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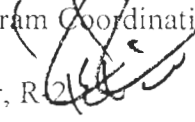
APR 20 2009

ONEIDA COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING



MEMORANDUM
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

To: D. Rettig, Office of Regional Planning and Program Coordination

From: R. Rice, Regional Planning & Program Manager, R2 

Subject: **ARRA Candidate Re-evaluation**

Date: April 16, 2009

As requested, Region 2 has undertaken a re-evaluation of proposed candidates for funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. Based upon this review, we are confident that the projects identified are consistent with the language and intent of the legislation. More specifically, project candidates were identified utilizing the following emphasis areas:

- **Projects that are Eligible for Federal Aid and are "Ready-to-Go":** Realizing the time constraints in the legislation and the desire to have projects under construction during the summer of 2009, Region 2 selected projects that either had their design nearly complete or were of a nature in which contract documents could be assembled within a matter of weeks. "Ready-to-Go" was the primary consideration in proposing candidates for ARRA funding.
- **Projects that are Element Specific in Nature:** The time restrictions of the legislation made projects with unresolved issues impractical to progress. In particular, projects requiring ROW acquisition, utility relocation, special environmental permitting, or ones that had air-quality conformity requirements were not priority candidates for ARRA funding.
- **Projects that Maximized Job Creation:** While the time restrictions of the legislation inherently favor pavement-type investments, the region attempted to diversify the types of work proposed in an effort to maximize the potential jobs created. Labor-intensive operations, such as concrete and bridge work, were proposed and were given a priority in project candidate selection.
- **Improvements to Federal Aid-Eligible Municipal Streets:** In concert with the ARRA legislation's intent to program improvements in "economically distressed areas," Region 2 made a conscious decision to propose an overall higher percentage of projects in the counties of Fulton, Herkimer, and Montgomery. In addition, the region programmed investments specifically on local streets within our eight cities: Amsterdam, Johnstown, Gloversville, Little Falls, Utica, Rome, Sherrill, and Oneida. Each of the proposed

facilities is on the federal aid system and has, historically, not received adequate rehabilitation treatment. The programming of these projects has been widely supported by the municipalities involved. In addition, the region is providing all of the design and construction inspection services for these projects: thereby further increasing their importance to the cities.

- **ADA and Sidewalk Repairs in Region's Hamlets & Villages:** In concert with the ARRA legislation's intent to program improvements in "economically distressed areas," as well as DOT's desire to increase its Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, the region made a conscious decision to propose a project that would invest in the deteriorated sidewalk conditions present in many regional villages and hamlets. These are labor-intensive, highly-visible type improvements that can significantly improve the non-motorized mobility within a community. The region has several tourism-oriented locations in which these proposed investments have been positively supported.
- **Improvements to Higher AADT State Routes:** For the proposed paving-type ARRA candidates, the locations were screened to ensure consistency with the HOCTS Long-Range Plan and other federal planning requirements. In particular, the selected locations are higher volume routes (>10,000 AADT) that have been previously identified as important regional corridors. These candidates certainly represent investments in key regional infrastructure facilities.
- **Projects are already on the TIP/STIP:** Region 2 continues to be over-programmed in several "core" funding categories. The utilization of ARRA funds to replace existing programmed funds helps to better balance the TIP/STIP. We still contend that our allocations and ARRA "targets" were disproportionately low, creating difficulty in delivering our expected construction targets and, more importantly, maintaining the area's infrastructure.

In addition to the above criteria, Region 2 also undertook an extensive outreach effort in the development of ARRA candidates. Coordination with HOCTS, county and municipal officials, as well as other interested parties played an integral role in identifying potential projects. As a result, we are confident that it has proposed a series of investments that will meet the requirements and intent of the ARRA legislation.

RER:kr

cc: M. Shamma, Regional Director, R-2
H. Miller, HOCTS Program Manager