

Grants awarded \$1.5M for Washington Avenue Bridge

Written by Staff Reports
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GRANTS, N.M. - The City of Grants was awarded \$1.42 million to replace the bridge on Washington Avenue. The current 60-year-old bridge is crumbling, Mayor Martin Hicks said.

“That bridge is older than me,” he emphasized. “Look at it, the bottom of it is all corroded. It is in poor shape.”

The City is required to make a \$75,000 match toward the estimated \$1.5 million bridge project. The new bridge is currently at 60 percent. Design and construction is planned for the spring of 2020.

City Manager Laura Jaramillo said, “We are very thrilled to receive substantial funding that will

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help the City of Grants address infrastructure needs. On behalf of the citizens, we give a big thank you to our team at the local and regional level for all their hard work to obtain this funding. In addition, special thanks to our legislators who worked to make this funding available at the community level. This opportunity is a blessing to the community.”

In Ruidoso last week, the NMDOT Commission approved \$50 million worth of local and tribal transportation projects throughout the state, including the bridge on Washington Avenue. The funding was appropriated by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham.

During the 2019 Legislative Session, Representatives Patricio Ruiloba (D-12, Bernalillo) and Patricia Lundstrom (D-9, McKinley and San Juan) introduced and passed House Bill 694, which created the Local Government Transportation Project Fund that allows the state to invest in a wide range of local transportation project types, at all stages of readiness, and only requires a minimum local match.

A special call for projects was announced in April. One hundred and sixty six applications were turned in statewide and 57 were selected for an award. The Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations, and the NMDOT reviewed applications. Ultimately, NMDOT Cabinet Secretary Michael Sandoval provided a final list of recommendations to his department’s commission for approval in Ruidoso on Aug. 15.

Also awarded were the Pueblos of Acoma and Laguna, and the Village of Milan. Acoma was awarded \$1.13 million for the Veterans Boulevard Roadway Project; Laguna was awarded \$1.9 million for an Interstate 40 Concrete Box Underpass; and, the Village of Milan was awarded \$120,000 for Haystack Phase II.

The commissioner for District 6 is longtime area resident Charles Lundstrom. District 6 encompasses the northwest corner of the state, including Grants, Acoma, Laguna, and Milan.

Mayor Hicks said after the Washington Avenue Bridge is replaced, “There’s two more to go. Since I was elected, it has been all about flood control. We’ve replaced the bridges on First Street, Second Street, College Heights Road, George Hanosh Boulevard, and Nimitz Avenue...Now, the bridge on Washington Avenue. The bridges on Roosevelt and Santa Fe

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Avenues are next.”

Near Washington Avenue Bridge is the Future Family Foundations Center and Mesa View Elementary.

Drainage improvements are already being made on the 500 Block of Jefferson Avenue, one of the roads that leads to the Washington Avenue Bridge. Phase I construction, which includes a new roadway, sidewalk, and a large retention pond, is expected to start at the beginning of October and end in December. The City is currently seeking funding for Phase II, which includes drainage improvements on the 500 Block of Washington Avenue. For many years, residents on and near the 500 blocks of Washington and Jefferson avenues have been at risk of flooding. The drainage improvements and bridge are expected to help alleviate the risk.

For additional information: (505) 285-3981.