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## **RECONNECTING AMERICA LAUDS TIGER II GRANTS**

**Infrastructure investment, regional planning will create more sustainable communities, strengthens economic competitiveness**

(October 20, 2010) -- Reconnecting America President and CEO John Robert Smith applauded today's award of nearly \$600 million in Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) II construction and planning grants.

“This second set of TIGER grants continues the Administration’s commitment to infrastructure investment that creates more sustainable communities and strengthens America’s ability to compete in a global economy,” Smith said. “These projects will help to create regional integrated transportation solutions that will bring economic and societal benefits for years into the future.”

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood's office received nearly 1,000 applications for more than \$19 billion in projects around the country. Using merit-based evaluation criteria, the department selected 42 capital construction projects and 33 planning projects that address some of the nation’s most critical challenges.

Grant recipients represent both large and small communities, in all regions of the country. Under TIGER II, more than \$140 million is reserved for projects in rural areas.

“These grants break away from the traditional, stove-piped approach to transportation investment, and reward regional cooperation and innovation,” Smith added. “I urge Congress and the Administration to continue building upon this approach as they move forward on a multi-year, multi-modal transportation reauthorization bill. With the multiple benefits these projects will provide, we’re getting a lot of return for the dollar.”

The TIGER II follow last year's 51 grants under the TIGER I program.

“These are innovative, 21st century projects that will change the U.S. transportation landscape by strengthening the economy and creating jobs, reducing gridlock and providing safe, affordable and environmentally sustainable transportation choices,” said Secretary LaHood. “Many of these projects could not have been funded without this program.”

Roughly 26 percent of TIGER II grants go for transit, 20 percent for rail projects, 16 percent for ports, 4 percent for bicycle and pedestrian projects, 5 percent for planning projects and the remaining 29 percent for road projects.

The planning grants represent the first time the U.S. Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have joined together in awarding grants for localized planning activities that ultimately lead to projects that integrate transportation, housing and urban development.

Almost 700 applicants sought up to \$35 million in TIGER II planning grants and up to \$40 million in HUD Sustainable Community Challenge Grants. HUD’s funds can be used for localized planning efforts, such as development around a transit stop and zone or building code updates and improvements. The two Departments, along with assistance from the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, participated in the evaluation of the planning grant applications.

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*Reconnecting America is a national nonprofit that is helping to transform promising ideas into thriving communities – where transportation choices make it easy to get from place to place, where businesses flourish, and where people from all walks of life can afford to live, work and visit. Reconnecting America is the managing partner of the Center for Transit-Oriented Development, the only national nonprofit effort funded by Congress to promote best practices in transit-oriented development. Reconnecting America is also a founding partner of Transportation for America, a broad coalition of housing, environmental, equal opportunity, public health, urban planning, transportation and other organizations focused on creating a 21st century national transportation program. For more information visit our website, [www.reconnectingamerica.org](http://www.reconnectingamerica.org).*