

**TRIBAL AND STATE RELATIONS COMMITTEE****October 13, 2014****11 a.m. Roughrider Room****North Dakota Department of Transportation****Ron Henke, P.E., Deputy Director**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I'm Ron Henke, Deputy Director for Engineering at the North Dakota Department of Transportation (DOT.)

The DOT has always had good relationships with the tribes in North Dakota and continues to work in partnership with them to provide a safe transportation system across the state. As a result there are federal grant programs available to them for roads like Jack Rabbit road on the Turtle Mountain Reservation.

**Federal Grant Programs**

- **TIGER Grant Program**
  - This program is an application process. Currently, we do not believe the Federal government is seeking any applications for this program.
  - The TIGER program began as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. In 2014, the federal government announced that \$600 Million was available to fund transportation projects across the country under a competitive grant program.
  - The only project awarded in North Dakota was submitted by the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation (MHA Nation). The Fort Berthold Comprehensive Regional Transportation Planning project includes a series of studies to accommodate changes to the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation transportation network caused by energy development. The project was awarded one million dollars and has a total estimated cost of \$3,942,000.
- **Highway Safety Improvement Program**
  - The DOT sends information to tribal, city and county agencies inviting them to submit safety project requests to be considered for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) each year in October. This is a data driven program.
  - The purpose of the HSIP program is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads through the implementation of infrastructure-related highway safety improvements.
  - Examples of types of safety projects include (but are not limited to):
    - Turn lanes
    - Rumble strips

- Recovery approaches or escape roads at T-intersections
- Curve delineation
- Pedestrian countdown signal heads
- Some HSIP projects approved for the Spirit Lake Reservation include:
  - BIA 1 & BIA 6 south of St. Michael - Install recovery approach off the end of BIA 1 at its intersection with BIA 6.
  - BIA 21 – 3 miles west of Tokio - Widen road shoulder space, inslopes and a clear zone.

#### Local Road Safety Program (LRSP)

- To address traffic safety issues in rural parts of our state, the DOT launched a new safety program in 2013 for county, tribal and township roads. Goals include:
  - Developing data driven Local Road Safety plans.
  - Establishing safety emphasis areas.
  - Identifying high priority safety projects.
  - Fostering safety culture among local stakeholders.
- The DOT is currently setting up meetings with tribal agencies to take place before the end of this year to help develop a local road safety program for each area.

#### Crash Reporting Program

The DOT is actively working with tribal agencies to develop and implement an electronic crash reporting system to assist the tribes in coordinating current crash data in an effort to help reduce traffic crashes in the future. The Turtle Mountain Reservation Law Enforcement Agency has the equipment and staff attended training for this program.

According to North Dakota Century Code, state highway funds can only be spent on projects that are associated with state highways. However, we will continue to work with tribal governments through federal programs where we can.

Thank you Mr. Chairman, this concludes my testimony.