WSDOT Awards One of the Largest Recovery Act Projects

Local News

Posted by: David Haviland

Posted on : August 27, 2009 at 5:30 am

Construction employment hours and payroll doubled for Recovery Act related projects from June to July as work began or continued on more than 100 state and local highway projects. Employees collected an average of nearly $38 per hour for 144,308 hours worked in July. One of the largest state Recovery Act projects was awarded on August 20 to add an auxiliary lane to I-405 northbound in Bothell. WSDOT applied for almost $435 million in high speed passenger rail funds on August 24, the deadline for states to apply for the first portion of $8 billion in Recovery Act funds for high speed passenger rail projects.

This week by the numbers (project dollars in millions)

Individual highway projects

State

Local

Total

Notes

Total funds

$340

$152

$492

Obligated funds

$242

$130

$372

All funds must be obligated by March 1, 2010

Projects certified

36 (100%)

149 (100%)

185 (100%)

Projects obligated

35 (97%)

136 (91%)

171 (92%)

FHWA has obligated some or all funds for the projects

Project delivery to date

Operationally complete

6 (17%)

2 (1%)

8 (4%)

Five state projects were completed this month

Awarded

28 (78%)

118 (79%)

146 (79%)

Eleven projects were awarded this week

Advertised

30 (83%)

136 (91%)

166 (90%)

Certified, awaiting advertisment

6 (17%)

13 (7%)

19 (10%)

Safety funding buckets ($12)

Note: state only

Rumble

Strips

Cable

median

barrier

Total

Notes

Awarded

6

17

23

Advertised

6

27

33

Transit projects

Large

urban

Small

urban

Nonurban/

rural

State total

Percent of total $179 awarded

96%

97%

100%

96%

June

employment

State

Local

Total

Notes

Payroll

$3.1

$2.3

$5.4

Average wage is $38/hour

Hours

82,962

61,346

144,308

More than double the June total of 57,698

FTEs

480

355

834

FTE = 173 hours per month

Employees

1,608

1,805

3,413

Note: Not a count of unique employees

Key issues: State

New employment data reported for July – WSDOT and local government reported payroll and hours worked associated with Recovery Act projects more than doubled from June to July as stimulus-funded construction efforts continued to grow. Contractors, subcontractors and governments paid out $5,434,708 for 144,308 hours of work on more than 100 Recovery Act projects in July. The average employee received $38 per hour for work related to the projects.

The payroll rose by 148% and hours worked climbed 150% from June to July.

The payroll and hours worked had also doubled from May to June.

WSDOT reported employment data to Congress and the Federal Highway Administration on August 20. The reports are available at WSDOT’s federal reporting web page. Visit the measured employment web page for more information.

I-405 Recovery Act project awarded under budget – WSDOT awarded a $19.3 million contract to build an auxiliary lane on I-405 in Bothell. The project was awarded 36% below the anticipated amount of $30 million. Crews will build the northbound lane between NE 195th Street and SR 527, where afternoon commuters face severe backups daily.

WSDOT submitted an application for nearly $435 million in high speed passenger rail funds – On August 24, Washington submitted an application requesting $435 million of the $8 billion in Recovery Act funds available for high speed passenger rail projects nationwide. This is the first of two application tracks for Recovery Act grants. The second grant application is due on October 2. Track 1 applications are for projects that can be completed within two years of federal funding obligation. Track 2 applications are for corridor projects that can be completed by 2017.

WSDOT is proposing 20 projects totaling $435 million in Track 1. The projects identified will reduce congestion and travel times, increase rail capacity and travel speeds, eliminate bottlenecks, and improve stations.

The Federal Rail Administration is expected to select projects in September.

WSDOT will apply in October for Track 2 funding for additional projects that will provide substantial upgrades to existing services.

States had registered to request $103 billion nationwide under a pre-application process, nearly 13 times the $8 billion available.

A map of proposed Washington projects is available at the high speed passenger rail webpage.

Eleven more highway projects awarded

State project

I-405/NE 195th St and SR 527 – Auxiliary lane

Local projects

Arlington – 188th Street Pedestrian Trail
Oroville – 5th Ave/SR 97 to 23rd Ave
Wenatchee – Historic Pipeline/Pedestrian Bridge
Ridgefield – Hillhurst Rd Overlay Project
Benton City – 7th Street: Ellen Ave to North City Limits
Benton County – Kiona to I-82 and Kiona Roads
Richland – First Street Improvements
Wapato – Camas Ave Grind and Overlay Project
Port Townsend – Upper Sims Way Improvement Project – B
Spokane County – 5 mile + Strong Rd. Project 2

Key issues: National

Congress tracking state transportation spending – Chairman James Oberstar and the U.S. House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure continues to collect and publish reports on

transportation Recovery Act spending on August 20.

