



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

June 10, 2009

The Honorable James L. Oberstar  
Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter transmits the 2009 Report to Congress on Section 1301, Projects of National and Regional Significance of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

Section 1301(k) of SAFETEA-LU requires the Secretary of Transportation to submit a report each year to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. The enclosed report includes a funding table that shows the allocation amounts to be made available to finance grants under this section.

Section 1301(m) requires that, notwithstanding any other provision of Section 1301, the Secretary shall allocate amounts in this section for grants to carry out the 25 projects designated in the table of "Projects of National and Regional Significance" incorporated under Section 1301. As Section 1301(m) obviates the need for any funding allocation proposals or recommendations, the enclosed project information will serve to inform the committees of the progress made in funding the designated projects.

More than 3 years after the program was authorized and the projects designated to be funded, three of the 25 projects designated in the legislation, with a total authorized funding of \$85 million (about 5 percent of the total), have not submitted any information describing the projects, nor any estimate of total project costs, and no funds have been allocated to them. While all but one of the other projects have received funding allocations, obligations and outlays of funds remain slow. Of the \$1.779 billion authorized for the program, only \$448 million has been obligated (about 25 percent), and only \$229 million has been spent (about 13 percent).

I recommend that the project funding proceed in accordance with the distribution plan set forth in Section 1301(m), which stipulates allocating the total of all funds in this section to the 25 projects identified in this section and require that this allocation be distributed for each of Fiscal Years (FY) 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 at 10 percent, 20 percent, 25 percent, 25 percent, and 20 percent, respectively.

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The Honorable James L. Oberstar

Section 1301(f)(6) directed the Department to promulgate a regulatory framework for soliciting, evaluating, and rating projects; the Final Rule for "Projects of National and Regional Significance Evaluation and Rating" was published on October 24, 2008, and is included in this report. Should Congress fund the Projects of National and Regional Significance in the upcoming reauthorization of the surface transportation bill, the Department stands ready to apply this regulatory framework to ensure that funding under this important program is applied to well-planned and defensible projects that address national and regional significant needs.

Identical letters have been sent to the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Sincerely yours,

Ray LaHood



Enclosure



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

June 10, 2009

The Honorable John L. Mica  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Mica:

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Ray LaHood



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THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

June 10, 2009

The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
Chairman  
Committee on Environment and Public Works  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

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THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

June 10, 2009

The Honorable James M. Inhofe  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Environment and Public Works  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Inhofe:

This letter transmits the 2009 Report to Congress on Section 1301, Projects of National and Regional Significance of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

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Ray LaHood



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**Projects of National and Regional Significance  
2009 Report to Congress  
Project Information**

**United States Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration**

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## **Project Status**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has received project descriptions and funding allocation requests for 22 of the 25 projects designated under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Section 1301(m). Twenty-one of these projects have received funding allocations, while one is currently pending final review and congressional notification. The following tables summarize the status and funding of the 25 projects.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), FHWA, developed implementing guidance for Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) grantees and posted it on the Internet in early 2006. All grant recipients for projects designated under PNRS are asked to submit project descriptions to FHWA in order to initiate the release of designated funds. The project description, which includes information on project purpose, scope, cost, planning, and finance is submitted to the FHWA Division Office through DOT in the State where the project is located. (Only one project description is required to be submitted for the 5 years of funding authorized by SAFETEA-LU).

The FHWA Division Office reviews and comments on the project description and forwards the description to the FHWA Headquarters where DOT staff from the relevant modal agencies, along with the Office of the Secretary, review the proposal. This review is to ensure that the proposed work is aligned with the congressionally designated project and to determine where and how the Department could assist in project implementation.

More than 3 years after the program was authorized and the projects designated to be funded, three of the 25 projects designated in the legislation, with a total authorized funding of \$85 million (about 5 percent of the total), have not submitted any information describing the projects, nor any estimate of total project costs, and no funds have been allocated to them. While all but one of the other projects have received funding allocations, obligations and outlays of funds remain slow. Of the \$1.779 billion authorized for the program, only \$448 million has been obligated (about 25 percent) and only \$229 million has been spent (about 13 percent).

**Projects of National and Regional Significance Status**

<b>State</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>5-Year Authorized Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
CA	Bakersfield Beltway System	\$140 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	Inland Empire Goods Movement (Norton AFB)	\$55 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	Alameda Corridor East	\$125 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	Transbay Terminal	\$27 m	Under Review
	Gerald Desmond Bridge/I-710	\$100 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	Sacramento Intermodal Station	\$3 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
CO	Union Station (Denver)	\$50 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
IL	O'Hare Bypass	\$140 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	CREATE	\$100 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	Miss River Bridge	\$150 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
MI	Blue Water Bridge Border Plaza (Port Huron)	\$20 m	No Project Description Received
MN	Union Depot Multimodal Transit Facility	\$50 m	No Project Description Received
NJ	Liberty Corridor	\$100 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
NM	Relocate El Paso, TX Rail Yard to Santa Teresa	\$14 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
NY	Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project	\$100 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
OR	I-5 Bridge Repair	\$160 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
PA	US 422 Widening and Interchange Improvements (Montgomery County)	\$20 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	Rt 28 Widening and Improvements (Allegheny County)	\$15 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	I-80 Improvements (Monroe County)	\$15 m	No Project Description Received
SC	I-73 Construction (Myrtle Beach to NC State Line)	\$40 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
VA	Portsmouth Rail Relocation	\$15 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
WA	Alaska Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement	\$100 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
	Replacement of Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall (Seattle)	\$120 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
WI	Marquette Interchange Reconstruction (Milwaukee)	\$30 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated
VA,WV, OH,[KY]	Heartland Corridor	\$90 m	FY05-FY08 Funding Allocated

