

**Chapter 36.77 RCW**  
**ROADS AND BRIDGES—CONSTRUCTION**

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**RCW 36.77.010 Maps, plans, and specifications.** Whenever it is ordered by resolution of the board that any county road shall be laid out and established and altered, widened, or otherwise constructed or improved, the county road engineer employed by the county shall prepare such maps, plans, and specifications as shall be necessary and sufficient. A copy of such maps, plans, and specifications shall be approved by the board of county commissioners with its approval endorsed thereon, and such copy shall be filed with the clerk of the board. [1963 c 4 § 36.77.010. Prior: 1959 c 67 § 2; prior: 1937 c 187 § 32, part; RRS § 6450-32, part.]

**RCW 36.77.020 Approval—Call for bids.** Upon approval of such maps, plans, and specifications and the filing thereof the board shall, if it determines that the work shall be done by contract, advertise a call for bids upon such construction work by publication in the official county paper and also one trade paper of general circulation in the county, in one issue of each such paper at least once in each week for two consecutive weeks prior to the time set in the call for bids for the opening of bids. All bids shall be submitted under sealed cover before the time set for the opening of bids. [1963 c 4 § 36.77.020. Prior: 1959 c 67 § 3; prior: 1937 c 187 § 32, part; RRS § 6450-32, part.]

**RCW 36.77.030 Opening of bids—Deposit.** At the time and place fixed in the call for bids, such bids as have been submitted shall be publicly opened and read. No bid may be considered unless it is accompanied by a bid deposit in the form of a surety bond, cash, cashier's check, or certified check in an amount equal to five percent of the amount of the bid proposed. [1985 c 369 § 3; 1963 c 4 § 36.77.030. Prior: 1959 c 67 § 4; prior: 1937 c 187 § 32, part; RRS § 6450-32, part.]

**RCW 36.77.040 Award of contract—Bond—Low bidder claiming error.** The board shall proceed to award the contract to the lowest and best bidder but may reject any or all bids if in its opinion good cause exists therefor. The board shall require from the successful bidder a contractor's bond in the amount and with the conditions imposed by

law. Should the bidder to whom the contract is awarded fail to enter into the contract and furnish the contractor's bond as required within ten days after notice of the award, exclusive of the day of notice, the amount of the bid deposit shall be forfeited to the county and placed in the county road fund and the contract awarded to the next lowest and best bidder. A low bidder who claims error and fails to enter into a contract is prohibited from bidding on the same project if a second or subsequent call for bids is made for the project. The bid deposit of all unsuccessful bidders shall be returned after the contract is awarded and the required contractor's bond given by the successful bidder is accepted by the board. [1996 c 18 § 4; 1963 c 4 § 36.77.040. Prior: 1959 c 67 § 5; prior: 1937 c 187 § 32, part; RRS § 6450-32, part.]

**RCW 36.77.065 County forces construction projects or programs—Amounts—Violations.** The board may cause any county road to be constructed or improved by use of county forces as provided in this section.

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "County forces" means regular employees of a county; and

(b) "Road construction project costs" means the aggregate total of those costs as defined by the budgeting, accounting, and reporting system for counties and cities and other local governments authorized under RCW 43.09.200 and 43.09.230 as prescribed in the state auditor's budget, accounting, and reporting manual's (BARS) road and street construction accounts: PROVIDED, That such costs shall not include those costs assigned to the right-of-way account, ancillary operations account, preliminary engineering account, and construction engineering account in the budget, accounting, and reporting manual.

(2) For counties with a population that equals or exceeds four hundred thousand people, the total amount of road construction project costs one county may perform annually with county forces shall be no more than the total of the following amounts:

(a) Three million two hundred fifty thousand dollars; and

(b) The previous year's county motor vehicle fuel tax distribution factor, as provided for in RCW 46.68.124(5), multiplied by the amount listed in (a) of this subsection.

(3) For counties with a population that equals or exceeds one hundred fifty thousand, but is less than four hundred thousand people, the total amount of road construction project costs one county may perform annually with county forces shall be no more than the total of the following amounts:

(a) One million seven hundred fifty thousand dollars; and

(b) The previous year's county motor vehicle fuel tax distribution factor, as provided for in RCW 46.68.124(5), multiplied by the amount listed in (a) of this subsection.

