

5 companies invited to bid for next Valley section of high-speed rail

BY TIM SHEEHAN

The Fresno Bee April 3, 2014 Updated 22 hours ago

<http://www.fresnobee.com/2014/04/03/3858400/5-companies-invited-to-bid-for.html?sp=/99/406/263/>

Five companies have been invited to submit bids to build the second portion of California's high-speed rail line in the central San Joaquin Valley -- even before construction commences on the first 29-mile stretch.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority issued its "request for proposals" Thursday for a 65-mile section of the proposed rail line from the southern edge of Fresno to just north of the Tulare-Kern county line. The work, which is estimated to cost between \$1.5 billion and \$2 billion, represents an extension of the first construction segment between Madera and Fresno, where the state agency anticipates construction to start this spring or summer.

Among the construction teams that were pre-qualified earlier this year to bid on the project are a consortium which last year won a contract worth about \$1 billion for the Madera-Fresno section: Tutor Perini Corp. of Sylmar, Zachry Construction of Texas and Pasadena-based Parsons Corp.

The other companies expected to vie for the second contract are:

California Rail Builders, a joint venture that includes Ferrovial Agroman U.S. Corp. and Granite Construction. Ferrovial is an American subsidiary of Ferrovial S.A., a Spanish company; Granite Construction is a California firm headquartered in Watsonville.

Dragados/Flatiron/Shimmick, a consortium that includes Dragados USA Inc., a subsidiary of Spanish firms Grupo ACS and Dragados S.A.; Flatiron West Inc. of San Francisco; and Shimmick Construction of Oakland.

Golden State Rail Partnership, which includes OHL USA Inc., a subsidiary of Spain's Obrascón Huarte Lain S.A. and Samsung E&C America Inc., a U.S. subsidiary of South Korea's Samsung Group.

Skanska-Ames Joint Venture, a team that includes Skanska USA Civil West California District Inc. (a subsidiary of Sweden's Skanska) and Minnesota-based Ames Construction Inc.

The bid request issued Thursday calls for the construction teams to submit their proposals by Sept. 2. The rail authority anticipates awarding a contract in November.

For the first contract between Madera and Fresno, however, the authority extended the deadline several times as it amended its bid requests. An original deadline of August 2012 was ultimately stretched to January 2013, and a contract that was originally anticipated to be inked by the end of 2012 was not awarded until last summer.

The second construction package covers the proposed rail route from American Avenue south of Fresno, near the Burlington Northern Santa Fe freight tracks, through Kings County and into Tulare County, to about a mile north of the Tulare-Kern county line. The route includes bypasses around the towns of Hanford, Corcoran and Allensworth.

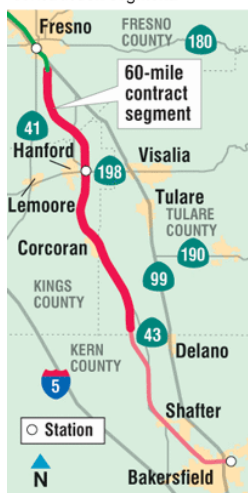
The construction work is expected to include six aerial structures for the tracks, six bridges, one undercrossing and 30 road overpasses. Whichever contractor is chosen will do the engineering and design work for the section as well as build it up to the railbed. The actual laying of steel tracks will be part of a later contract.

The request for bids comes as the rail authority confronts legal concerns that threaten to stymie the work, including a lawsuit by high-speed rail opponents from Kings County challenging the agency's statewide rail plan.

Also tied up in court is the availability of money from Proposition 1A, a \$9.9 billion high-speed rail bond measure approved by California voters in 2008. Money from Prop. 1A would be used to provide a matching share for more than \$3 billion allocated by the Federal Railroad Administration for construction in the Valley.

Seeking bids

The California High-Speed Rail Authority is seeking bids to design and build its second construction segment.



The reporter can be reached at (559) 441-6319, tsheehan@fresnobee.com or @TimSheehanNews on Twitter.