

News Release
Oct. 29, 2007
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Hidalgo County Road Builders Name Director of Public Affairs

Project Locates Offices in McAllen

(McAllen, Texas) – The company selected by the Hidalgo County Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) to build a bypass loop in the county has selected Veronica de Lafuente to manage community outreach and public affairs for the project. Hidalgo County Road Builders (HCRB) was granted an approximately \$650 million contract by the RMA to construct a commercial loop to relieve congestion being caused by economic growth and the North American Free Trade Agreement.

“Veronica is the ideal person to reach out and educate the public about this project,” said Gerry Pate, CEO of HCRB. “She has a terrific background in politics and business and has long been active in the community. We chose a person for an important job who has great experience and who cares deeply about the future of Hidalgo County and the entire valley.”

Before joining HCRB, de Lafuente was the Governmental Affairs Director for Hidalgo County Judge J.D. Salinas. Prior to that appointment, she acted as a liaison to the Texas legislature on issues critical to the Rio Grande Valley for Cameron County Judge Gilberto Hinojosa while also serving as his administrative assistant for governmental affairs. She advised Cameron County Commissioners on matters of appropriation and legislation that were critical to their constituents while also consulting on federal matters and important appointments to boards and commissions. De Lafuente was also a legislative liaison for governmental affairs for Texas Southern University and a legislative assistant for state representative Joe Pickett.

“I couldn’t be more excited about this project coming to Hidalgo County and the Rio Grande Valley,” de Lafuente said. “This is a chance to be a part of not just solving the problem of truck traffic, but also planning for the future, managing growth, and doing some innovative things to show how a local community can take control of its own destiny.”

De Lafuente will begin meetings with community leaders, civic organizations and various associations as she begins to outline the loop, or truck bypass. RMA commissioners unanimously approved HCRB as the exclusive contractor to build the toll road, in part, because of innovative funding mechanisms that reduce reliance upon the state for money. Hidalgo County will be the first in the state to use a Tax Reinvestment Zone (TRZ) to pay for road construction. Recently approved by the Texas legislature, the TRZ uses tax money generated from business growth prompted by the road’s development to fund future road projects.

Hidalgo County Road Builders have also recently opened an office in McAllen at 801 West Nolana, Suite 205, which is where de Lafuente will be headquartered and where the construction project will be managed.

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