

WASHINGTON

PROJECTS and PAYCHECKS

STATE EXAMPLES

On the Road to Recovery 2009

(As of December 31, 2009)

**Number of Recovery
Projects:**
208

**Total State
Expenditures:**
\$144,319,526

**State Web Site for
More Information:**
www.wsdot.wa.gov/funding/stimulus

**AASHTO Recovery
Web Site:**
recovery.transportation.org

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*A one-year report on **state transportation successes** under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*

February 2010

AASHTO
THE VOICE OF TRANSPORTATION



"Washington State leveraged \$492 million in Recovery Act funds into nearly \$1.4 billion in highway investments by combining federal dollars with state funds to advance ready-to-go projects; putting more workers on the job. We also benefited from a good bidding climate – with bids on average more than 20 percent below engineers estimates – which allowed us to make transportation improvements in more areas of the state."

–Paula Hammond, DOT Secretary

I-5/Port of Tacoma Rd to King County Line Pierce County, Washington

Value: \$57,687,715, relieved congestion and reduced the risk of collisions

This project widens I-5 in the median to accommodate new HOV lanes from Port of Tacoma Road to the Pierce/King County line. This project is part of the Tacoma/Pierce County HOV Program, a series of highway projects to provide operational improvements and high-occupancy-vehicle lanes on I-5, SR 16, and SR 167.

The HOV lanes are expected to ease congestion on this heavily traveled section of I-5. Other improvements include new bridge railings, new traffic cameras and monitoring equipment for real-time traffic conditions, and ramp meters. Additionally, this project repaves all lanes of I-5 from Port of Tacoma Road to the Pierce/King county line.



Charles Graham, Dean Libhart, Erik Buholm and Rich McKinney were all out of work for months before landing jobs on the I-5 Port of Tacoma to King County Line HOV project.

How ARRA Affected the Jobs' Picture in My State

Dean Libhart of Tacoma is married and has a 3-year-old and a 6-year-old at home. "This (job) is a godsend for my family," Libhart said.

Michael Joseph, a 53-year-old Spanaway man who's worked four months out of the last 12, said: "I just about started crying (when I landed the job)." Times have been particularly



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I-5/Port of Tacoma Rd to King Co Line

Pierce County, Washington

(continued)

trying for Joseph, whose wife is fighting cancer. “For me, health care is everything,” Joseph said. And without work, keeping up with health care costs is close to impossible.

Charles Graham, 44, of Key Center, is a single father of an 11-year-old daughter and he takes care of his 63-year-old mother. For more than two decades, he found steady work. That all changed Nov. 7, 2008, the last day Graham worked before starting this new job. “In 21 years, I’ve never seen anything like this,” Graham said.

All of these men are willing and able to work, and say they would much rather earn a paycheck for a hard day’s labor than use the social services that have helped them survive – barely. “The \$21 a month in food stamps doesn’t even pay for the milk,” Libhart said. “I had never been to a food bank before. You have to do what you have to do.”

That was yesterday. Today, Libhart and the others were up before dawn, dressed in hard hats and vests. No more time to talk. The trucks are pulling out and these guys need to get to work. Charles Graham, Dean Libhart, Erik Buholm and Rich McKinney were all out of work for months before landing jobs on the I-5 Port of Tacoma to King County Line HOV project.