

Infrastructure Stimulus



McGraw-Hill Construction's 11 Regional Construction Publications provide local reports about how the federal infrastructure stimulus funding is unfolding across the nation.

The enactment of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 in February was definitely good news for the nation's transportation and public works contractors, delivering about \$130 billion in new funding for highways, buildings and other public works.

"How can you not be happy?" Stephen E. Sandherr, the Associated General Contractors' CEO, told *Engineering News-Record* as the bill became

law. "This is the most significant investment in infrastructure in my lifetime."

Steve Hall, American Council of Engineering Companies' vice president for government affairs, remarked to ENR: "It's not a perfect package by any means. But it's hard to deny that this doesn't represent a major, major expansion of federal investment in infrastructure across the board."

In this special report, editors with McGraw-Hill Construction's Regional Construction Publications deliver the latest information about how states around the country are moving forward with their transportation stimulus funding. Readers will find state-by-state funding totals, information about construction types being targeted, details about individual projects and timelines for awarding projects.

There are two common themes running through the reports. The first, of course, is the economic boost these projects are delivering to the nation at a unique moment in its history.

As Colorado editors Mark Shaw and Melissa Leslie report, Gov. Bill Ritter (D) put it this way: "These funds are vital to putting Coloradans back to work, getting our economy moving again and building a modern, 21st Century transportation system."

Or, as Caltrans Director Will Kempton said: "This is about jobs, jobs, jobs."

The other theme running underneath the good news of the stimulus is the recognition that this one-time infusion will not be able to overcome construction's overall declines, nor address the backlog of infrastructure needs.

"We have \$16 billion in unfunded work across New Mexico," says Mike Gibson, executive director of Associated Contractors of New Mexico. "The initiative is a badly needed Christmas present, but it'll be short-lived."

For now, here's how the stimulus is unfolding across the country. *By Scott Judy*

CALIFORNIA

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California will receive \$2.6 billion for infrastructure construction work on highways, roads and bridges. Of that, \$1.72 billion goes to the state transportation department (Caltrans), \$771 million goes to local governments and \$77.1 million targets other projects such as bicycle lanes.

Contingent on the state legislature unanimously passing legislation changing funding allocations to double regional grants, Caltrans accelerated the timeline for going to bid with 57 shovel-ready projects. The moves were designed to meet federal deadlines for use of \$625 million in federal economic stimulus funds, freeing up state dollars for projects that otherwise might have been a year or more away.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) estimated that 11,000 new jobs will be created or retained by the first wave of projects. "This is about jobs, jobs, jobs," says Caltrans Director Will Kempton. On the list of bids to go out in the next 120 days are repaving and bridge replacement jobs that were previously scheduled for 2010 or beyond.

"The deadlines for the FHWA funds that flow to the state are quite strict," says Metropolitan Transportation Commission Executive Director Steve Heminger.

The majority of the funds, \$565 million, will be administered through the State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP), with the balance targeted for highway maintenance.

Other bridge work includes \$46.7 million to replace two aging bridges in Merced County and a \$38-million overcrossing in Red Bluff. Another \$29 million is earmarked for improvement to drainage systems in Tahoe and \$9.5 million for slope embankment reconstruction in Williams.

Road repaving and rehabilitation in-



California will receive \$2.6 billion in infrastructure stimulus funding. (Photos courtesy CalTrans)

cludes more than \$75 million to repave three miles of rough pavement on Interstate 710 in Los Angeles.

Other Southern California projects include \$50.6 million for slab replacement and grinding on Interstate 5 in Sun Valley and Sylmar. A \$16.8-million contract will build two new lanes on Interstate 805 in Chula Vista to ease traffic congestion.

Once approved by the California Transportation Commission, another \$50 million could go toward the \$1-billion Doyle Drive/U.S. Route 101 Golden Gate Bridge access road. The current 1.5-mile elevated roadway is considered seismically unsafe. The first two of four contracts could open in June with historic Presidio building relocation (\$10 million) and utility relocation (\$15 million). The balance of the work, partial bridge Presidio interchange (\$160 million) and southbound batter tunnel (\$70 million) will go to bid in August and October. It should be completed by 2014.

Other accelerated Bay Area projects include a \$12.6-million bridge deck rehabilitation in Oakland, \$29.5 million in road rehabilitation on Highway 80 in

Fairfield and \$33 million in Highway 280 rehabilitation in San Jose. More projects, totaling \$2.5 billion from the total \$787 billion federal stimulus package, could be announced at CTC's April meetings. *By J.T. Long. Robert Carlsen contributed to this story.*

COLORADO

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Colorado will receive nearly \$7.2 billion in total stimulus money over the next two years. That amount ranks the state 26th in the country for stimulus funding, according to the Center for American Progress, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank that tracks federal policies and programs.

