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Stimulus money to pay for U.S. 30 repairs

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CHAMBERSBURG, Pa. — Pennsylvania Transportation Secretary Allen D. Biehler visited Franklin County on Monday to talk about the impact federal stimulus dollars will have in the greater Chambersburg area.

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Secretary Allen D. Biehler talks about stimulus projects in Franklin County, while state Sen. Richard Alloway, R-Franklin/Adams/York, listens. (Credit: Photo by Jennifer Fitch /)

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) money will be used for three Franklin County projects, two of which will be repairs for U.S. 30. About \$2.3 million is being invested in 6 miles from Norlo Road to the Adams County line.

On Thursday, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation will open bids for another portion of the road in Hamilton and St. Thomas townships.

“It’s going to take care of a big trouble spot for us,” Biehler said while standing a few dozen feet from the eastern portion of U.S. 30 slated for repairs and resurfacing.

Resurfacing typically must be done every seven to 12 years. U.S. 30 near Norlo Road was resurfaced in the late 1990s, but Biehler said the road gets worn quickly from a high volume of traffic and tractor-trailers.

He said tractor-trailer traffic could lessen under a Norfolk Southern plan to develop a rail-truck facility in Antrim Township, Pa., in southern Franklin County. Biehler recently met with state Sen. Richard Alloway, R-Franklin/Adams/York, and Gov. Ed Rendell to talk about “a major private/public investment” for the project.

The facility, similar to the CSX terminal in Chambersburg, Pa., would put container trucks on an upgraded rail line. In his 2009-10 budget proposal, the governor included \$45 million to upgrade the line from the Mason-Dixon Line to Harrisburg, Pa.

“Norfolk Southern is trying to make a long-term investment from New York to Mississippi. The more they can improve their line in capacity and speed, the more they can attract container traffic to their system,” Biehler said.

The third stimulus project in Franklin County involves a bridge in Orrstown, Pa.

Construction has started on Fulton County’s two stimulus roads projects. One involves three bridges in

Ayr, Bethel and Taylor townships. The other will resurface 2 1/2 miles of U.S. 30 in Brush Creek Township.

“These types of government spending do the most good for taxpayers,” said Alloway, who hosted the transportation secretary at a press conference.

The state senator thanked Valley Quarries Inc. for signing a contract under budget for the U.S. 30 work near Norlo Road. He also praised the contractor for using Volvo equipment made locally.

Biehler said the stimulus funds will be used to put an extra \$1 billion worth of work under contract by the end of August. He cited statistics that every \$1 billion creates 30,000 jobs in many areas — from the people operating paving machines to construction inspectors.

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