

## Construction projects abound on higher education campuses nationwide

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As the nation's economy starts to rebound, many of the nation's colleges and universities are finding that business is booming - particularly in the construction arena.

Last year, colleges and universities throughout the country spent \$17.8 billion on construction, up from \$12.7 billion the previous year.

A recent college construction report *College Planning and Management* magazine's "2009 National College Construction Report" shows that almost \$12.2 billion in college construction is expected to be completed in 2009. That includes \$8.5 billion in new construction, \$1.5 billion in additions and \$2 billion in renovations.

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## \$56M in loan guarantees to assist 12 businesses

### Funds expected to help strengthen areas of rural America

Twelve rural businesses across the nation have been awarded loan guarantees totaling \$56.2 million through funding of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The funds will be used to provide the capital these businesses need to expand and further stabilize rural communities. The funds are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Among the loans is one for \$7 million to a Minnesota manufacturing and design company that specializes in drive train products. Another \$5 million loan will be used to finance construction of a wood pellet manufacturing facility in North Carolina. These pellets can be used as a source of both heat and power for various industries.

The funding comes through the USDA Rural Development's Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program and can be applied for by private businesses, cooperative organizations, corporations, partnerships, nonprofit groups, federally recognized Indian tribes, public bodies and individuals. The 12 projects announced for funding will leverage an additional \$5.6 million in private sector investments.

Other loans include a \$1.35 million loan to refinance debt for an Alabama specialty care nursing home and a \$325,000 loan to fund the construction of a crematory in Minnesota. To view a complete listing of the projects and financial institutions involved in the loans, click [HERE](#) and look under "Recent Reports."

**For information about these and other funding opportunities, contact Reagan Weil or Richard Hartmann at 512-531-3900.**

## Innovative technologies to improve energy efficiency

### Hydropower projects qualify for \$30.6 million in funds

Seven hydropower projects have been selected for funding from \$30.6 million in Recovery Act funds dedicated to modernizing hydropower infrastructure by increasing energy efficiency and reducing the environmental impact at existing facilities.

These projects will employ innovative technologies such as high-efficiency, fish-friendly turbines, improved water intakes and advanced control systems. They will increase generation by an estimated 187,000 MWh per year, or enough to power 12,000 homes. This generation is carbon-free and reduces carbon dioxide emissions more than 110,000 tons per year compared to electricity.

Projects, which are expected to begin in 2010, include innovation to improve plant capacity, design, manufacture and installation of state-of-the-art wheel turbines, upgrades to units and hydroelectric plants and more. To view the projects selected, click [HERE](#) and look under "Recent Reports."

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## Follow the money

### Broadband awards to be streamlined to one last round instead of two

Award of broadband grant and loan programs through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will come quicker than anticipated. The two agencies responsible for oversight of the \$7.2 billion in funding - the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Utilities Service (RUS) and the U.S. Department of Commerce's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) - this week announced they will award the remaining funding in just one last round, instead of two.

During the first round of funding, federal officials received approximately 2,200 applications totaling nearly \$28 billion, some seven times more than the \$4 billion that was available during that round. The applications represented all 50 states, five territories and the District of Columbia. Those applications are currently being reviewed and up to \$4 billion in loans, grants and a combination of the two are expected to be awarded. Funding awards are expected to be announced next month.

In a Request for Information (RFI) released this week, officials seek feedback on how to streamline the application process while ensuring that the agencies obtain the information necessary to make awards in accordance with the law. The RFI also asks whether the agencies can better balance the public's interest in transparency and openness with stakeholders' legitimate interest in maintaining the confidentiality of proprietary data. That feedback will be instrumental when the second round of funding is released through a Notice of Funds Availability early next year. The funds are to expand access to and encourage adoption of broadband services in unserved and underserved areas of the United States, to expand public computer center capacity and support grants and loans to ensure broadband deployment in rural areas of the country.