The \$7.2 billion includes tax breaks and possible expansions of existing funding sources. Only about \$3.5 billion comes directly from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. The state is also eligible for millions more in federal grant programs, many of which could help Colorado's growing energy sector.

The biggest impact for the state's construction industry is in the more than \$500 million allotted for transportation projects—\$330 million of that in direct federal highway funding for the Colorado Dept. of Transportation and another \$103 million for transit projects across the state.

The majority of the transit funds, \$90.2 million, will go to urban agencies to fund capital projects such as new transit facilities and vehicles, including \$72.1 million to the metro area's Regional Transportation District. The remaining \$12.5 million in transit funds

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Utah and Idaho will collectively receive roughly \$315 million in infrastructure stimulus funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

are being made available to the state's rural areas and will be managed by the Colorado Dept. of Transportation.

"These funds are vital to putting Coloradoans back to work, getting our economy moving again and building a modern, 21st Century transportation system," Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter (D) says. Ritter certified the first 18 highway and road projects, worth about \$145 million, in mid-March.

Nearly \$30 million in ARRA funds will go to four of the state's airports, with Denver International Airport getting the biggest piece, almost \$12 million. The money is targeted mostly for runway rehabilitation (\$7 million) and the rest for apron paving.

Colorado will receive another \$42 million for clean-energy initiatives across the state. These grants are in addition to the \$130 million already promised out of ARRA funds for the state's green sector. "Thousands of jobs could be created through these grants," says Tom Plant, director of the Governor's Energy Office.
By Mark Shaw and Melissa Leslie

INTERMOUNTAIN (Utah, Idaho)

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Contractors, subcontractors and suppliers working in the heavy-highway market in Utah received good news in late February when the Utah Transportation Commission approved plans for distributing more than \$215 million in federal economic-stimulus funds for local and state projects.

"It's a step in the right direction," says Rich Thorn, president/CEO of Associated General Contractors of Utah. "This will help a lot of companies."

The commission approved close to \$150 million for road and bridge maintenance projects. Another \$46 million is slated to be funneled to metropolitan planning organizations and another nearly \$20 million to committees that oversee transportation for rural communities.

In addition, the Utah State Legislature passed a \$2.2-billion bond at the end of its 2009 legislative session in mid-March, the bulk of which will go toward the much-needed Interstate 15 CORE project, a \$1.725-billion reconstruction of I-15 in Utah County from American Fork Main Street to the U.S. 6 interchange.

Carlos Braceras, deputy director for the Utah Department of Transportation, says the stimulus money will help im-

prove transportation conditions and add or maintain thousands of jobs.

"Most of it will go to the repair and preservation of pavement and bridges, areas where we're hurting," Braceras says.

Braceras estimates that federal stimulus money will translate into about 5,000 jobs either created or maintained.

Specific projects include \$24 million in pavement rehabs on SR-204 in Weber County, along with a 13-mile-long chip seal on U.S. 191 in San Juan County. \$15 million is designated for a lane/interchange expansion on I-15 from 7200 South to 9000 South in Salt Lake County, and another \$15 million will go to widen Syracuse Road in Davis County.

Several other projects will be possible because of the stimulus funds, including the conversion of an old warehouse in South Salt Lake into a workshop that will repair TRAX cars—a potentially \$40-million project.

In Idaho, the Idaho Transportation Dept. expects about \$100 million to be put toward road and bridge projects.

On the building side, the Idaho Division of Public Works isn't expected to receive any federal stimulus money, administrator Tim Mason says.

"I don't think facilities-type projects will see anything," Mason says. "We could use the money, but there are other things that need it worse."

The State of Utah's Division of Facilities and Construction Management anticipates having roughly \$41 million to use towards energy improvement-related projects, according to assistant director of construction Lynn Hinrichs. *By Brad Fullmer*

MID-ATLANTIC (Md., Pa., Va., Del.)

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Stalled construction crews will again be fanning out across the roads and bridges of the Mid-Atlantic states—at least through 2009.

With the help of federal stimulus

funding provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, states are dedicating billions of dollars to shovel-ready projects—primarily resurfacing jobs—that can ramp up quickly and complete by the end of the year.

