



Transit, ADA projects next in stimulus plan

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Local government projects, transit and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act will be the next areas of focus as the Oklahoma Department of Transportation continues to put to work funds from the federal stimulus package.

Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley told members of the Oklahoma Transportation Commission at the Tuesday, May 19, meeting that Oklahoma continues to lead the nation in terms of the percentage of funds already having been put to work improving transportation infrastructure.

He noted that nearly 80 percent of ODOT's stimulus funding is under contract. Work on several stimulus projects has begun and more projects will begin soon.

"We are pleased with the competitive bids we have received from contractors on construction projects throughout the state, which seems to be the trend in other states," Ridley said. "I am very pleased about the work that ODOT engineers and consultants have done to put us in a position to be able to let projects quickly."

Ridley noted that over the next few months, officials will focus on local government projects, along with Americans with Disabilities Act improvements and transit projects.

ODOT has received proposals for vehicles for use in rural transit programs, Ridley said. The proposals, which include a compressed natural gas option, are for vans and buses that would meet guidelines of the Americans with Disability Act. The contract for rural transit vehicles was competitively bid through a coordinated process with the Department of Central Services.

The stimulus program also sets aside funding for urban transit providers in metropolitan areas of Oklahoma City, Tulsa, Norman and Lawton.

Ridley said the department is also studying ways to improve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act along highways in rural parts of the state. The department has requested proposals from engineering firms to improve accessibility.

More than 100 stimulus-funded contracts have been awarded by the commission for transportation projects statewide. Construction has started on six projects, including I-44 through Cleveland County and US-69 in Atoka and Pittsburg Counties, and contracts have been finalized on nearly 80 others.

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INFORMATION RELEASE

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