### \$9 million to be awarded for surveys to control healthcare-related infections

Nine million dollars in Recovery Act funding has been announced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to state survey agencies in 43 states to help reduce healthcare-associated infections in surgical centers.

As part of this initiative, surveyors in 43 states will survey some 1,300 ambulatory surgical centers in the United States. Last year, 12 states volunteered to start early by surveying facilities using nearly \$1 million provided through the Recovery Act. In addition to the funds being made available for the inspection of these surgical centers, the Centers for Disease Control has also made \$40 million available to state public health departments to create or expand state-based health-associated infection prevention and surveillance efforts, and strengthen the public health workforce trained to prevent such infections. These infections are blamed for the deaths of 100,000 people each year and add \$30 billion to the nation's health care costs annually.

## Stimulus news briefs

### More than 75 percent of highway, bridge funding obligated

More than 75 percent of federal highway and bridge project funds from the federal Recovery Act have been obligated, according to officials of the U.S. Department of Transportation. The department recently surpassed the \$20 billion mark in approved obligations - of the \$26.6 billion total approved in Recovery Act funds.

The project that pushed the department spending over the \$20 billion mark was a \$36 million I-25/Alameda bridge in Denver, Colorado. That was part of a very busy \$760 million month for project approvals. Some 8,500 highway projects have been approved and nearly 5,000 of them are under way now.

### Stimulus funds jump-start Massachusetts water projects

Aided by federal Recovery Act funding, the State of Massachusetts recently awarded more than \$750,000 in grants to 11 communities for stormwater projects. The funds will be used to conduct watershed non-point source pollution assessment and planning work to address water quality problems.

The additional federal funds allowed for expansion of the state's plans to address water quality concerns. The proposals were selected competitively by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection and included both municipalities and regional planning groups. The projects undertaken will be in Amesbury, Brewster, Cambridge, Duxbury, Marshfield, North Reading, Pembroke, Pittsfield, Provincetown, Sharon and in the Connecticut River watershed.

The largest single grant - \$150,000 - went to Cambridge to measure the total amounts of phosphorus, metals, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons that are removed by two different types of street sweeping technologies. A \$90,240 grant was awarded to the Town of Provincetown for stormwater mitigation in Provincetown Harbor.

### Maryland reignites solar energy grant program

Thanks to a \$1.45 million infusion of stimulus funds, the Maryland Energy Administration has been able to reopen its solar grant program. The program was previously open to both businesses and homeowners - with grants up to \$10,000. The program, which had quit taking applications because of lack of funding, now expects to offer grants of up to \$25,000 to encourage the installation of larger solar systems - either solar photovoltaic systems or solar water heating. Applicants can receive as much as \$500 per kilowatt hour for the first 20 kilowatts of a photovoltaic system and up to 15 percent of the cost of a solar hot water system.

### SBA, city to assist small businesses in San Diego

The City of San Diego and the Small Business Administration are teaming up to help small local businesses qualify for opportunities resulting from Recovery Act funding. One of the qualifications of subcontracting on federal, state and city contracts is that the company must be bonded for \$5 to \$10 million.

The SBA notes it can provide 90 percent backing for bonds up to \$10 million. That could be helpful for small businesses seeking a part of bridge and highway construction or military construction in the area, as well as local projects such as San Diego's new main library.

### Michigan lawmakers use stimulus to reduce school cuts

Michigan lawmakers have passed legislation that will allow them to use \$184 million in Recovery Act funds to plug holes in school district budgets in the state, where some schools are facing a more than \$125 per student cut. Using the federal funds will allow schools to reduce to \$10 the amount of cuts per student.

School officials had previously been notified of the cuts due to declining revenues in the School Aid Fund. Recovery funds would address shortfalls for this year, but schools will still face a \$165-per-pupil cut for Fiscal Year 2010.

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## What the states are doing

Federal Recovery Act funds will contribute to \$266 million in wastewater and drinking water improvements for dozens of **Missouri** communities. Of that amount, \$146 million is stimulus dollars and the remainder is from Missouri's Revolving Loan funds. Among the big winners - \$16 million for the city of Springfield for wastewater improvement projects, \$4 million to Houston, \$281,050 to Aurora and \$378,761 to Nixa. Ava will receive \$3.5 million for drinking water system improvements.

