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First ADOT economic recovery projects advance this week

PHOENIX - An \$85-million first round of state highway construction projects to be advanced by federal economic recovery funds were to be advertised for bids this week, just two weeks after formal identification by the State Transportation Board.

The 14 Arizona Department of Transportation projects to be advertised for bids should be under construction by summer. "These projects will both extend and create jobs in our vital construction industry, with impacts on other sectors of the economy," Gov. Jan Brewer said.

"This is a big economic boost that also provides Arizonans with much-needed highway improvements. Much of this money quickly returns to local economies across the state, helping to provide the recovery we need," she added.

"I have worked with my staff to ensure that Arizona is well-prepared to move forward with this economic recovery program to advance our infrastructure upgrades and, hopefully, gain additional funding through this federal program."

The 14 initial highway projects, with a total estimated cost of \$85.7 million, are the first of 41 projects statewide that will advance using funds under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

On March 13, the State Transportation Board approved the prioritized list of shovel-ready projects across Arizona.

The initial local projects to be advertised for contractors' bids are:

- * State Route 160 repaving, Navajo Highway 59 to Dennehotso in Navajo County (estimated cost: \$6 million)
- * SR 160 repaving, Kayenta to Navajo Highway 59 in Navajo County (estimated cost: \$4.4 million)
- * Interstate 40, deck repair of Black Creek Bridges in Apache County (estimated cost: \$700,000)

More economic recovery projects will be advertised in the near future, helping to create a competitive bidding environment. All transportation projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act must be complete within three years.

"It takes a lot of teamwork to prepare these projects, get people back to work and reinvest in economies around the state," said John Halikowski, ADOT's interim director.

"There's been tremendous cooperation between ADOT, regional planning associations, local governments, the transportation board and the Federal Highway Administration in getting these vital improvements accelerated on the 'Road to Recovery.' Ultimately all of us as Arizonans benefit from these improvements to our state transportation system."

Under a funding formula approved by the State Transportation Board, approximately \$350 million in federal economic recovery funds will be used to advance all 41 ADOT projects. The funds are to be divided among the Maricopa County region (\$130 million for five projects), the Pima County region (\$46 million for eight projects) and Greater Arizona, comprising the state's 13 other counties (\$175 million for 28 projects).

To view details on all of ADOT's projects currently being advertised for qualified bids, visit www.azdot.gov/Highways/CNS/phone_sheet.asp. After bids are received, they are reviewed by a panel of evaluators with a recommendation on a selected contractor and cost, and forwarded to the State Transportation Board for formal action.

More information on ADOT's implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is available at www.azdot.gov/recovery. Information from the federal perspective is available at www.recovery.gov.

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