“This money is intended to wash in and wash out,” says Brian Holmes, president of the Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association. “It certainly will help, but the DOTs have a lot of long-term needs that still aren’t being addressed.”

Maryland, which received \$610 million for transportation under the ARRA, was the first state in the nation to release a project. On March 4, the state awarded a \$2.1-million road resurfacing and improvement project along New Hampshire Avenue in Montgomery County to American Infrastructure of Fallston, Md.

The New Hampshire Avenue project was awarded as part of the \$223.4-million first phase of funding to Maryland. The largest chunks of that funding include \$146.2 million in resurfacing work and \$50.8 million in traffic and safety projects. With the \$145-million second phase, the state added \$47.5 million to bridge work along with another \$47.5 million for resurfacing and \$46 million for traffic and safety.

Pennsylvania, which has the highest number of deficient bridges in the country, is dedicating a major portion of its more than \$1 billion in stimulus funding to bridges. Nearly \$350 million will go to 103 bridge projects, including \$66 million for the preservation of Girard Point Bridge on Interstate 95 in Philadelphia.

Rich Kirkpatrick, PennDOT spokesperson, says the stimulus will help the state chip away at its backlog of more than 6,000 deficient bridges, but it’s only a short-term gain.

“Before the stimulus, we had \$1.8 billion in projects set for this year, and now we’re looking at nearly \$3 billion,” Kirkpatrick adds. “That’s a big help, but



On March 4, Maryland awarded a \$2.1-million road resurfacing and improvement project along New Hampshire Avenue in Montgomery County to American Infrastructure. (Photo courtesy American Infrastructure)

we’ve got nearly \$11 billion in need for our bridges alone.”

The region’s smallest state, Delaware, is targeting one of the largest projects funded under the stimulus package. Of the state’s \$200 million in funding, \$48 million will add high-speed toll lanes to the state’s Interstate 95 toll plaza. Another \$70 million will fund paving and rehabilitation funds.

Virginia is still finalizing its plan. At a March Commonwealth Transportation Board meeting, the state discussed an outline of plans for the initial piece of its \$694 million in stimulus funding. The plan called for \$100 million to \$150 million to repave up to 500 lane-miles; \$80 million to \$100 million for road improvements around BRAC-related projects; and \$60 million to \$70 million for work on up to 120 bridges. *By Bruce Buckley*

MIDWEST (Ill., Ind., Mo., Wis.)

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Midwest agencies are moving swiftly to spend stimulus funds.

For instance, Missouri started four projects backed by federal funds on the same day the \$787-billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was approved by President Obama.

“This is about putting people to

work,” says Pete Rahn, Missouri Dept. of Transportation director. “For us to sit and let bureaucratic processes slow us down is contrary to the intent of stimulus.” The agency has identified 208 projects as being shovel ready.

Indiana also is being aggressive by naming the second-highest-elected official in the state, Lt. Gov. Becky Skillman (R), to chair a task force to coordinate use of stimulus dollars by all agencies.

Skillman says that in February, the Indiana Dept. of Transportation opened a letting for 27 projects valued at \$39 million. In March, there was letting for 29 projects valued at \$43.6 million, she adds.



Pete Rahn (left), director of the Missouri Dept. of Transportation, confers with other state officials, who awarded an \$8.5-million contract for the replacement of the Osage River Bridge on Feb. 17, the same day the \$787-billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was approved by President Obama. (Photo courtesy MoDOT)



Connecticut is spending \$200 million of the \$1.6 billion it received on highway and bridge repair, including stretches of the state's major thruway, I-95.

Because of its population, Illinois scored the biggest pot in the region, \$9 billion. Of that, nearly \$1.6 billion will be spent on infrastructure.

In March, engineers with the Illinois Dept. of Transportation had identified approximately \$693 million in projects that were to be shovel-ready for a special letting in early April, allowing work to begin in late May or early June.

The projects were virtually designed with all environmental clearances completed, right-of-way acquired and minimal utility conflicts, says Paris Ervin, an IDOT spokesperson. While the list is larger than expected in the first wave of funding (approximately \$400 million), it will allow Illi-

nois to be in a position to spend any funds redistributed from other states.

It's not just roads that are expected to receive funding.

In Wisconsin, "municipalities will be able to complete wastewater projects more quickly and for reduced financing costs," says Susan Crawford, administrator of the division of enforcement and Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources. Typical projects include improvements or upgrades of wastewater plants, sewer systems or basic water infrastructure.