The State of **Massachusetts** has been awarded approximately \$2 million in stimulus funds to help identify the speed and location of broadband services in the state over the next five years. The mapping will determine which areas of the state have broadband and which don't.

The Baldwin County Drug Task Force in **Alabama** has been awarded more than \$465,000 in stimulus funds to help investigate, arrest and prosecute drug offenders.

The City of Charlotte, **North Carolina**, is hoping to be awarded nearly \$7 million in block grants to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases produced by heating and cooling its buildings. The city will capture data that will be used to develop a long-range energy efficiency plan for city buildings. If approved, the city would get half of the \$7 million in federal funds within four months; the rest would come later. The funds can be used for retrofits, solar-power systems, energy efficient lighting, hybrid vehicles, green roofs, etc.

The **Florida** Department of Transportation is expecting to have more stimulus funds on hand to spend on other projects after the Tequesta Drive bridge replacement project came in under budget. The bid was approximately \$1.8 million less than the initial projection of \$4.2 million.

A footbridge at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, **Massachusetts**, could benefit from \$9 million in stimulus funds. The footbridge would keep New England Patriots fans attending home games from having to cross over busy Route 1. The footbridge would go over the highway and provide a safe venue for walking from the parking lot to the stadium.

Ventura County, **California**, will use a grant and loan totaling \$14.1 million from stimulus funds to overhaul a district's wastewater treatment.

The housing authority in Baltimore City, **Maryland**, has been awarded \$66 million in stimulus funds that will be used to fight blight in the city. Renovations to properties are expected to help create a stable environment for families. Some 240 individual houses will be rehabilitated as well as 30 units of conventional public housing. The remainder of the funds will be used for green projects that include energy, lighting and wastewater system upgrades in city public housing.

An interlocal project among an organization that includes 14 **Florida** counties is applying for stimulus funds to expand broadband Internet access. A needs study will be performed. The authority would not provide Internet to end users in most cases but to Internet service providers who would buy capacity and turn around and sell it to their customers. The needs assessment for broadband service covering 9,100 square miles and 380,000 residents should be completed by mid-November. It is hoped enough stimulus money will be made available to put the infrastructure necessary for the network in place.

Stimulus funds will help schools in Baltimore County, **Maryland**, perform high school renovations. Baltimore City, too, will use its stimulus funds for deferred maintenance projects. The county is going through its schools and putting in new windows, heating and cooling systems and performing other upgrades. Science labs and technical education classrooms also are being added. The funding is available after the federal government authorized 100 school systems in the country with a high percentage of poor students to issue tax credit bonds for school repairs and construction.

## Non-Recovery Act opportunities

Recovery work from damages from Hurricane Katrina at four educational facilities in southeastern **Louisiana** will continue thanks to more than \$8.7 million in federal grants from the Jefferson Parish Public School System, Recovery School District and Preschool Learning Center. Of that amount, \$6.5 million went to the Jefferson Parish Public School System through Federal Emergency Management Agency public assistance grants to the Thomas Jefferson High School for repairs and the Grand Isle Elementary School for replacement of a gym. Another \$1 million went to the Preschool Learning Center to replace three structures with one.

The Okhoy Owingeh Pueblo of **New Mexico** have been awarded \$91,903 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to continue their water pollution control program. The funds will be used for water sampling to assess surface water quality on the Pueblo's reservation. Data analysis will also help detect any changes to the quality and the condition of the Pueblo's water, and assess the health of the stream ecosystem.

There will be a lot of construction activity soon in the city of **Hutto**, Texas. Taxpayers recently approved three bond proposals - a \$8.5 million for street improvements, \$3.3 million for city park upgrades and \$5 million for construction of a YMCA facility.

