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be soliciting applications from interested communities in the coming months.

- MAP-21 significantly reduces USDOT's ability to run competitive grant programs, and instead sends out most funding according to various formulas. This will increase the predictability of funding from year to year, but will reduce communities' ability to undertake projects such as construction of a transit center, introduction of a streetcar line, or renovation of a bus garage that require an infusion of funding over and above what the formulas provide in a particular year.
- In general, MAP-21 retained the prohibition against using federal transit funds to pay for operating expenses in areas over 200,000 in population, providing little help to communities facing transit fare increases and service cuts as a result of constrained local and state funding.
- Funding for low-interest loans under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program was greatly increased, from \$122 million annually to \$750 million in FY13 and \$1 billion in FY14. In addition, the share of a project's cost that can be covered by TIFIA was raised from 33% to 49%. However, MAP-21 also eliminated all evaluation criteria for projects, other than credit-worthiness. In other words, USDOT will no longer evaluate the merits of a project that is applying for TIFIA funds; they will consider only the likelihood that the TIFIA loan will be paid back. Applications for TIFIA will be received on a rolling basis at USDOT, and loans will be granted on a first-come, first-served basis.

With passage of the new law, the onus now shifts to the USDOT, states, cities, transit agencies and MPOs to use the programs described above and others within MAP-21 to help make our communities more complete, with transportation choices and neighborhoods that are accessible to everyone. ★



BILL SADLER



CHRIS YAKE

Reconnecting America Staffers Honored

Reconnecting America Program Associate Bill Sadler was recently named to the 2012 Next American Vanguard Class and Reconnecting America Project Director Chris Yake made Mass Transit magazine's Top 40 Under 40 list.

Sadler was one of 43 people selected from nearly 200 applications by Next American City for this year's class. According to the announcement at Americancity.org, Next American Vanguard Class members were chosen for their bright ideas for cities, experience in the field and ambition for the future.

Yake was nominated to Mass Transit magazine's Top 40 Under 40 List by his peers and judged on criteria that included job commitment, industry involvement and contribution, achievement in his position and innovation in his field.

Yake is the third Reconnecting America staffer to be honored by Mass Transit magazine. Last year, Reconnecting America Chief Cartographer and New Media Director Jeff Wood was named to the list, and the year before, Policy Director Sarah Kline made the Top 40 Under 40 for her work as director of policy and government relations for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. ★