

CDA Tribe lands \$1.8 million in federal stimulus money

By Rebecca Thomas

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The Coeur d'Alene Tribe is using federal stimulus money to launch projects that were put on hold.

Included in the approximately \$1.8 million the tribe has received so far is a sum of over \$800,000 for the Citylink bus service.

Citylink, which offers free daily transportation to Coeur d'Alene, Post Falls and other areas, will buy four new vehicles through a \$420,000 grant and build a maintenance garage with a \$460,000 grant.

And that could be just the beginning.

About \$3 billion of the \$787 billion federal stimulus package was reserved for tribes and tribal organizations. Tribal spokesperson Marc Stewart said the Coeur d'Alene Tribe is also competing for other grants. The tribe has already received money for housing and medical services along with the transportation funds, some of which was allocated based on grant formulas, which use specific numbers to determine need.

The tribe has applied for many grants that have not been allocated yet. Mr. Stewart said if all the tribe's grant applications go through, the tribe could receive approximately \$10.7 million in federal stimulus funds.

"The money's just starting to trickle in, so to speak," Mr. Stewart said.

He said the tribe may use the housing money on an already planned neighborhood near the old tribal headquarters off Agency Road near Plummer.

University of Idaho graduate students worked with tribal members and leaders last spring to create plans for a neighborhood with mixed housing, gardens and a community center to replace the mostly abandoned houses there. Mr. Stewart said construction could start as early as this fall, or "as soon as possible, as soon as the council decides which way to go about it," he said.