

Bidding thresholds may increase

NEW IOWA LEGISLATION will have a moderate impact on city and county transportation agencies and how they let bids for road projects. The legislation (House File 324) takes effect July 1.

The new legislation will have an impact in two basic ways: bidding thresholds and city/county accounting procedures.

Bidding thresholds

Bidding thresholds will become adjustable under the new legislation. Currently, agencies can complete road projects either in house (if their project cost estimates fall under the bidding threshold) or by requesting proposals. If agencies' estimates are over the threshold amount, the projects must go through a formal bid letting process.

The legislation provides for the formation of a committee consisting of three representatives from local public sector agencies, three representatives of private sector contractor organizations, and one Iowa DOT representative. The committee, which will meet at least every two years, will compare bid thresholds to the construction price index.

The committee will make recommendations about increasing or decreasing the bid thresholds, although they will never go beneath the minimums established in the legislation:

- \$50,000 for counties
- \$50,000 for cities with population of 50,000 or more (new minimum)
- \$25,000 for cities under 50,000 population

Any changes in the bidding thresholds will take effect on January 1 following the advisory committee's meeting.

The increase to the \$50,000 threshold for cities with 50,000 or more population will affect nine Iowa cities including Ames, Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines, Dubuque, Iowa City, Sioux City, and Waterloo.

City/county accounting procedures

In some cases cities have been using less exact accounting procedures than counties for estimating the costs of road projects. For example, city estimates have sometimes failed to include costs of things like leasing or renting equipment. Consequently, as a result of lower project estimates, cities

have been able to do more of their road projects in house.

Under House File 324, an advisory committee will be established to assist cities and counties with developing true cost accounting. This method will help cities and counties more accurately estimate the costs of their future projects.

For more information

If you have questions about complying with House File 324, contact your agency's legal department •

The new legislation will have an impact [on] bidding thresholds and city/county accounting procedures.

How-to for concrete and asphalt pavement repair

FOUR MANUALS are available to help your shop improve the following maintenance activities:

- sealing and filling cracks in asphalt surfaced pavements
- repairing potholes in asphalt pavements
- repairing joint seals and partial-depth spalls in concrete surfaced pavements

Originally published as a set of reports through the Strategic Highway Research Program, this how-to information has been updated and repackaged as a series of practical manuals:

Materials and Procedures for Rapid Repair of Partial-Depth Spalls in Concrete Pavements, December 1999 (FHWA-RD-99-152).

Materials and Procedures for Repair of Potholes in Asphalt-Surfaced Pavements, December 1999 (FHWA-RD-99-168).

Materials and Procedures for Repair of Joint Seals in Portland Cement Concrete Pavement Joints, December 1999 (FHWA-RD-99-146).

Materials and Procedures for Sealing and Filling Cracks in Asphalt-Surfaced Pavements, December 1999 (FHWA-RD-99-147).

How to access

The manuals are available in portable document format (.pdf) on the web, www.tfhr.com/pavement/ltp/reports.htm (currently items 33-36 on the page). You can also borrow copies from CTRE's library; contact Jim Hogan, library coordinator, 515-294-9481, hoganj@iastate.edu (see descriptions on page 16). Or purchase your own from the National Technical Information Service, 703-605-6000.