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Alamo RMA Chairman statement on the removal of the Environmental Clearance for the 281 North Project

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(SAN ANTONIO) – October 1, 2008 - Dr. William E. Thornton, chair of the Alamo Regional Mobility Authority (Alamo RMA), released the following statement today regarding the removal of the environmental clearance for the 281 North project.

“Today, the Alamo RMA received notice from the Federal Highway Administration and the Texas Department of Transportation that the environmental clearance for the 281 North project is being removed and that no additional capacity, be it tolled or non tolled, will be allowed to occur within the 281 North corridor in the foreseeable future.

“According to TxDOT, the procurement process surrounding the Environmental Assessment may have been tainted by irregularities in the procurement of a scientific services contract and components of the environmental document have been called into question.

“The Alamo RMA Board has and will remain committed to being proactive stewards of our environment. Any doubts raised by the irregularities involved with this project must be fully and completely answered.

“While some will certainly proclaim this a victory, we must mourn the fact that drivers crying out for relief along 281 North will only have a future drive of tail lights and congestion to greet them each morning and afternoon. With ever diminishing federal and state funding, and continually increasing costs, we should be committed, now more than ever, of finding new ways and new means to keep our community moving.

“Since 2004, our community has spent millions upon millions of dollars and thousands of hours working on a way to accelerate this needed project. We have to face the stark reality that while relief is needed, it simply cannot come today.

“In late 2007, the Alamo RMA exercised local control to develop the 281 North project. Our mission is to accelerate needed projects to keep our community moving. We had in place, ready to start work, a design build team able to have the entire project complete in three years and eight months. Today, there is no timeline we can offer for relief.

“For our entire community today is a sad day. Anyone celebrating the end of this project, at this time, is also celebrating a stay in the status quo, a stay of congested roadways, of increasing frustrations, and increased wastes of fuel as people struggle to travel to and from work, to and from family events, and all at a cost to our environment, our clean air, and community which has yet to be realized.”

About the Alamo Regional Mobility Authority

Overseen by a seven-member Board of Directors, the Alamo RMA includes a professional staff and consultant team that are committed to finding ways to empower our local community to take charge of our transportation future. The purpose of the Alamo RMA is to provide Bexar County with opportunities to accelerate needed transportation projects - through the direction of a local board making local choices about local mobility needs - that enhance the quality of life and economic growth for all residents in our region.

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