



Washington State  
Department of Transportation

## *Highways & Local Programs Division*

Serving the local agencies in Washington for over 60 years

Fall 2009

### **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act**

#### **Status of ARRA highway projects as of October 9th:**

Delivery of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) program totaling \$492 million is progressing extremely well statewide.



- 192 projects have been certified by the Governor for utilizing ARRA funds (39 state, 153 local)
- 48 projects have been completed to date (13 state, 35 local).
- 164 projects have been awarded or are under construction (29 state, 135 local).

#### **Fund Obligations:**

- A total of 73 percent of the ARRA funds (\$357 million of the \$492 million) have been obligated statewide. Local governments have obligated 89 percent of local funds (\$134.8 million of \$152.1 million). Both WSDOT and local agencies have until March 2010 to obligate all the ARRA funds.
- Funds are now obligated on 177 of 190 individual projects (36 state, 141 local).

**Low Bids Allow Funding for Additional Projects** – WSDOT has been applying federal stimulus funds to a secondary list of more than \$80 million in projects identified by Governor Gregoire and the Legislature as projects that WSDOT could advance if additional stimulus funding became available.

Governor Gregoire and Washington Transportation Secretary Paula Hammond announced in June that Washington State will deliver more highway projects with \$492 million in federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds than first envisioned, thanks to the recent trend toward lower construction bids. Contractor bids on state, city, and county stimulus projects are coming in an average of 20 percent lower than expected.

The low bids reverse a trend from 2004 to 2008, when inflation in the cost of highway project construction caused cost escalations of 42 percent.

Local governments are also experiencing low bids and are preparing to advance additional ARRA projects. The secondary lists of local projects are dependent upon the amount of savings available. Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council

(RTC), and Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) have provided Tier 2 lists on their respective websites. For projects selected outside these areas, the Local Panel has developed a prioritized Tier 2 list. After funding is determined to be available and projects selected, a link to the project's webpage will be provided.

The projects on the secondary list will be funded as money becomes available. At this time, it is not clear how many of the projects on the secondary list will be funded with surplus ARRA dollars.

## **Federal Transportation FFY 2010 Budget**

On October 1, President Obama signed a continuing resolution that keeps federal highway programs operating through October 31<sup>st</sup>.

In addition, SAFETEA-LU expired September 30<sup>th</sup>, without an extension or repeal of the \$8.7 billion rescission of contract authority. This resulted in rescinding \$148 million of Washington's contract authority.

Proposals for the future funding of transportation have included either a three month extension or an 18 month extension.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee supported a three month extension in order to allow Congress time to continue to work on a six year measure worth some \$500 billion. Whereas, Senate leaders have supported the Obama administration's request to extend SAFETEA-LU for 18 months, until March 2011. However, there was a move late September 30<sup>th</sup>, by the Senate, to support the three month extension but it failed the required unanimous consent.

The path forward for transportation authorization is unclear, but Congress will need to act prior to the end of October to further extend funding for transportation projects.

## **ARRA TIGER Grants**

The US Department of Transportation received 1,380 applications totaling nearly \$57 billion in requests from all 50 states, territories, and the District of Columbia, vying for a share of \$1.5 billion the department will award for innovative transportation projects that show significant economic and environmental promise for the nation, a region, or metropolitan area.

Of the \$57 billion in TIGER grants requested, more than half of the applications are for highway or bridge projects, with the rest of the applications focusing on transit, railroad, port infrastructure, multimodal, or other investments.

The TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Discretionary Grant program was created by Congress to finance significant performance-driven projects and those that involve multiple jurisdictions or modes. The TIGER program focuses on longer-term, strategic infrastructure development along with the Economic Recovery Act's primary focus on immediate job creation.

From Washington State, the USDOT received 49 applications totaling approximately \$1.66 billion.

WSDOT applied for grants to build portions of the SR 520 Bridge Replacement program (\$300 million), the Columbia River Crossing (\$147 million), and the North Spokane Corridor (\$35 million). Each of the proposed projects to receive funding will

improve mobility in major freight corridors, complement current state highway investment, and provide jobs in communities experiencing significant business closures and unemployment.

The US Department of Transportation (USDOT) will review and score each application through a competitive process.

USDOT has designed a rigorous evaluation process that will require projects seeking over \$100 million in federal funds to undertake an economic benefit-cost analysis. The required analysis will consider factors such as fuel and travel time savings, carbon emission reductions, and economic and public health benefits.

USDOT will also use a cross-modal evaluation process where teams from each of the major modes – highways, transit, rail, maritime, and aviation – will work together evaluating a broad cross-section of projects.

USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood is expected to select projects in January 2010. States are eligible to receive up to a maximum of \$300 million in TIGER grants.

More information about the grant applications can be found at <http://www.dot.gov/recovery/docs/tdgappoverview.pdf>.

