

MaineDOT's Plan for Using the Transportation Funds *in the* **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009**

What the Stimulus Bill Contained for Transportation Nationally

Signed by President Obama on February 17th, the \$787 billion federal stimulus or recovery package contains the following transportation components.

- **Highway and Bridges:** formula funding at \$26.8 billion
- **Transit:** formula funding at \$6.7 billion
- **Aviation:** formula funding at \$1.1 billion
- **FHWA / Maritime Administration:** a competitive program for ferry systems at \$60 million
- **Coast Guard Funding:** a competitive program for removal of navigable waterway obstructions at \$142 million
- **FHWA Competitive Grants:** a competitive program for surface transportation projects (highway, rail, etc.) of national, regional, and metropolitan significance at \$1.5 billion
- **High Speed / Intercity Passenger Rail:** a competitive program at \$8 billion

What Maine Can Expect to Receive

Based upon current estimates, Maine can expect to receive about **\$162 million** in formula funding as follows.

- **Highway and Bridges:** \$130.7 million
- **Transit:** \$13.2 million
- **Aviation:** \$18 to 20 million

In addition, MaineDOT will aggressively pursue funding from the competitive programs noted above. Obviously, such funding cannot be assured. Potential candidates include:

- **\$6 million for the removal of the Waldo-Hancock Bridge** from the \$142 million of Coast Guard funding.
- **\$35 million for the *Downeaster* extension from Portland to Brunswick** from either the \$1.5 billion for FHWA Competitive Grants for surface transportation, or possibly from the \$8 billion for High Speed / Intercity Passenger Rail.
- **\$60 million for the Portland-S. Portland Veterans Bridge and \$12 million for Phase II of the Acadia Gateway Center** from the \$1.5 billion for FHWA Competitive Grants for surface transportation.
- **\$5.5 million for the construction of a CBITD ferry, and \$32.8 million to replace *M/V Everett Libby* (built in 1960) and the *M/V North Haven* (built in 1959) with "H" classification vessels** from the \$60 million for FHWA/Maritime Administration.

What Criteria Were Used to Select Projects

- **Jobs Now** - Regarding highways and bridges, only projects that can advertise for construction bids within 120 days have been selected. Based upon existing FHWA estimates, this will support about **3,500 jobs**. These direct and indirect jobs are well-paying and badly needed now. Further, because the bill contains "use it or lose it" provisions, fast action will position Maine well in the event of a redistribution of unused federal stimulus or recovery funds.

- **Work Already Being Planned** - To meet the “Jobs Now” goal, projects were derived from numerous existing MaineDOT and MPO planning documents demonstrating need, and commitment. Projects needed at least some level of design completed to be considered.
- **Geographic Distribution, with a focus on economically distressed areas and economic lifelines** - Though \$130.7 million for highways is a substantial sum coming at critical time, this simply is not enough to be transformative. That meant we needed to focus on basic, “fix-it-first”-type projects. To spread the benefits to as many communities as possible, a substantial paving component was included. Further, as required by the stimulus bill, projects in economically distressed areas were given priority. Additionally, because the Interstate is an economic lifeline, Interstate work was also a priority.
- **Safety and Environmental Benefit** - Projects that will improve safe travel be it on highways or bridges, busses or ferries. Projects that support MaineDOT’s environmental stewardship efforts.
- **Passenger and Freight Movement Options** - Projects that will advance modal system choices for moving freight and passengers thereby maintaining Maine’s goal for preserving the life of the existing transportation network.
- **Project Types and Scale** - Projects of varying sizes and types were selected, to support different contracting communities, skill sets and levels.

Project Listings

MaineDOT’s plan for the transportation recovery funding is outlined in the pie chart showing a breakdown by dollars for work type attached as [Appendix A](#) and is detailed in the list of Recovery Plan Projects attached as [Appendix B](#).

- **Highway and Bridges** - 71 projects totaling \$130.4 million statewide. See [Appendix B](#).
- **Transit** - \$13.2 million in formula funds are targeted to be used for 19 buses and a ferry vessel.
 - \$5.1 million to purchase 13 buses in urban areas (4 for Bangor, 3 for Lewiston-Auburn, 2 for So. Portland, and 4 for Metro/Portland);
 - \$7.4 million for the *Governor Curtis* replacement vessel;
 - \$0.7 million to purchase 6 small buses for rural systems.
- **Aviation** - FAA is directing the selection process through use of its Discretionary Grant program. This program tends to favor larger airports.

The Recovery Plan in Context

Although it is natural to focus on the lists with a local geographic eye, viewing the recovery plan list in isolation would be misleading. As can be seen by the pie charts attached as [Appendix C](#), recovery funded projects represent about one third of the construction dollars that MaineDOT has or will deliver in State FY 2009, and the breakdown by work type is quite different. Further, MaineDOT’s capital program for State FY10-FY11 remains under development pending budget and bond discussions. So stay tuned for more information on the question, “What’s going on in my area?”