## Funding Info - Projects of National and Regional Significance (Sec. 1301)

State	Demo ID	Project List	Estimated		FY 05/06		FY 07		FY 08		FY 05-FY08		Amount	
			Total Authorized Funding*	Total Project Cost	Distribution Amount	Distribution Date	FY 07 Distribution Amount	FY 07 Distribution Date	FY 08 Distribution Amount	FY 08 Distribution Date	Total Distribution Amount	Total FY05-FY08 Distribution Amount	Obligated as of 12/6/08	Expended as of 12/6/08
CA	CA743	Bakersfield Bypass	\$140,000,000	\$336,464,000	\$39,056,400	8/30/2007	\$32,225,054	8/30/2007	\$32,305,000,000	3/17/2008	\$102,616,454,000	\$22,073,265,000	\$1,365,589,54	
CA	CA744	Inland Empire Goods Movement (Norton AFB)	\$55,000,000	\$99,914,000	\$14,176,800	2/6/2007	\$12,659,843	4/18/2007	\$12,691,250,000	3/17/2008	\$39,527,893,000	\$26,505,678,000	\$5,055,427,11	
CA	CA745	Alameda Corridor East	\$125,000,000	\$4,600,000,000	\$32,220,000	3/16/2007	\$28,772,370	4/18/2007	\$28,843,750,000	3/17/2008	\$69,836,120,000	\$28,824,443,000	\$1,144,178,37	
CA	CA746	Transbay Terminal	\$27,000,000	Under Review					\$0.00			\$0.00	\$0.00	
CA	CA747	Gerard Desmond Bridge-710	\$100,000,000	\$721,400,000	\$25,776,000	1/18/2008	\$23,017,897,000	1/18/2008	\$23,075,000,000	3/17/2008	\$23,075,000,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	
CA	CA748	Sacramento Intermodal	\$3,000,000	\$4,862,300	773280	12/22/2008	690,537	12/22/2008	\$692,250,000	12/22/2008	\$2,156,067,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	
CO	CO112	Union Station (Denver)	\$50,000,000	\$434,474,000	\$12,866,000	6/13/2008	\$11,508,948	6/13/2008	\$11,537,500,000	6/13/2008	\$35,934,448,000	\$4,000,000,000	\$0.00	
IL	IL524	O'Hare Bypass	\$140,000,000	\$2,171,000,000	\$36,086,400	12/6/2006	\$32,225,054	4/18/2007	\$32,305,000,000	3/17/2008	\$100,616,454,000	\$11,153,027,000	\$311,246,91	
IL	IL525	CREATE	\$100,000,000	\$1,500,000,000	\$2,776,000	1/31/2007	\$23,017,897	4/18/2007	\$23,075,000,000	3/17/2008	\$71,868,897,000	\$27,884,928,13	\$3,536,282,31	
IL	IL526	Miss River Bridge	\$150,000,000	\$910,000,000	\$33,684,000	2/22/2007	\$34,526,844	4/18/2007	\$34,612,500,000	3/17/2008	\$107,803,344,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Mt	MI274	Blue Water Bridge	\$20,000,000					\$0.00						
Mt	MI274	Border Plaza (Port Huron)	\$20,000,000					\$0.00						
MN	MN238	Union Depot Multimodal Transit Facility	\$50,000,000					\$0.00						
NJ	NJ272	Liberty Corridor	\$100,000,000	\$601,460,000	\$25,776,000	12/26/2007	23017897	12/26/2007	\$23,075,000,000	3/17/2008	\$71,868,897,000	\$7,189,392,000	\$10,749,22	
NM	NM077	Relocate El Paso, TX Rail Yard to Santa Teresa	\$14,000,000	\$13,466,000		11/14/2008	3,222,506	11/14/2008	\$3,230,500,000	11/14/2008	\$10,061,646,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	
NY	NY693	Terra Harbor Freight Movement Project	\$100,000,000	\$125,000,000	3608640	11/12/2008	23017897	11/12/2008	\$23,075,000,000	11/12/2008	\$71,868,897,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	
OR	OR174	I-5 Bridge Repair	\$160,000,000	\$663,479,000	\$41,241,600	8/29/2006	\$36,828,634	4/18/2007	\$36,920,000,000	3/17/2008	\$14,990,234,000	\$45,218,432,35	\$38,428,123,14	
PA	PA672	US422 Widening and Interchange Improvements	\$20,000,000	\$168,950,000	\$5,165,200	8/29/2006	\$4,603,579	4/18/2007	\$4,615,000,000	3/17/2008	\$14,373,779,000	\$11,253,000,000	\$5,151,769,85	
PA	PA673	Rte 28 Widening and Improvements (Allegheny County)	\$15,000,000	\$120,000,000	\$3,866,400	8/29/2006	\$3,452,695	4/18/2007	\$3,465,000,000	3/17/2008	\$10,784,065,000	\$10,784,065,000	\$5,969,073,59	
PA	PA674	I-80 Improvements (Montco County)	\$15,000,000					\$0.00						
SC	SC120	I-73 Construction (Myrtle Beach to NC State Line)	\$40,000,000	\$2,525,500,000	\$10,310,400,000	2/15/2008	\$9,207,159,000	2/15/2008	\$9,230,000,000	3/17/2008	\$28,747,559,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	
VA	VA239	Portsmouth Rail Relocation	\$15,000,000	\$69,600,000	\$3,866,400	11/30/2006	\$3,452,695	4/18/2007	\$3,461,250,000	3/17/2008	\$10,780,335,000	\$10,246,103,000	\$10,246,103,000	
WA	WA270	Alaska Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement	\$100,000,000	\$2,800,000,000	\$25,776,000	5/19/2006	\$23,017,897	4/18/2007	\$23,075,000,000	3/17/2008	\$71,868,897,000	\$71,868,897,000	\$39,147,294,59	
WA	WA271	Replacement of Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall (Seattle)	\$120,000,000	See Above	\$30,931,200	5/19/2006	\$27,621,475	4/18/2007	\$27,690,000,000	3/17/2008	\$86,242,675,000	\$86,242,675,000	\$71,942,482,28	
WI	WI140	Marquette Interchange Reconstruction (Milwaukee)	\$30,000,000	\$90,000,000	\$7,732,800	8/29/2006	\$6,905,369	4/18/2007	\$6,930,000,000	3/17/2008	\$21,568,168,000	\$0.00	\$0.00	
VA, WV, OH, KY	N/A	Hearland Corridor	\$90,000,000	\$150,000,000	\$23,198,400	1/9/2007	\$23,718,107	5/10/2007	\$20,767,500,000	3/17/2008	\$64,682,007,000	\$63,462,181,16	\$25,195,602,63	
Total			\$1,779,000,000	\$4,316,920,000	\$431,695,920,000		\$383,708,334,000		\$394,671,500,000		\$1,151,271,857,000	\$448,273,799,64	\$229,082,080,53	