Development of a 120-room hotel in Oak Creek, **Wisconsin**, will continue with the help of a \$625,000 Blight Elimination and Brownfield Redevelopment grant from the state's Department of Commerce. The funds will be used to remediate impacted soil and building contaminant blocking barriers on the property, where the hotel project is expected to cost \$17.4 million.

The Orlando, **Florida**, International Airport has a laundry list of projects it would like to complete if \$400 million in tax-exempt municipal bonds are issued. Among the proposed projects are technology upgrades, improvements to the baggage system and people mover system and renovations of the north terminal. The baggage system improvements alone will cost \$60 million to \$80 million. The first \$100 million in bonds could be issued as early as December. Not all of the bonds will be issued at the same time.

The EPA has awarded \$325,263 to the **Oklahoma** Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ODAFF) to administer a comprehensive and effective State Pesticide Regulatory Program and maintain an effective pesticide enforcement program. ODAFF will also use the funds for applicator certification, worker protection standards and groundwater and endangered species programs.

The advertising contract for the **North Carolina** Education Lottery will be re-bid for the first time. The lottery's ad budget for FY 2008 was \$8.6 million. By law, up to 1 percent of the overall lottery sales can be spent on advertising, which could have the 2009 advertising budget upwards of \$12.9 million. Thus the contract could be as high as \$1.55 million per year. The deadline to apply is Nov. 16.

**New Jersey** entities are expected to spend up to \$15 billion in 2010 and 2011 on transportation infrastructure projects, according to a business, government and academic forecast. The largest spender will be the NJ Transit, which plans \$4.7 billion in spending. The Port Authority and New Jersey will spend \$4 billion, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority will spend \$3.3 billion and the state Department of Transportation will spend \$1.8 billion. State construction budgets include \$1.4 billion for the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, \$1.2 billion by the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust and \$1.2 billion for the New Jersey Schools Development Authority.

The Otoe-Missouria Tribe of **Oklahoma** has been awarded \$125,000 by the EPA to continue the Tribe's water quality program. The funds will be used for water quality sampling to assess surface water quality on the Tribal lands. Data analysis will also help detect any changes to the quality and the condition of the Tribe's water and assess the health of stream ecosystems.

A \$30.1 million bridge replacement is planned in Burnet County, **Texas**, thanks to the Texas Department of Transportation. Bids are expected to be opened in July of next year with construction expected to begin in April 2011. The project includes two bridges spanning Lake Marble Falls and each will include two travel lanes in opposing directions.

A new \$37 million school will be partially funded by a recently approved bond election in Verona, **Oregon**. Officials are looking to public and private donations to help raise the \$24 million not covered in the \$13 million bond.

The **Arkansas** State Plant Board has been awarded \$200,000 by the EPA to administer a comprehensive and effective State Pesticide Regulatory Program, ensure pesticides are used in compliance with labeling instructions, and ensure pesticides produced and/or distributed in Arkansas comply with federal and state regulations. The funds will also provide laboratory support for pesticide analysis and an effective pesticide enforcement program.

The Granite school district in **Utah** is looking forward to building and upgrading schools after a recent successful bond issue. The Granite district's bond amount approved was \$256 million. Most of the funds will be used to install air conditioning in 51 schools. The rest will build three new schools and rebuild five others.

The **California** Coastal Commission recently approved the construction of a new desalination plant in Carlsbad. The private company building the plant will begin construction soon.

Brooksville, **Florida**, city officials have approved an agreement to open a new disaster shelter and renovate a city-owned structure. Some \$600,000 in state funding and \$100,000 from Hernando County will be used to renovate the structure that can be used as a shelter in emergencies.

Columbia, **Missouri**, is the recipient of a low interest loan and an infusion of federal stimulus dollars to help fund a \$67 million wastewater system overhaul. The wastewater treatment plan will be overhauled to meet a growing demand.

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## Decision-makers on the move...