Projects are filtering beyond the state level. For instance, two-thirds of the 208 shovel-ready projects identified by MoDOT were derived from 22 regional planning partners statewide, and about 61% of the projects overall are planned for economically distressed areas, director Rahn says. *By Craig Barner and Paula Widholm*

NORTHEAST (N.Y., N.J., Conn.)

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The northeast's tri-state region of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut was awarded more than \$28 billion in stimulus funds with the lion's share of that money—\$24.6 billion—going to New York State. However, the billions of dollars allocated for infrastructure projects in all three states are serving more as a soft landing for the sharp decline of total construction starts in all three states, rather than as an actual stimulus.

"The most immediate impact we're going to see will be with highway and bridge [projects], followed by mass transit," says Robert Murray, vice president of economic affairs for McGraw-Hill Construction. "These types of projects would definitely have been settling back in this climate, but instead we're seeing an increase which will help cushion the effects of this recession."

New York State has set aside about \$1.1 billion for road and bridge projects and about \$1.2 billion for mass transit. Gov.

David Paterson (D) announced that about \$41 million will be used for the first highway and bridge jobs, which will most likely be replacement projects in the upstate counties of Steuben, Onondaga, Oneida and Herkimer. Meanwhile, the money allocated for mass transit projects will mostly be directed to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's expansion projects in New York City, including the new Second Avenue Subway and East Side Access lines.

"If you look at the size of the projects New York typically puts out to bid, this money isn't really going to go very far," says Denise Richardson, executive director of the General Contractors Association of New York. "But it allows us to continue a level that we wouldn't have otherwise been able to."

Across the Hudson River, New Jersey received nearly \$2 billion. About half of that money is allocated for state transportation projects, including about \$130 million to help with the construction of a second Trans-Hudson rail tunnel for commuters into Manhattan called "Access to the Region's Core," a project worth more than \$8 billion. The state is distributing a total of \$425 million for transit and about \$650 million for highway and bridge work.

Connecticut is using \$200 million of the nearly \$1.6 billion it received for a series of road and bridge projects, including a \$73-million reconstruction of a train bridge on Route 1 in Branford, more than \$70 million in various improvement projects on the Merritt Parkway in Trumbull and Fairfield, as well as \$18.8 million in resurfacing jobs throughout the state.

The office of Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell (R) is working with individual municipalities in order to determine where to direct the stimulus dollars.

"We cannot look at these projects in a parochial fashion," says Rell spokesperson Adam Liegot. "This will be a comprehensive strategy to reinvigorate our communities and our state." *By Jack Buehrer*

NORTHWEST (Wash., Ore., Ak.)www.northwest.construction.com

Stimulus funds are beginning to flex their muscles throughout the Northwest.

So far, Washington has received \$739 million, Oregon \$334 million and Alaska \$240 million.

To meet the shovel-ready requirement, states concentrated on paving and road maintenance projects.

In Alaska, "\$170 million of the stimulus funds will go toward road improvements that will facilitate construction of the \$20 billion natural gas pipeline in Prudhoe Bay," says Roger Wetherell, chief communications officer, Alaska State Dept. of Transportation and Public Facilities in Juneau.

In Washington, one of the biggest stimulus projects will add a lane on SR 405 near Seattle. The total project cost is \$40 million and would not have been possible this fiscal year without the stimulus package, says Denise Cieri, deputy director of the WSDOT I-405 program. "We are able to accelerate this project with the stimulus money."

WSDOT bids dropped 17.6 % from last year, says Cieri. "For an owner, this is a great time to have the extra money."

In Oregon, Gov. Ted Kulongoski (D) approved a list of 100 projects that would receive federal stimulus dollars. The first funded project went to Baker Rock Resources, Beaverton, Ore., to pave 7 miles of highway and add a cable barrier for a cost of \$5 million.

In addition to federal stimulus money, Oregon and Washington have put forward separate funding packages. The Oregon Legislature approved selling \$175 million in bonds to pay for deferred maintenance at public buildings and schools.

Washington State juggled almost \$1 billion from future transportation budgets to push forward projects slated to start in 2010. *By Lucy Bodilly*



The \$298 million in stimulus funds that will go to the Louisiana Dept. of Transportation and Development will create a statewide ripple effect. James Construction Group of Baton Rouge, La., paves two new lanes on US 167 in north Louisiana. (Photo by Sam Barnes)

SOUTH CENTRAL

(Ala., La., Miss., Ark. Tenn.)