\* The total authorized funding levels in this table equal the totals authorized in SAFETEA-LU sections 1301, however, the funding is subject to obligation limitation and other "take-downs" designated in the Appropriations Acts.  
 \*\*FY 08 includes Deobligation due to SAFETEA-LU Tech Corrections Bill

## **Project Descriptions**

The following summarizes project information submitted to DOT as part of project descriptions. This summary only contains projects that have completed the review process and received funding allocations. There are a total of 20 PNRS with 21 funding allocations.

### **Alameda Corridor East (CA)**

**Summary:** In 2001, the Alameda Corridor East (ACE) Construction Authority, San Bernardino Associated Governments, Orange County Transportation Authority/City of Placentia, and the Riverside County Transportation Commission developed the comprehensive ACE Trade Corridor Plan. The ACE Trade Corridor Improvement Plan proposes highway/rail grade separations at 131 crossings, plus 61 additional crossing improvements. The ACE Trade Corridor extends the public infrastructure necessary to connect the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and the Alameda Corridor to the transcontinental rail network through the Nation's second largest metropolitan area.

Eliminating vehicle conflicts at the 131 highest volume crossings will improve rail system reliability, significantly reduce the frequency of crossing accidents and railroad liability exposure, and further enhance the competitive position of Southern California in attracting international trade. The areas through which the ACE Trade Corridor passes account for approximately 6.7 million jobs today; that number is expected to grow to 9.7 million by 2020. The virtual gridlock that will result from unmitigated freight train growth will stifle both the existing economic base and the prospects for future growth. The vitality of the State's trade corridor sector and the future competitiveness of the region, State, and Nation, in a just-in-time economy, depends upon its global gateways—its international seaports and airports—and the major trade corridors which serve as strategic intermodal linkages and provide needed goods movement mobility throughout the region, State, and Nation. Improving major trade corridors such as the ACE Trade Corridor, which serve the San Pedro Bay ports, is seen as essential to preserving California and the Nation's global competitiveness.

By 2020, almost 13,000 vehicle hours of delay would be eliminated with these improvements, as would an estimated 370 accidents per year. The congestion avoided by the 131 grade separations will eliminate approximately 288 tons per year of combined reactive organic gas, nitrogen oxides, and carbon monoxide annually in 2010, the attainment deadline for the most polluted air basin in the Nation.

The estimated cost of the total improvement program is \$4.6 billion. Currently, the 4 counties have 25 projects funded and 7 projects completed. At least 10 projects will be funded by the PNRS funds.

## **Bakersfield Beltway System (CA)**

Summary: The proposed Bakersfield Beltway System consists of the following three limited access expressway or freeway facilities on three different alignments:

- West Beltway - extends north-south from SR 58 to SR 119 along the western part of the metropolitan Bakersfield area.
- South Beltway - extends east-west from SR 58 to I-5 along the southern part of the metropolitan Bakersfield area.
- North Beltway - extends east-west from SR 99 to SR 43 along the northern part of the metropolitan Bakersfield area.

The proposed beltway system will ultimately provide direct connections to I-5, SR 43, SR 99, and SR 119 bypassing the metropolitan Bakersfield area. The PNRS funding will be used for conducting environmental studies, planning, preliminary engineering, design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction for various segments.

## **Gerald Desmond/I-710 Gateway Project (CA)**

Summary: This project involves replacement of the Gerald Desmond Bridge which is a key component of the I-710 Corridor/Gerald Desmond Bridge Gateway Program. The I-710/Desmond Program is a comprehensive, strategic approach to addressing the congestion, air quality, and safety issues in the Corridor between the Ports of Long Beach/Los Angeles and State Route 60. The Gerald Desmond Bridge is the westerly extension of the I-710 and is currently designated part of State Route 710. The bridge replacement project entails demolition and replacement of the existing bridge with a 6-lane cable-stayed bridge and reconstruction of the Terminal Island East and I-710 Freeway/Desmond Bridge interchanges.

