

NCA NEWSFAX

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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Public transportation stimulus projects to put more Idahoans to work

BOISE — Idahoans will have improved access to public transportation and increased mobility because of 21 projects receiving federal stimulus funding.

Idaho Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter approved more than \$8.7 million in federal stimulus funding to put more Idahoans to work and improve transportation options. The public transportation projects are calculated to generate or preserve approximately 155 jobs.

"A public transportation network is essential to Idaho's economy. It connects workers to jobs and provides options for the economically challenged, the young, our seniors, and the physically challenged among us," Otter said. "Besides helping to create, preserve and attract jobs, providing transportation options also conserves fuel

and reduces congestion and air pollution."

Statewide, projects range from improving bus service and replacing old public transportation vehicles to building shelters at public transportation sites and constructing bike and pedestrian paths.

"The funded projects were already identified as needs," said Randy Kyrias, administrator for Idaho Transportation Department's Division of Public Transportation. "Communities throughout the state engaged in a grass-roots initiative led by local leaders, users, providers, and human service agencies. These personally-invested parties have come together to develop public transportation strategies for their unique community."

Examples of projects funded through the federal economic stimulus program include:

- The Yellowstone Business Partnership, \$335,000 to create a tri-state bus-based system among the mountain communities in Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho for Yellowstone-Teton Regional Transportation Basin.
- Victor, in partnership with Teton Basin Ice and Recreation, nearly \$284,000 for creating a transit center, complete with a lobby, restrooms and a designated park-and-ride area.
- Mountain Rides, \$1.6 million for vehicle replacement and acquisition to expand commuter service between Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum and Sun Valley.
- The Clearwater Economic Development Association, \$215,000 to coordinate schedules, organize connections and provide ridesharing and Web services.
- Ponderay, \$48,000 for the construction of a bike and pedestrian corridor along Kootenai Cutoff Road, which connects Idaho 200 and U.S. 95.

"For a small community, the stimulus funds provide a huge benefit," said Erik Brubaker, planning director for the city of Ponderay. "In Ponderay, we're able to build a bike and pedestrian corridor along a very busy road where there's a need for multi-modal transportation."

Learn more about Idaho's public transportation projects receiving federal stimulus funding by visiting mobility-idaho.org and clicking on "Economic Stimulus Projects" and then "Idaho's Transit Stimulus Funding approved by ITD Board."