**Doug Young**, a 20-year veteran of the Jefferson City, Missouri, Conservation Department, has been named the state's new chief information officer, effective Nov. 18... **Gov. M. Jodi Rell** of Connecticut has indicated she will not seek re-election next year... **Richard Sloan** will become the new chief of police in Haines City, Florida, effective Nov. 30... **David H. Tucker**, who has served as deputy commissioner of the Vermont Department of Information and Innovation, has been named commissioner and of the department and the state's chief information officer... **Caryn Wagner** has been nominated by President Barack Obama to serve as the U.S. Homeland Security Department's intelligence chief, and to oversee information technology systems designed to share information with federal, state and local officials and direct the Office of Intelligence and Analysis... The president also selected **Alefredo "Al" Armendariz** to be the regional administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 6, including Louisiana, Arkansas, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma and 66 Tribal Nations. Cape Coral, Florida's longest serving city manager, **Terry Stewart**, has resigned after serving the city since 2002... East St. Louis, Missouri, city manager **Robert Betts**, who has held that position for three years, was fired Sunday by the city council... Deputy Chief **Charlie Beck's** nomination to become the next Los Angeles police chief has been approved by the city's Public Safety Committee and will go to the full city council on Nov. 17 for a vote... **Tish Elston**, who has served as first deputy mayor/city administrator in St. Petersburg, Fla., since 2001, will serve with the title of city administrator in the newly elected mayor's administration... Port Aransas, Texas, City Manager **Michael Kovacks** has resigned that position to take the assistant city manager's job in Park City, Utah... Humboldt County, California's Board of Supervisors have named Assistant County Administrative Officer **Phillip Smith-Hanes** to the county administrative officer position - the county's highest ranking appointment position - after his having served four years with the county, the last two as assistant CAO.

## Calendar of events

### Conference on Global Preparedness set in December

The Third Annual Conference on Global Preparedness is set for Dec. 8-10 at the Melbourne Hilton Rialto Place in Melbourne, Fla. The event is hosted by the Florida Institute of Technology's Global Center for Preparedness. This year's event will feature speakers: Kay Goss, associate director of FEMA from 1994-2001 and now director of emergency management and crisis communications for SRA International; Yuki Karakawa, vice president and managing director, Logistics and Sustainment, Lockheed Martin Corp.; and representatives of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Florida National Guard and the Department of Homeland Security. Major topics will include Emergency Response and Interoperability, the economy and preparedness, cyber-security and information assurance, human factors and secure technology. Presentations will show how these areas are interconnected to identify today's challenges. To register, contact Conference Administration at (321) 674-8342 or email cgpinfo@fit.edu. For more information, click [HERE](#).

### National Brownfields conference slated Nov. 16-18

The 13th National Brownfields Conference has been scheduled for Nov. 16-18 at New Orleans' Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. More than 6,000 environmental and economic development officials, finance and insurance providers, risk managers, planners, attorneys, civil engineers and students are expected to attend. The program features more than 150 panel sessions on green jobs and green remediation, creative financing and financial risk management, community and economic development, environmental assessment and cleanup, use of alternative energy to power the cleanup and redevelopment of properties, sustainability and more. There also will be more than 200 exhibitors. Displays of the latest technologies and services, mobile workshops and walking tours of New Orleans are also included. The National Brownfields Conference is managed by the International City/County Management Association, in partnership with EPA. For more information and to register, click [HERE](#).

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## All 50 states have own recovery Web sites

All 50 of the states and the District of Columbia now have their own "recovery" sites where citizens can track where ARRA dollars are being spent in their respective states. The states are charged with ensuring accountability and transparency in how the funds are spent and their Web sites show the projects being funded and the amount of ARRA funds allocated. For links to each of the state and District of Columbia recovery Web sites, [HERE](#).

## Procurement consulting, national research and advocacy services

Strategic Partnerships, Inc. (SPI), a leading company in the state and local government procurement, national research and government relations world, offers a timely client-customized service that helps companies find and capture state and local government contracts arising from the recently enacted federal stimulus package. [Click here](#) for procurement consulting and advocacy services

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