The I-710 Corridor/Gerald Desmond Bridge Gateway Program is a crucial transportation facility serving the Ports of Long Beach/Los Angeles, the region, State, and Nation. The I-710 Corridor and Gerald Desmond Bridge carry approximately 15 percent and 10 percent of all U.S. waterborne container volume, respectively. While the recently opened Alameda Corridor can be thought of as the trade "railway" gateway to the Nation, the I-710 Desmond Gateway is the de facto trade "highway" gateway to the Nation. The I-710/Desmond Gateway is presently experiencing serious performance problems due to a number of interrelated reasons, including traffic congestion and safety.

The Desmond Bridge is a National Highway System Intermodal Connector Route and part of the Federal Strategic Highway Network (National Defense Highway System). Additionally, the Port of Long Beach is designated as a strategic military out-load port by the DOT Maritime Administration (MARAD), and the Gerald Desmond Bridge provides access to MARAD's Ready Reserve vessels on Terminal Island.

The bridge's "Sufficiency Rating," which is part of the overall DOT Highway Bridge Program (determined by the traffic volumes/operating conditions, geometric design, and structural integrity), was 43 in 2005. Replacement is warranted when a bridge has a 50-point "Sufficiency Rating." Such a low rating was determined even after the bridge was seismically retrofitted in 1998.

Additionally, the Gerald Desmond Bridge is located over the main Federal navigation channel that serves the Port of Long Beach. It is one of the lowest bridges in any large commercial port in the world. The existing air draft of the bridge is 156 feet, which is insufficient to accommodate some existing container ships. In addition, new vessels currently being constructed will not be able to pass under the bridge.

Project benefits include the following:

Environmental Benefits - By replacing the existing 4-lane bridge with a 6-lane bridge, and by reducing the grade from 6 percent to 5 percent, air pollution resulting from traffic congestion (particularly diesel emissions from slow truck speeds and from idling) would decrease significantly.

Congestion Mitigation Benefits - Traffic operating conditions would improve from an unacceptable level of service F to an acceptable level of service D. Delays will be significantly reduced. By 2025, the replacement of the Gerald Desmond Bridge would reduce vehicle hours and vehicle miles traveled per day in the Corridor by about 5,115 vehicle hours traveled and 28,245 vehicle miles traveled, respectively.

Safety Benefits - The existing Gerald Desmond Bridge is not wide enough to enable the efficient and safe clearing of incidents/accidents. At present, there are various design deficiencies that contribute to the high accident rates on the I-710 Corridor and on the Gerald Desmond Bridge. Truck accidents occur frequently on the bridge, often times blocking both travel lanes, which limits emergency access and traps vehicles on the bridge until the disabled truck is removed. The new bridge will eliminate this safety hazard by providing an additional travel lane and standard inside/outside shoulders in each direction.

### **Roadway improvements in and around the former Norton Air Force Base as part of the Inland Empire Goods Movement Gateway Project (CA)**

Summary: The Inland Empire Goods Movement Gateway (IEGMG) is a regional effort to facilitate goods movement through the county of San Bernardino, particularly, in and around the former Norton Air Force Base (NAFB). This project includes several transportation improvement projects that will greatly enhance mobility throughout the region and help speed the flow of commerce. The area in and around the former NAFB in San Bernardino is becoming a major distribution center for goods movement from the Los Angeles and Long Beach port areas and transcontinental freeways which go through the area. Reconstruction and improvements to these freeways will contribute to enhanced goods movement. There are two subprojects in the IEGMG which comprise this PNRS application: the I-215 corridor reconstruction and the I-10/Tippecanoe interchange reconstruction.

The I-215 corridor is one of two freeway corridors in the immediate area, both of which are currently at or near capacity. The I-215 corridor connects to I-15, a major north-south cross-country corridor, which then intersects with I-40 and I-70, major east-west cross-



country freeway corridors. Millions of tons of maritime cargo are shipped by truck along these cross country corridors. This project will reconstruct I-215 by adding a high-occupancy vehicle lane and mixed-flow lane in each direction on the corridor and other operational improvements. These projects are vital to improving regional goods movement and increasing safety in this area and improving this vital link between the area distribution centers and the major cross-country trucking corridors.

Tippecanoe Avenue in San Bernardino is one of the main arterials that connects the distribution center area around the former NAFB and the I-10 transcontinental corridor. The I-10 corridor extends from Los Angeles to Florida with connections to other transcontinental freeway corridors along the way. The existing I-10 access to and from Tippecanoe at the interchange needs improvement due to four closely spaced signalized intersections around the interchange causing queuing problems on the streets and onto the mainline. This project will construct an added auxiliary lane in the eastbound direction, widen streets and ramps, and reconfigure a westbound ramp to eliminate a signalized intersection.

### **Sacramento Intermodal Station (CA)**

Summary: The city of Sacramento proposes to improve the existing station to meet current needs and to establish a state-of-the-art regional transportation center to meet future needs of rail and bus transit passengers and service operators in the Sacramento region through the year 2025 and beyond. Developed in three phases, the Sacramento Intermodal Transportation Facility would encompass a realignment of existing mainline rail tracks (Phase 1), improvements to the existing Sacramento Valley Station (Phase 2), and eventual transformation of the station into a multimodal transportation center (Phase 3).

The scope of work activities to be funded by PNRS grant will be in Phase 1 – Track Relocation and will include project development, preliminary engineering, environmental review, preliminary site acquisition support, final design, and construction. If funds remain after completion of the design phase, these funds would be used in subsequent approved project delivery phases, such as construction.

