of the ground work for this project," Cloutier said. "The Interlocal Agreement with the NET RMA means that the RMA can represent Rusk County in trying to get a pass-through funding application approved."

The initial Loop 571 extension would extend 3.4 miles from US 79 to US 259 South, enabling traffic on US 259 to bypass the City of Henderson and ease congestion within city limits. Mr. Cloutier said that the city and county are also examining the feasibility of completing the Loop from US 259 South to US 259 North.

In other business, the NET RMA Board discussed the possibility of accelerating work on Toll 49 Segment 3A so that the project might be included in the economic stimulus package being prepared by the Federal government. In order to be considered, the government has stipulated that projects must be "Shovel Ready," which means they have completed environmental clearance, engineering, the land acquisition process, and utility adjustments.

"We are keeping a close eye on the possibility of obtaining federal funding," said NET RMA Chairman Jeff Austin, III. "The NET RMA wants to be in a position to act if the opportunity presents itself."

Other action items and presentations during the meeting included:

- Wayne Placide of First Southwest Company presented an update from the NET RMA financial team. After his presentation and discussion about the funding possibilities as a result of portions of Toll 49 being included in the economic stimulus package, the NET RMA Board passed a resolution to initiate the process of procuring underwriting services to assist the NET RMA in preparing bond packages.
- A discussion about future NET RMA projects included:
 - East Texas Hourglass: The NET RMA will examine the current status of the planning studies and look for funding opportunities to continue the project development process.
 - Angelina Neches River Authority, Lake Columbia Projects: The NET RMA and Lake Columbia officials agreed to begin discussions to explore opportunities to partner on the projects.
 - Texarkana Outer Loop: The Financial Assistance Agreement request to TxDOT has been completed and will be submitted.

About the NET RMA

The NET RMA is an independent government agency created to accelerate the development of transportation projects in North East Texas. Our mission is to implement transportation solutions that will enhance the quality of life and the economic environment in our area. The NET RMA is governed by a 19-member board of directors that represent each of the member counties: Bowie, Cass, Cherokee, Gregg, Harrison, Panola, Rusk, Smith, Titus, Upshur, Wood, and Van Zandt. Texas RMAs were made possible through an initiative passed by state legislature in 2001. The NET RMA was established in October 2004.

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