



For immediate release
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Governor Bill Richardson Announces Recovery Projects Are Moving Forward-Contracts Have Been Awarded for Four New Mexico Highway Projects

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson today announced that the state has awarded contracts for four highway reconstruction projects under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Construction on these projects, worth nearly \$50 million, is expected to start in a month.

“These construction projects will have an immediate impact on creating good jobs for New Mexicans,” Governor Richardson said. “We have set an aggressive schedule to utilize every stimulus dollar available for road projects; and we will also be prepared to go after any additional money that becomes available. The GRIP planning process has given New Mexico an advantage when it comes to qualifying for recovery funds.”

The New Mexico Department of Transportation awarded Silver City-based James Hamilton Construction Co., reconstruction projects on U.S. 62/180 and N.M. 128. Albuquerque-based Star Paving will reconstruct a two-mile portion of U.S. 84/285 near Española; and FNF Construction Co., who worked on part of the reconstruction along U.S. 84/285, will begin work on U.S. 491.

Details of the projects, which will start construction in a month, are as follows:

- U.S. 62/180, from the Texas state line to Carlsbad (mile marker 16.25 to 26.25); constructing new lanes; estimated cost \$16.6 million; and to be completed in 18 months.
- N.M. 128, the junction of N.M. 31 east through Jal to the Texas state line (mile marker 24.7 to 38.81); roadway rehabilitation and realignment; estimated cost \$15.6 million; and to be completed in 18 months.
- U.S. 84/285, between the Dreamcatcher Interchange and Española (mile marker 186 to 188); reconstruction of existing lanes; estimated cost \$7.9 million; and to be completed in 18 months
- U.S. 491, the southern half of the corridor from Tohatchi to Shiprock (mile marker 15.6 to 29.5); roadway rehabilitation; estimated cost \$8.9 million; and to be completed in 12 months.

“We have been very aggressive in our preparations to get these projects under contract and ready to go,” said Transportation Commission Chair Johnny Cope. “On behalf of my fellow commissioners, I would like to commend the Department for moving so swiftly.”

“Since the announcement of the federal stimulus, the Department has been very proactive; in fact, we were one of only a few states to have shovel-ready projects ready to go,” said Transportation Secretary Gary Girón. “We are eager and excited to finally get the construction started.”

Governor Richardson announced last month that NMDOT is prepared to begin work on six highway projects worth more than \$106 million, creating 500 new construction jobs. Two other projects that will start construction this summer and fall include: reconstruction of US 84/285 between Arroyo Seco and La Puebla, and reconstruction of Paseo Del Volcan/West Central Interchange along I-40 in Albuquerque.

All of these projects were part of GRIP I, and were passed and approved with the Legislature. With these projects, New Mexico will be one of the first states in the nation to draw down these critical highway funds, and put them to work to stimulate the economy today.