### **Denver's Union Station (CO)**

Summary: This project proposes to transform the historic Denver Union Station (DUS) into a multimodal transportation center servicing the Metro Denver Region, the State of Colorado and beyond. The DUS is the hub of a comprehensive set of transportation improvements underway that are intended to promote travel on alternative modes, resulting in reduced vehicle miles traveled, congestion, and air quality impacts. At completion, DUS improvements will bring together the many different means of transportation planned in the region into one place, provide safe and convenient transfers, and include transit-oriented development.

The DUS project will utilize PNRS funds, along with many other sources of local and State funds it will leverage, to complete a variety of preconstruction, construction, and transit infrastructure improvement activities.

## **Construction of O'Hare Bypass/Elgin O'Hare Extension (IL)**

Summary: This project is comprised of: (1) the Elgin-O'Hare Expressway Extension (including the reconstruction and upgrade of Thorndale Avenue) and investigation of a western access interchange at the proposed Western O'Hare Bypass to access the O'Hare International Airport and (2) construction of an access controlled facility around the western and southern boundaries of O'Hare International Airport from I-294 to I-90 (including investigation of interchange access at cross routes). This project will result in improved mobility for motorists in the Chicago metropolitan area.

## **Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program**

Summary: The Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program involves improvements to both railroad infrastructure and the local road system in Chicago. This project will invest \$1.5 billion in capital projects to reduce train delays and congestion throughout the Chicago area along five rail corridors. Private and public contributions will fund the program, with the six railroad partners providing \$212 million (an amount equal to the potential economic benefits of the improvements to the rail industry). The remaining funds will come from Federal, State, and local governments. The key projects are as follows:

- Grade separation of six railroad-railroad crossings (rail-rail "flyovers") to eliminate train interference and associated delay, primarily between passenger and freight trains.
- Grade separation of 25 highway-rail crossings, to reduce motorist delay, improve safety, eliminate crossing accidents, decrease energy consumption, and reduce air pollution.
- Additional rail connections, crossovers, trackage, and other improvements to expedite train movements in five rail corridors traversing the Chicago region.

The CREATE Program is a first-of-its-kind, public-private partnership that provides a multimodal program (freight rail, passenger rail, and highway) that capitalizes on a spirit of collaboration among competitors to provide significant benefits to the Chicago region and the Nation. The FHWA Illinois Division Office, in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Transportation and Chicago Department of Transportation, developed the Systematic, Project Expediting, Environmental Decisionmaking (SPEED) Strategy to address the CREATE Program in total. The SPEED Strategy supports systematic decisionmaking, provides an expeditious method of moving low-risk component projects forward, and assesses potential environmental impacts in a proportional, graduated way.

- In all, CREATE will bring benefits to the Chicago region valued at:
  - \$595 million related to safety improvements and reduced delays for motorists and rail passengers,
  - \$1.1 billion related to air quality improvements, and
  - \$2.2 billion related to construction.
- During its construction period, CREATE will generate an annual average of more than 2,700 full-time, construction-related jobs and \$365 million in purchases of materials and services.

- By decreasing shipping times, CREATE will boost the competitiveness of manufacturers and businesses and encourage long-term job growth in Illinois and nationwide. Shippers will save an estimated \$40 million annually in reduced inventory costs.
- Reductions in highway needs and user costs will yield more than \$10 billion in savings for the Nation over 20 years.
- For area residents, CREATE means reduced traffic congestion, shorter commuting times, better air quality, and increased public safety.

### **Mississippi River Bridge and related roads (IL)**

Summary: The New Mississippi River Crossing project includes a new 8-lane river bridge, the relocation of I-70 on a new alignment from east of IL 203 in Illinois to existing I-70 north of downtown St. Louis, and the partial construction of Relocated I-70/I-64 interchange.

This project will serve the Heart of America where one out of five industrial jobs are located and 40 percent of U.S. exports originate. The bridge location will facilitate national east-west traffic and assist in the north-south goods movement important to the North American Free Trade Agreement trade relations, which support 27 percent of U.S. agricultural exports. Construction of this project will greatly improve traffic efficiency and access in Illinois and Missouri by correcting the existing transportation bottleneck that relies on a single crossing for three vital Interstates. This project will also strengthen the Nation's defense, communication, and economic infrastructure by providing an additional Mississippi River crossing in America's heartland.

### **Liberty Corridor (NJ)**

Summary: The Liberty Corridor currently encompasses 8 counties (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Passaic, and Union counties), with 232 municipalities. It contains 9 of the State's 10 largest cities and towns. The Liberty Corridor takes a comprehensive look at the transportation issues facing the region and improves the transportation system connecting the largest seaport on the east coast and the 13th largest airport in the Nation to the national and global economy and the transcontinental rail network.

The Liberty Corridor Phase I proposal includes 10 projects (6 highway, 2 freight rail, and 2 public transit projects). These projects include the following:

- (1) Wittpenn Bridge Replacement - replaces the existing Wittpenn bridge with a new vertical-lift bridge on a new alignment.
- (2) North Jersey Railroad Doublestack Clearance/National Docks - improves vertical clearances on two tunnels on the Conrail railroad route between the Port of New York and New Jersey and the CSX mainline serving the U.S. rail network. The Bergen and Waldo tunnels currently limit the height of intermodal container trains to 19 feet 2 inches. The improvements will allow passage of industry standard intermodal container trains of 20 feet 2 inches in height.

