

INFORMATION RELEASE



Office of the Director

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ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION OPENS BIDS FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN CRITTENDEN COUNTY

LITTLE ROCK (3-15) -- The Arkansas State Highway Commission has opened bids for improvements to roadways in Crittenden County, according to Commissioner John Ed Regenold of Armorel.

The first project will construct a new Arkansas Welcome Center on Interstate 40/55 in West Memphis. Olympus Construction, Inc. of Jonesboro, Arkansas, was awarded the contract at \$3,784,756.03.

“The new center in West Memphis is one of a number of Welcome Centers that are being rebuilt around the state,” stated Regenold. “This one is located on the Interstate in West Memphis between Ingram Boulevard and 7th Street.”

Former Governor Mike Huckabee and the Arkansas Legislature approved the initial phase of reconstruction plans for the Centers in 2001. Since that time, new Arkansas Welcome Centers have been built in Blytheville, Corning, El Dorado, Fort Smith, Lake Village and Texarkana.

The new centers incorporate design elements such as native stone and large timbers, and feature more space for travel information, seating areas and interactive exhibit space. The centers also feature state-of-the-art computer kiosks, multi-media rooms and picnic areas.

“I think motorists coming into Arkansas will like this new facility,” Regenold added. “Not only will the center be a nice place to stop and relax, motorists will be able to obtain all the information they need about our highways and interesting tourist destinations.”

The West Memphis project is being funded with money provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The Act provided Arkansas with \$351 million in federal stimulus funds for roadway and bridge improvements throughout the state. Additional information about the ARRA can be found at www.recovery.gov.

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For more information about its impact on Arkansas, go to www.recovery.arkansas.gov. Information about specific road and bridge construction projects can be found by going to www.ArkansasHighways.com, and clicking on the ARRA logo and link in the lower right portion of the page.

A second project in Crittenden County will construct a bridge on Highway 147, near the city of Edmonson. Chancellor & Son, Inc. of Cordova, Tennessee, was awarded the contract at \$2,368,101.35.

“This new bridge will be built over Ten Mile Bayou Cutoff,” stated Regenold.

Regenold said work could begin on the projects in two to four weeks, weather permitting. Completion of improvements on Highway 147 is expected in mid 2011. The Arkansas Welcome Center should be completed in late 2012.

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