

On February 20th, President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. KDOT pledged to share funds with local Partners.

Jerry Younger – State Transportation Engineer

KDOT had decided, even before the stimulus money was available and the legislation was signed, KDOT had decided to share twenty percent of our funds with our local partners. That's consistent with typically what we share every year - with our local partners - of our federal funds

So, we had set a target of seventy million dollars that we would share with our local partners. As I mentioned before, thirty- eight million of that had already been mandated to go to our two urban areas, that left thirty two million to share with our local partners outside those urban areas.

How were projects selected?

We put out a call for projects on February 28th, giving our local partners three weeks to submit applications to our district offices. So, our deadline for receiving back the applications was March 13th, and then the following week we worked together to select the projects to be funded.

We had made the decision at the time we put out the call for projects that our selection process would be done by our district engineers and area engineers. And we felt that that probably gave us the best group of people to make the sort of decisions that made sense for their regions.

Our district and area engineers worked day in and day out with the local partners within their district and within their areas. So they well understand the transportation needs that exist on the local system and are better able to compare projects one to another and come up with a priority on which projects rated best in that comparison.

So, consequently, our district engineers and our area engineers were the ones who, not only visited with our local before and during the call for projects, but actually went through the applications that were submitted, kind of compared applications, projects, one versus another and then came up with a priority ranking that funding was applied to those projects.

Ultimately we ended up with about seventy-seven projects throughout the entire state. We actually are programming a little bit more than our original thirty-two million dollar number. We're actually programming thirty four point seven million dollars. So we're at almost twenty-one percent versus twenty percent of the total amount of stimulus money that KDOT received.

The needs far outweigh the funds

There were some tough selections in there, tough process to come up with our final list. Certainly we had many, many worthy projects, projects that were important to our local partners and local communities and counties, that would have benefitted from receiving funding and being selected for funding.

However, again, it was a difficult process and ultimately our district and area engineers came up with those that they felt like best, best utilized, best addressed the transportation needs within their region.

More may come

As we go forward, there may be some further opportunities for locals, with either a redistribution of some unused funds on other states in the country or even a second phase of the stimulus in the next year or two.

Should those opportunities present themselves, we'll certainly consider sharing some of that money again with the locals and we may be able to have another call for projects in the future.

For more information

For those who'd like to see all the projects that were selected, we'll have the complete listing on our website, ksdot.org, so I encourage you to go there and look at all the projects that were selected for all the districts.