- (3) Port Reading Junction - addresses a major choke point in the region's rail system by reconfiguring the Port Reading Junction to provide double track train operations between CSX - West Trenton line and Norfolk Southern - Lehigh line. This improves the efficiency of train operation and optimizes the current Lehigh line double tracking project.
- (4) Tremley Point Connector Road - provides access from the New Jersey Turnpike Interchange 12 through Carteret, NJ, over the Rahway River, and into Tremley Point in Linden, NJ.
- (5) North Avenue Corridor Project – Phase I - separates truck traffic for the Port and Airport from passenger traffic for retail, hotel, and other land uses in the area.
- (6) Route 35/36 Eatontown - improves access to Fort Monmouth and other locations via Route 35/36.
- (7) Route 1, Section 6V, North of Ryders Lane to South of Milltown Road - improves access by replacing a deficient bridge, road improvements, and additional signals.
- (8) Route 18/I-287 Connection - upgrades access via Hoes Lane from I-287 to the Busch Campus of Rutgers University. Hoes Lane will be upgraded to be part of State Route 18, with four lanes, pavement replacement, signal replacement, and various pedestrian safety improvements (including sidewalks, multiuse paths and two new pedestrian bridges).
- (9) Liberty Corridor Bus Rapid Transit Service - Creates a bus rapid transit line connecting Newark's neighborhoods and workforce to the downtown employers at the Port of Newark/ Elizabeth, Newark Liberty International Airport, the Newark Innovation Zone, and University Heights Science Park.
- (10) New Brunswick/Northeast Corridor Transit Connection Initiative - develops a direct connection from the westbound station platform to the University Research Tower and provides access to the North East Corridor and Newark Liberty International Airport.

Phase I projects are intended to achieve the following:

- Clear chokepoints in the surface transportation system, which will assist the competitiveness of one of the Nation's largest ports as an efficient and effective means of moving goods internationally, nationally, and regionally.
- Make critical connections and separate traffic flows, enabling underutilized and brownfield properties to be brought back to productive use.
- Separate freight and passenger traffic to allow diverse land uses, such as ports, warehouses, retail complexes, and hotels, to coexist and thrive.
- Enhance access to sites of innovation, assisting research institutions and firms focused on emerging technologies to attract workers and develop products that both benefit the U.S. and can be exported to the global marketplace.

The Liberty Corridor is fully integrated into the State, New Jersey Department of Transportation, New Jersey Transit, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, and New Jersey Turnpike Authority's planning, and all of these entities have embraced the Liberty Corridor's concept and project selection. Given the larger planning context, more than 20 public and private organizations have come together to agree on the Liberty Corridor's priorities. The \$100 million Liberty Corridor funds will be leveraged to produce \$601 million in transportation projects.

**For purposes of construction and other related transportation improvements associated with the rail yard relocation in the vicinity of Santa Teresa (NM)**

Summary: This project is located around El Paso, Texas, which is midway between the west coast of the United States and the eastern limits of the Union Pacific Railroad's southern tier mainline. El Paso is a major railroad service center and crew change location. The Union Pacific's mainline is the railroad's primary east-west route for intermodal containers from southern California, serving both the Mid-West (Chicago) and the South-Central (Houston/Dallas) markets. The city also is served by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway line that connects to its major east-west mainline at Belen Junction, south of Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Based on data from the U.S. Public Waybill, approximately \$55.6 billion in commodities passed through El Paso by rail in 2001, with origins and destinations in more than 16 States, as well as Mexico. This represents approximately 13 percent of the total value of all goods transported by rail in the U.S. Nearly 17 percent of the entire 9 million U.S. intermodal rail shipments transited through the city of El Paso during the same period to origins and destinations throughout the Nation.

The goal of this project is to improve rail operations and regional transportation systems by constructing, improving, and relocating infrastructure in the vicinity of Santa Teresa, New Mexico, and El Paso, Texas. This project will plan, design, and construct the necessary transportation improvements. The project will provide mutual benefits to the citizens of the region by enhancing the national transportation system, the environment, and national security. Specifically, the relocation of specific rail operations from El Paso, Texas, to New Mexico.

The project will promote international trade and create a more efficient, higher capacity rail system to expedite the movement of cargo to and from Western ports. National security would be enhanced with new, state-of-the-art rail security screening and inspection devices. The project is also intended to enhance the quality of life in the city of El Paso's metropolitan area by relocating railroad industrial-type operations away from the city's central business district. The goal is to reduce truck trip lengths and queuing in residential and commercial neighborhoods resulting in a reduction of noise and exhaust emissions.

The PNRS funding will be used for an access road to the facilities. The project will consist of roadway construction to connect state highway NM 136 to the Union Pacific facilities and will include intersection improvements. The rail line relocation and yards will be constructed independently by Union Pacific.

**Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project, New York (NY)**

Summary: The Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project (the Cross Harbor Project) proposes the near-term rehabilitation and the long-term improvement of the currently underutilized rail freight network connecting the New York and New England markets to national markets west of the Hudson River.

Currently, in order to cross the New York Harbor, barges carry railcars from Greenville Yard, New Jersey, which have arrived via the national rail network, across the harbor to float bridges located at 51st Street in Brooklyn, New York. From these yards, the railcars are transported via the Bay Ridge Line to points further east and north. The only other rail link across the Hudson River is operated by CSX and located 100 miles to the north near Albany. This circuitous routing adds over 200 miles for rail freight goods traveling to and from the south and west and hinders any potential shift from truck to rail for goods emanating from these areas.