### **High Speed Passenger Rail (ARRA Discretionary)**

On October 2, WSDOT submitted their application for Track 2 projects of the \$8 billion in ARRA funds dedicated for High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSIPR). The primary focus of the Track 2 projects is to develop new high speed and intercity passenger rail services, including substantial upgrades to existing services.

WSDOT has a total of 26 capital rail projects that qualify for Track 2 consideration, including all projects submitted in Track 1. WSDOT applied in August for nearly \$435 million in the first round of applications for Track 1 ready-to-go projects. With the Track 2 applications, WSDOT has applied for a total of more than \$1.3 billion in ARRA HSIPR stimulus funds. For additional details go to: [www.wsdot.wa.gov/funding/stimulu/passengerail.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/funding/stimulu/passengerail.htm)

Nationwide, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has received 45 applications from 24 states for about \$50 billion for high-speed rail corridor projects, more than six times the amount available. FRA was expected to announce the first awards in October; however, the first award announcements have been delayed until this winter.

### **ARRA Ferry Boat Discretionary (FBD) Program**

In July 2009, USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood announced \$60 million in grants to 19 states and one U.S. territory to improve ferry service and save and create jobs under ARRA.

Skagit County received one of the grants for the Guemes Island Ferry terminal totaling \$750,000. The funds will be for the construction of a new ferry terminal to expand customer service.

ARRA provides the \$60 million to the Federal Highway Administration's Ferry Boat Discretionary program, which is intended for the construction and repair of ferry boats and terminal facilities.

## **Planned Project Calls**

Highways and Local Programs is planning a call for projects for the following programs:

### **Bridge Program**

The Bridge Program call is planned for April/May of 2010 in the amount of \$30-\$40 million based on the funds available from FHWA. The projects will include replacement, rehabilitation, scour, seismic, and paint and will be funded at 80 percent federal funds with a 20 percent local match. The final selection will be announced in November/December 2010.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety**

The Pedestrian/Bike Safety call is planned for January 2010 in the amount of approximately \$7 million based on historic state funding levels. There will be an invitation process to apply for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety grants based on known

risk locations. Priority is given to projects that include matching funds. However, matching funds are not required.

Final project selection will be made by the Legislature during the 2011 session.

### **Safe Routes to School**

The Safe Routes to School call is planned for January of 2010 in the amount of approximately \$4 million based on historic state and federal funding levels.

The Safe Routes to School grants will be an open competitive process and give priority to projects that combine engineering, enforcement, and education elements.

Priority is given to projects that include matching funds. However, matching funds are not required. Final project selection will be made by the Legislature during the 2011 session.

## **Advantages of FHWA Web-based Biological Assessment Tool**

FHWA's web-based BA tool has completed the "pilot" phase and is now available for use nationally. The tool has a number of advantages, including:

- No longer need to print and mail drafts of the BA for internal reviews, saving time and money.
- Shortens BA review times since the BAs can be shared instantly online.
- Collects and archives all documents and correspondence pertaining to the project ESA consultation. Each project is assigned a unique e-mail address that collects/stores in the project archive.
- Local agencies are able to check and update the status of the ESA consultation for their projects quickly and easily.
- Expedited initiation of consultation through online submittal of BAs to the Services.
- BA writers have access to an online library of information pertaining to ESA.
- BA writers gain efficiencies by having access to an archive of ESA documents from other projects in the area, or with similar impacts.

## Washington's Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan - 2010 Technical Update

The 2010 technical update is the first technical update of the State's Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan since it was signed by Secretary Hammond in November 2008. WSDOT is currently working with RTPOs, local agencies, and others to update the statewide project needs and plans to make the technical update available in March 2010.

The Plan includes strategies for improving connections, increasing coordination, and reducing traffic congestion. It also includes an assessment of statewide bicycle and pedestrian transportation needs. The technical update of this plan will present revised state interest and other project needs information in maps and table form, include analysis of changes from the current plan, and report on progress toward meeting the established goals. More information and the full 2008-2027 Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Walkways Plan can be found at [http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/bike\\_plan.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/bike/bike_plan.htm)

## 2009 Awards of Excellence awarded to Local Agency Projects

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) and the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) selected four local agency projects for the Awards of Excellence. The annual awards program is a collaborative effort between WSDOT Highways & Local Programs Division and FHWA to formally recognize FHWA funded local agency projects that have achieved excellence in safety enhancements, construction, innovative design, environmental compatibility, and public involvement and satisfaction. They represent the "best of the best" community projects throughout Washington.