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The South Central states all had shovel-ready wish lists that well exceeded their final, allocated amount from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Although no state received as much as it could use, highway departments are embracing the opportunity to advance long-awaited projects and stimulate the economy, create jobs and move other projects further up in the queue.

Of the \$513.6 million that Alabama is receiving, \$80 million will be divided among the state's 67 counties and metro areas and an additional \$15.4 million is reserved for local transportation enhancement, leaving the Alabama Dept. of Transportation with \$417.8 million.

The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Dept. has had a list of 130 projects worth \$1.1 billion ready to go since 1999, but will only receive \$350 million in stimulus funds. That is almost equal to its normal annual expenditure, which is just short of \$400 million, says Glenn Bolick, public affairs spokesperson.

"With this stimulus money we are going to be able to do three years worth of work in the next two years," Bolick says.

Of the \$350 million, \$10 million will

go toward enhancements and \$15.5 million is allocated for metropolitan areas with a population greater than 200,000, which includes West Memphis and Little Rock. ASHTD will use a portion of the enhancement money to build a new welcome center in the West Memphis area, along Interstate 30 near the I-55 intersection, Bolick says.

The \$298 million of the \$430 million transportation stimulus funds that will go to the Louisiana Dept. of Transportation and Development will allow the department to advance projects and definitely create a statewide "ripple effect," says Mark Lambert, communications director.

The Mississippi Dept. of Transportation received \$350 million in transportation stimulus, half of the department's initial request, says Charles Bailey, with MDOT public affairs. After distributing the 3% for enhancements and 30% for metropolitan areas, MDOT is left with roughly \$235 million for construction, a little more than half its annual budget range of \$400 million to \$450 million.

Though the Tennessee Dept. of Transportation had not yet tallied its transit, rail and aviation funding, the state will be receiving \$572.7 million for highways and bridges, says Julie Oaks, public information.



The Florida Dept. of Transportation will be making extensive use of design-build for its stimulus projects. (Photo courtesy Granite Construction Co.)

About \$469.7 million of the allocated amount will be under TDOT's discretion to advance projects in the categories of major construction, bridge replacement and resurfacing, Oaks says.

"This year's budget (minus the ARRA funds) would have been \$631 million in federal funds and \$109.9 million in state funds for highways and bridges, so the funds from ARRA are more than half of our normal highway and bridge program." *By Angelle Bergeron*

SOUTHEAST (Fla., Ga., N.C., S.C.)

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The four-state region of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina received more than \$3.5 billion in stimulus funds aimed at highways and other infrastructure work, and state transportation departments are moving rapidly to deliver on these projects.

North Carolina received \$838 million in transportation stimulus funds, with \$735 million targeted for highways and bridges. Another \$103 million is intended for aviation, bicycle and pedestrian, ferry, public transportation and rail projects.

The North Carolina Dept. of Transportation announced that 70 highway and bridge jobs, funded with \$466 mil-

lion from ARRA, would be let by June.

Florida will be the biggest recipient of infrastructure stimulus dollars in the Southeast. The state will receive roughly \$1.4 billion in stimulus funding. An estimated \$1.35 billion will go to highway and bridge construction. Urban transit systems will receive \$290 million in funding, while rural transit systems will get about \$20 million. The stimulus also funds \$50 million in airport improvements.

The Georgia Dept. of Transportation is receiving roughly \$932 million in stimulus funds. The State Transportation Board determined that up to 50% of the money would be used for highway maintenance, including resurfacing and interstate rehabilitation. As much as 26% can be used for congestion relief or new capacity projects, while 10% is allocated to bridge replacement and rehabilitation, 10% for safety projects and 4% for enhancements.

In March, the state approved \$512 million worth of projects utilizing stimulus dollars. GDOT expects to let these projects starting in April and have all of them awarded by June.

South Carolina received \$463 million in stimulus funding for transportation projects. The state transportation depart-

ment has allocated \$150 million of that total for local projects. Of that amount, \$106 million will be divided equally among the state's six congressional districts, giving each roughly \$17.75 million.

To date, the state has approved nearly \$300 million in funding overall. That includes: highway resurfacing and rehabilitation—\$150 million; interstate highway maintenance—\$74 million; bridge replacements—\$56 million; and safety/traffic improvements—\$19 million.

SOUTHWEST (Ariz., N.M., Nev.)

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The Southwest region has been allocated more than \$1.1 billion in stimulus funding, and of that amount, \$400.4 million worth of projects are approved and will be out for bid in the coming weeks, say representatives from Arizona, Nevada and New Mexico transportation departments.