The advancement of the Cross Harbor Project is seen as strengthening the economic vitality of the entire region, opening access to the region for other Class I and short-line railroads, and enhancing the efficiency and capacity of the Nation's transportation network by encouraging and supporting a shift from truck to rail for goods transport.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, as a public transportation agency, will take on the near-term and long-term issues that are demanded by the current state of the Cross Harbor rail network. If the rail network that supplies goods to the Nation's largest consumer market is not maintained in the near-term, the window of opportunity to create long-term improvements that benefit the national movement of goods by rail will close. Thus, it is the Port Authority's intention to utilize the PNRS funding to return the existing rail network to a state-of-good-repair in keeping with the intent of the No Action Alternative as defined in the existing Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Parallel to this activity, and in coordination with its project partners, the Port Authority will work to identify a preferred alternative for continuing the national rail service across the New York Harbor into the East of Hudson region by supplementing the existing DEIS and completing a Final EIS and Record of Decision.

### **I-5 Bridge repair, replacement, and associated improvements in the I-5 corridor (OR)**

Summary: This project makes a large number of individual improvements to bridges in the I-5 corridor. In all, a total of 25 bridges have been identified for improvement. The State's recommended allocation of the available funding is proposed as follows: widening of bridges, replacing bridges, reconstruction of interchanges around bridges, and modification of bridges with limited vertical clearance.

I-5 is one of the Nation's high priority corridors. It is the third most heavily traveled truck corridor in the Nation, and directly connects the United States to Canada and Mexico. This corridor carries a large portion of the freight traffic in and through the State. Oregon's existing transportation system is struggling to provide viable freight routes due to vertical clearance pinch points. In particular, the movement of mobile homes, construction material, construction equipment, and many other types of freight critical to Oregon's economy are greatly restricted due to insufficient vertical clearance on many routes. The PNRS project provides for the elimination of 13 vertical clearance obstructions that currently impede successful transport within the State of Oregon and between the Western States, Canada, and Mexico. Improving vertical clearance on freight routes is essential to the economic health of the State.

Additionally, several of the bridges identified require widening in anticipation of the need for additional travel lanes on the Interstate over the next 20 years due to increasing traffic volumes. In particular, the Oregon Department of Transportation identified 2 mainline segments of I-5 (Albany-Columbia River and Creswell-Coburg), 10 interchanges, and 4 climbing-lane segments that were forecast to be congested or extremely congested by 2020. The PNRS project will help fund the widening of six bridges (or bridge pairs) that will help alleviate future congestion, without increasing future costs, by providing sufficient structure width in bridges currently being replaced to accommodate a 20-year forecast of congestion conditions.

#### **Route 23/US 422 Interchange modernization and Route 363/US 422 interchange Improvement Project and US 422 widening, Montgomery County (PA)**

Summary: This project involves improvements to U.S. 422 in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, around Valley Forge National Historical Park. The project's aim is to provide safety and operational improvements to U.S. 422 and the surrounding area. The funds will be used for an early action project that will add a third auxiliary lane along U.S. 422 West between the PA 23 and PA 363 interchanges (SR 0422, Section ITM project). The funding will also be used for three additional projects along U.S. 422.

#### **Route 28 Widening and Improvements, Allegheny County (PA)**

Summary: This project is located along Route 28 from the connection with I-279 and I-579 to the Millvale Interchange in the city of Pittsburgh and the Borough of Millvale. The scope of work includes widening of the road to provide four standard lanes, construction of a median barrier, grade separations of roads, channelization, and signal improvement. To accommodate the proposed improvements, right-of-way acquisition, railroad relocation, and utility relocation will also be included in the project. This project will result in improved mobility and safety for motorists in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area.

#### **I-73, Construction of I-73 from Myrtle Beach, SC, to I-95, ending at the North Carolina State line (SC)**

Summary: This project proposes to improve national and regional connectivity to the Grand Strand area of South Carolina by providing a direct link from North Carolina to the Grand Strand area located along the Atlantic Ocean. I-73 will provide Interstate highway access to the Grand Strand and assist in keeping this area of the State competitive with other tourist destinations along the coast. The project will also facilitate a more effective evacuation of the Grand Strand population during emergencies such as hurricanes. The scope of work will include all items that are considered part of new highway project development such as, preliminary engineering, environmental review, design, mitigation, right-of-way acquisition, and construction.

#### **Alaska Way Viaduct and Seawall Replacement/Replacement of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall in Seattle (WA)**

Summary: This project proposes to improve the existing SR 99 corridor now served by the Alaskan Way Viaduct in Seattle, Washington. The Viaduct and the Seattle Seawall are at risk of failure from earthquakes or irreversible loss of use from age and

deterioration. The project will provide facilities with improved earthquake resistance that maintains or improves mobility for people and goods along the existing SR 99 corridor. The project would also improve the Alaskan Way Seawall, which supports surface streets and the Viaduct's foundations. Specifically, a 6-lane facility between Spokane Street and the Battery Street Tunnel will be constructed to replace the existing viaduct and seawall and reconnect the city street grid over SR 99 north of the Battery Street Tunnel.

The SR 99 Alaskan Way Viaduct, along with I-5, are the primary north-south limited access routes through downtown Seattle. One quarter of all north-south traffic through Seattle (103,000 vehicles) uses the Viaduct every day. Closure of the Viaduct following the 2001 Nisqually Earthquake resulted in extreme congestion on I-5 and in the downtown city street grid, clearly demonstrating that this is a critical route that needs to be replaced, due to the effect its closure would have on I-5 traffic. Washington State Department of Transportation estimates that if the Viaduct is no longer usable, travel time through the downtown Seattle area will double. Washington State Department of Transportation also believes that if the Viaduct were to collapse, container traffic through the International Port of Seattle (\$32 billion worth of goods each year) would grind to a halt, cutting off container traffic between Seattle and the Mid-West. This makes the Alaskan Way Viaduct a vital link in the region's highway and freight mobility system, and thus, critical to the region's economy.