### Projects that received the 2009 awards are:

**Best City Project: NWR City of North Bend – North Bend Way Roundabout**

**Best County Project: SWR Clark County – Hwy 99 Bridge over Salmon Creek**

**Best Special Project: NCR City of Wenatchee - Brick Street Preservation**

**Director's Award: NWR King County - Tolt River Bridge**

### Best City Award

**City of North Bend – North Bend Way Roundabout:** This roundabout project is a shining example of a city's council and community working closely together with public works staff to successfully develop and ultimately build a project that dramatically improves the safety of the traveling public. The project facilitates traffic flow through the focal point between the east and west sides of North Bend, and improves pedestrian access between

residential neighborhoods and local parks. Emphasis was placed on simplicity of the roundabout, ease of truck traffic negotiation of the intersection, use of landscaping to help direct driver attention to vehicles around them, and the use of in-pavement lighting for pedestrian safety.

Source of funds: TIB \$625,000, STP \$593,076, North Bend \$212,450. Total \$1.2M

## **Best County Project**

**Clark County – Hwy 99 Bridge over Salmon Creek:** Originally constructed in 1927, the Highway 99 Bridge (formerly known as the Kline Bridge) required extensive repairs after flooding events of past years. Construction of this project directly affected Salmon Creek’s salmon, steelhead, and trout populations, along with other plant and animal species. Ultimately, a partnership between the county, NOAA fisheries, WDFW, consultant, and WSDOT was able to overcome many environmental, design, and construction hurdles. After much heated debate among the stakeholders over complete closure or stage construction, Mother Nature won out when after a series of flood events in 2006 and 2007, the bridge was closed permanently. Working together, the partnership process resulted in an innovative stream reconstruction that allowed county and state decision makers to sleep more easily on stormy nights. Construction was completed ahead of time and under budget.

Source of funds: Federal Bridge Funds \$6.3M, County Road Funds \$5M, Clark County Public Utilities \$1,666,500. Total \$13M.

## **Best Special Project**

**City of Wenatchee - Brick Street Preservation:** Wenatchee’s much needed street renovation of Orondo Avenue and Palouse Street brought back the brick surface originally constructed in 1913. It has been a longtime goal of Wenatchee’s Historic Preservation Office to have these streets refurbished as they have contributed a strong element to the downtown’s National Register District. While coming in under budget and on time, there were virtually no complaints during construction, even though

two city blocks were closed, affecting dozens of businesses. By having bricks in storage from this project, as well as others, the City was able to provide key materials, saving the costs of purchasing new (or historic) materials. Not only do the historic brick streets contribute to the appearance of the surrounding historic buildings, they are a distinct visual reminder of the City’s heritage.

Source of funds: Federal Enhancement Funds \$172,103, Regional STP Funds \$30,000. Total \$202,103.

## **Director's Award**

**King County - Tolt River Bridge:** The original Tolt Bridge was built in 1922 over the Snoqualmie River, and is the only major bridge crossing between Carnation and Fall City. Often citizens experienced load restrictions and frequent closures due to deterioration and the failure to meet modern standards for safety, sight lines, and load capacity. The new Tolt River Bridge is longer and wider, with eight-foot shoulders for pedestrians and bicycles. Construction of the new bridge maintained the historic feel, while the new alignment provides a safer route across the river and wetland, and stays above the 100-year flood elevation. This project succeeded in maintaining historical integrity while utilizing modern construction methods that included sidewalks and bike lanes and effectively mitigated impacts to wetlands and endangered species.

Source of funds: STP \$3.1M, Federal Bridge Funds \$11.3M, CRAB \$900,000, King County Road Funds \$12.9M. Total \$28.2M.

## For More Information

---

### Highways & Local Programs Division Contacts

#### Director

Kathleen B. Davis  
(360) 705-7871  
davisk@wsdot.wa.gov

#### Northwest Region

Ed Conyers, PE  
Local Programs Engineer  
(206) 440-4734  
conyere@wsdot.wa.gov



#### Olympic Region

Neal Campbell, PE  
Local Programs Engineer  
(360) 357-2666  
campben@wsdot.wa.gov



#### Southwest Region

Ken Hash, PE  
Local Programs Engineer  
(360) 905-2215  
hashk@wsdot.wa.gov



#### Eastern Region

Keith Martin, PE  
Local Programs Engineer  
(509) 324-6080  
martink@wsdot.wa.gov



#### South Central Region

Roger Arms, PE  
Local Programs Engineer  
(509) 577-1780  
armsr@wsdot.wa.gov



#### North Central Region

Paul Mahre, PE  
Local Programs Engineer  
(509) 667-3090  
mahrep@wsdot.wa.gov



#### Headquarters, Olympia

Aaron Butters, PE  
Engineering Services Manager  
(360) 705-7375  
buttera@wsdot.wa.gov

Stephanie Tax  
Manager, Program Management  
(360) 705-7389  
taxs@wsdot.wa.gov

#### Web Site

---

<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/localprograms/>



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**