(4) For counties with a population that equals or exceeds thirty thousand, but is less than one hundred fifty thousand people, the total amount of road construction project costs one county may perform annually with county forces shall be no more than the total of the following amounts:

(a) One million one hundred fifty thousand dollars; this amount shall increase to one million two hundred fifty thousand dollars effective January 1, 2012; and

(b) The previous year's county motor vehicle fuel tax distribution factor, as provided for in RCW 46.68.124(5), multiplied by the amount listed in (a) of this subsection.

(5) For counties with a population that is less than thirty thousand people, the total amount of road construction project costs one county may perform annually with county forces shall be no more than the total of the following amounts:

(a) Seven hundred thousand dollars; this amount shall increase to eight hundred thousand dollars effective January 1, 2012; and

(b) The previous year's county motor vehicle fuel tax distribution factor, as provided for in RCW 46.68.124(5), multiplied by the amount listed in (a) of this subsection.

(6) Any county whose expenditure for county forces for road construction projects exceeds the limits specified in this section, is in violation of the county road administration board's standards of good practice under RCW 36.78.020 and is in violation of this section.

(7) Notwithstanding any other provision in this section, whenever the construction work or improvement is the installation of electrical traffic control devices, highway illumination equipment, electrical equipment, wires, or equipment to convey electrical current, in an amount exceeding forty thousand dollars for any one project including labor, equipment, and materials, such work shall be performed by contract as in this chapter provided. This section means a complete project and does not permit the construction of any project by county forces by division of the project into units of work or classes of work. [2019 c 310 § 1; 2009 c 29 § 1; 2005 c 162 § 1; 2001 c 108 § 1; 1980 c 40 § 1.]

**Effective date—1980 c 40:** "This act shall take effect on January 1, 1981." [1980 c 40 § 3.]

**RCW 36.77.070 Publication of information on county forces projects—Penalty—Prosecution.** If the board determines that any construction should be performed by county forces, and the estimated cost of the work exceeds ten thousand dollars, it shall cause to be published in one issue of a newspaper of general circulation in the county, a brief description of the work to be done and the county road engineer's estimate of the cost thereof. At the completion of such construction, the board shall cause to be published in one issue of such a newspaper a similar brief description of the work together with an accurate statement of the true and complete cost of performing such construction by county forces.

Failure to make the required publication shall subject each county commissioner to a fine of one hundred dollars for which he or she shall be liable individually and upon his or her official bond and the prosecuting attorney shall prosecute for violation of the provisions of this section and RCW 36.77.065. [2009 c 549 § 4126; 2009 c 29 § 2; 1983 c 3 § 81; 1963 c 4 § 36.77.070. Prior: 1949 c 156 § 9, part; 1943 c 82 § 4, part; 1937 c 187 § 34, part; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 6450-34, part.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2009 c 29 § 2 and by 2009 c 549 § 4126, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**RCW 36.77.075 County roads—Small works roster. (Effective until July 1, 2024.)** In lieu of the procedure for awarding contracts that is provided in RCW 36.77.020 through 36.77.040, a county may award contracts for public works projects on county roads using the small works roster process under RCW 39.04.155. [2000 c 138 § 208; 1991 c 363 § 81.]

**Purpose—Part headings not law—2000 c 138:** See notes following RCW 39.04.155.

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.

**RCW 36.77.075 County roads—Small works roster. (Effective July 1, 2024.)** In lieu of the procedure for awarding contracts that is provided in RCW 36.77.020 through 36.77.040, a county may award contracts for public works projects on county roads using the small works roster process under RCW 39.04.151 through 39.04.154. [2023 c 395 § 26; 2000 c 138 § 208; 1991 c 363 § 81.]

**Effective date—2023 c 395 §§ 1-30, 32-34, 36, and 37:** See note following RCW 39.04.010.

**Findings—Intent—2023 c 395:** See note following RCW 39.04.010.

**Purpose—Part headings not law—2000 c 138:** See notes following RCW 39.04.155.

**Purpose—Captions not law—1991 c 363:** See notes following RCW 2.32.180.