#### **Reconstruction of the Marquette Interchange, Milwaukee (WI)**

Summary: This project involves rebuilding the Marquette Interchange and adjacent sections of I-94, I-43, and I-794. The Marquette Interchange and the Zoo Interchange are the linchpins of the southeastern Wisconsin freeway system. The freeway system affects a significant portion of the State's residents. Besides serving the transportation needs of individuals and businesses in the Milwaukee area, approximately 62 percent of the State's jobs are influenced by the southeastern Wisconsin freeway system. Additionally, almost two-thirds of all goods shipped from the Fox Valley area travel on the southeastern Wisconsin freeway system, and with its connections to major markets, the freeway system serves as a gateway for tourists to Wisconsin, fueling an \$11.7 billion industry statewide.

#### **Rail Relocation to Route 164/I-664 rail corridor, Portsmouth (VA)**

Summary: The Portsmouth rail relocation to the Route 164 (Western Freeway) and I-664 median (Median Rail Project) is a project to relocate the existing Commonwealth Railway rail line that runs through the cities of Portsmouth and Chesapeake with a new rail line that will run through the medians of the existing Western Freeway. The Median Rail Corridor will extend approximately 4.5 miles and will link the APM Marine Terminal, currently under construction, (as well as the future Virginia Port Authority (VPA) Craney Island Marine Terminal) with the Commonwealth Railway main rail line at a point near Bowers Hill.

The Median Rail Project will be a component of the Heartland Corridor. The Heartland Corridor defines improvements necessary to permit the safe and efficient rail handling of increasing volumes of imported container shipments from the Port of Virginia into the Midwest region. The Median Rail Project will allow for improvements in the efficient and safe movement, as well as a significant increase in intermodal rail traffic associated



with the new APM/Maersk facility and the proposed Craney Island Marine Terminal. The new APM/Maersk Marine Terminal is a \$600 million project (opened in July 2007). The VPA is planning a \$2.4 billion marine terminal adjacent to APM/Maersk (to be opened in 2017). Together this \$3 billion investment in the national marine transportation system is planned to handle nearly 5 million, 20-foot equivalent units. Both terminals will be served by the proposed Median Rail line.

With adequate capacity in the system, over 30 percent (nearly 1 million containers) of this cargo is planned to move by rail. The Median Rail Project will provide the ability to keep 1 million trucks off the highways while also removing 14 at-grade crossings from the urban areas of Portsmouth and Chesapeake.

**Heartland Corridor Project including multiple intermodal facility improvements and improvements to facilitate the movement of intermodal freight from VA to OH (VA, WV, and OH)**

Summary: This project is designed to create an efficient intermodal rail route that will start at the Port of Virginia, cross West Virginia and terminate in Columbus, Ohio. In Columbus, Heartland Corridor trains will link up with western rail networks and/or the existing Norfolk Southern network that is double-stack cleared to Chicago. The funds will be used to link existing rail systems, build new rail line where needed, and raise tunnel and bridge heights to allow for passage of Norfolk Southern's double-stack trains.

The Heartland Corridor Project provides the opportunity to open up a significant portion of Appalachia currently excluded from international intermodal markets, connecting to a center of existing domestic and international distribution in the Midwest, thereby strengthening the economic vitality of the entire region and enhancing the efficiency and capacity of the Nation's transportation network. The Heartland Corridor Project will result in opportunities for shippers throughout the Midwest, from central Ohio through the Chicago and Detroit regions, to move their inbound and outbound product more effectively via rail. Provisions of the Heartland Corridor Project will also allow for the future development of intermodal facilities along the corridor, which will enable areas like western Virginia, West Virginia, northeast Kentucky, or southern Ohio to benefit from rail intermodal.

To the extent that this project is able to attract freight from highways to rail, there will be benefits through greater mobility for both motorists and those trucks which will continue to carry goods over the road. Current rail service, connecting Midwest points to maritime port facilities in Portsmouth, Virginia, or Norfolk, Virginia, is restricted to single-stack trains reducing the volume of freight that can move within a given time. To use double-stack trains freight must either travel via Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and then south, or via Danville, Kentucky, and Knoxville, Tennessee, and then east. The provision for double-stack via the Heartland Corridor will reduce the rail mileage for those containers moving from port terminals in Virginia to the Midwest by over 200 miles, making rail service more efficient and effective (increasing the volume of freight moved) and making rail a more attractive option for shippers. This project can result in a number of public benefits including, but not limited to, contributing to the reduction of congestion, improving public safety, and enabling States to stretch their highway dollars further.

## **Promulgation of Project Evaluation and Rating Regulations**

SAFETEA-LU Section 1301 requires the Secretary of Transportation to establish regulations on the manner in which the proposed projects under the PNRS Program will be evaluated and rated, in order to determine which projects shall receive grant funding. On October 24, 2008, FHWA published in the Federal Register at 73 FR 63362 a final rule establishing the required evaluation and rating guidelines for proposed projects. Under this rule, a proposed project would be eligible for funding under the PNRS Program only if the Secretary finds that the project meets the eligibility requirements of the rule. The Secretary will then evaluate and rate each project as “highly recommended,” “recommended,” or “not recommended,” based on the results of preliminary engineering, the project justification criteria, and the degree of non-Federal financial commitment.

Upon Congress authorizing additional funding for the PNRS Program, FHWA will be positioned to release a solicitation for projects. The FHWA will then use the evaluation and rating guidelines contained in the final rule for projects proposed during this solicitation.