Arizona is receiving \$522 million, of which \$350 million will be allocated by the Arizona Dept. of Transportation to 41 shovel-ready projects. The mix of projects had to meet state distribution requirements and will provide Maricopa County with \$130 million, Pima County with \$46 million and Arizona's 13 other counties with \$175 million.

The remaining money will be distributed through set formulas and grant programs.



The New Mexico Dept. of Transportation's initial round of ARRA-funded projects is worth more than \$106 million. (Photo courtesy NMDOT)

The State Transportation Board on March 13 approved 14 projects worth \$85.7 million to be advertised for bids, including a \$43.2-million Interstate 10 widening from Sarival Avenue to Verrado Way in Maricopa County and \$8.6 million in State Route 87 safety improvements from Payson to Pine in Gila County.

Additional funding includes \$100.6 million for mass transit and \$176.3 million for energy efficiency, weatherization and other state energy funding.

New Mexico's Dept. of Transportation was awarded \$252.6 million. The agency is prepared to begin work by May on six highway projects worth more than \$106 million, including reconstruction of existing lanes of U.S. 84/285 between Pojoaque and Espanola, pavement preservation on U.S. 491 between Tohatchi and Shiprock and 20 miles of two new lanes for U.S. 62/180 between Carlsbad and the Texas state line.

The stimulus is good, but only a temporary fix and not a continuing initiative, says Mike Gibson, executive director of Associated Contractors of New Mexico. "We have \$16 billion in unfunded work across New Mexico. The initiative is a badly needed Christmas present, but it'll be short-lived."

Nevada received \$201 million for transportation projects, but approved \$209.4 million in shovel-ready projects, of which 52% will be used for projects in Clark County, 13% to Washoe County and 35% among the state's remaining rural counties.

Of the \$209.4 million approved, all but four of the projects are paving projects. They include a \$9-million landscape project on U.S. Highway 95, \$3.6 million for a safety crossing over U.S. Highway 93 in Elko County, \$3 million to add a mile of rail line to the V&T tourist railroad in Carson City and \$27.6 million for an interchange off of U.S. Highway 395 in Reno. *By Scott Blair, with Tony Illia and Neal Singer*

TEXAS

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Texas is expected to receive between \$15 billion and \$16 billion from the federal stimulus, with \$2.2 billion going to the Texas Dept. of Transportation. Much of the funding will be available through state agencies and across state government, according to the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. The new spending will be through existing programs, but new ones could be created.

In early March the Texas Transportation Commission approved spending \$1.2 billion in stimulus money to fund 29 projects. Another \$505.6 million will fund maintenance and rehabilitation for more than 250 roads and bridges. TxDOT estimates that it could let contracts in April that would spend more than \$750 million of stimulus funds. It predicts that by May 2010 it will have let contracts for \$1.7 billion in stimulus funds.

State energy programs will see \$327 million for weatherization over three years and \$218.8 million for deployment of renewable energy and energy efficiency programs. Some \$342 million will go to the Texas Water Development Board for wastewater treatment projects as well as energy tax cuts.

While the stimulus package has been well received in the Lone Star State, some are taking a wait-and-see attitude. Raleigh Roussell, president and CEO of TEXO, a joint AGC/ABC contractors association located in Dallas, says his members have "mixed feelings."

"Everyone is hopeful, but we are all concerned if it will affect us and what strings may be attached," he says.

Jon Fisher, president of the Associated Builders and Contractors of Texas in Austin, likewise expresses concerns about future labor agreements. "We think projects should be open to the majority of construction workers who are not union," he says.

Fisher's concerns about labor agree-



The Texas Dept. of Transportation is receiving about \$2.2 billion in federal stimulus funding. (Photo courtesy TxDOT)

ments stem from an executive order signed by President Obama that encourages consideration of the use of labor agreements on construction projects of \$25 million or more.

But Fisher adds: "We welcome the stimulus for infrastructure projects—one-time expenditures—because of the job-creation aspect."

A more enthusiastic response comes from Thomas L. Johnson, executive vice president of Associated General Contractors of Texas Highway, Heavy, Utilities & Industrial Branch in Austin, who says the stimulus package "comes at a good time because we are desperate for the work."

Mike McWay, president of the Texas division of McCarthy Building Cos. in Addison, agrees. "The stimulus is good for Texas and good for the country because it's going to provide a number of projects that wouldn't have any other short-term way to move forward. How they prioritize the projects is the real trick." *By Eileen Schwartz <<*