Washington submitted its fifth monthly report on project status and employment data to the committee on August 20. **WSDOT registered on federal stimulus reporting web site –** WSDOT registered to submit federal stimulus accountability reports to the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) using a new federal webpage: www.federalreporting.gov. Starting in October, the site will publish reports on the main stimulus website www.recovery.gov.

States will submit the first quarterly accountability report through the website on October 10.

Recovery Act highway projects under construction nationwide –3,248 stimulus projects costing $9.5 billion are under construction in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and on federal lands, the FHWA reported on its website. The FHWA has obligated $17.5 billion of $26.8 billion (65%) to 6,626 projects.

Stimulus project of the week

SR 4 improvements enhance driver safety and put people back to work

Drivers traveling SR 4 may be looking down at fresh pavement and sideways at new guardrails, but for local contractor crews in Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties, the highway improvements have led to things looking up – economically, that is.

For several weeks, crews from Lakeside Industries, Inc. of Longview and Pacific Rim Service & Construction Company, Inc. of Portland, Ore. have been hard at work enhancing motorist safety along SR 4 by paving, upgrading guardrails and cable barriers, and retrofitting bridges with improved railings. These safety improvements are part of WSDOT’s SR 4 - Skamokawa to Coal Creek Road - Paving and Guardrail project, which improves nearly 28 miles of roadway on SR 4. Funds from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provided by Wahkiakum County have increased the scope of this project and helped contractor crews get working.

For many of the crew members, this project has put them back to work, and they could not be more thankful. Terry Norton with Pacific Rim has been out of work since last October, and says he is “so happy and thankful” to be called back to work. Ben Hwee, the owner of Pacific Rim, echoes Norton’s appreciation. “I’ve been able to call employees back to work that otherwise wouldn’t have had a job to go to,” says Hwee. Matt Smeall is another one of Hwee’s crew members dependent on income from the project, and says that he was “on the verge of bankruptcy this year, and so lucky to be hired on” for the SR 4 project.

Though the construction has caused some delays along the highway, local residents and businesses have expressed enthusiasm about the overall project. Businesses in the area have seen an influx in

customers, as the project crews dine in local restaurants and lodge at local motels. Lorraine Shroeder, a waitress at Duffy’s Irish Pub in the town of Grays River, gushed that the work is “simply gorgeous” and predicts that once the work is complete, “people will be much happier than before, because it’s a smoother ride and much more enjoyable to drive.”

Important dates

August 31: Next status report to the Legislature is due

September 15: Deadline for $1.5 billion TIGER discretionary grant applications

September 20: Next congressional accountability report is due

September 30: National Fish Passage Program habitat restoration grant applications are due

October 2: Applications for Track 2 FRA High-Speed Passenger Rail grants are due

October 10: WSDOT submits first new federal OMB quarterly performance report

Websites of interest

WSDOT ARRA website: http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/funding/stimulus

Washington recovery website: http://www.recovery.wa.gov/

Federal recovery website: http://www.recovery.gov/

FHWA recovery website: http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery/index.htm

Federal Transit Administration recovery website: www.fta.dot.gov/recovery

Federal Rail Administration recovery website: www.fra.dot.gov/us/content/2153

Federal Aviation Administration recovery website: http://www.faa.gov/recovery

OMB recovery website: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/recovery_default/

Highway projects advertised or planned for advertisement soon

Lead agency

Project

description

OFM jobs estimate 1

Funding – stimulus dollars

Total

project

budget

Advertisement date

WSDOT2

I-5/Martin Way to 48th St - NB and SB Concrete Pavement

N/A

$10,780,000

$11,335,000

Planned for

advertisement

on August 31

Bothell

North Creek Trail - Section 1, Stage 2 (Schnitzer)

11

$500,000

$1,139,000

Advertised

on August 19

Bothell

North Creek Trail - Section 2, Stage 2 (Canyon Park)

14

$600,000

$1,457,000

Advertised on August 19

Ilwaco

Beards Hollow Overlook

4

$100,000

$442,040

Advertised on

August 5

Spokane County2

5 Mile + Strong Rd. Project 2

3

$331,000

$351,000

Advertised on July 31

1 The OFM job estimate is calculated using the Office of Financial Management’s multiplier, which includes direct, indirect, and induced jobs.

2 These projects are funded with surplus stimulus funds. See www.wsdot.wa.gov/funding/stimulus/projectlist#tier2 for more information.

Data Source: WSDOT Project Control and Reporting and WSDOT Highways and Local Programs.

See full project list at - http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Funding/stimulus/ProjectList.htm