

DOT 148-11
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Huge Demand for TIGER Grants Highlights Need for More Transportation Investments

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today announced that the overwhelming demand for TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grants has once again far surpassed the available funding. Applications for TIGER III grants totaled \$14.1 billion, far exceeding the \$527 million set aside for the program. The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) received 828 applications from all 50 states, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia.

"The tremendous demand for TIGER grants clearly shows that communities across the country cannot wait any longer for crucial upgrades to the roads, bridges, rail lines, and bus routes they rely on every day," said Secretary LaHood. "It's important to make these vital investments in transportation so we can put Americans back to work rebuilding our nation's crumbling transportation systems."

Earlier this month, President Obama directed DOT to expedite application review and award the TIGER III grants by the end of 2011 – months ahead of schedule. This is the third round of TIGER grants that will be competitively awarded to the most deserving projects across the country. In 2009 and 2010, the Department received a total of 2,400 applications requesting \$76 billion, greatly exceeding the \$2.1 billion available in TIGER I and TIGER II grants. In the previous two rounds the TIGER program awarded construction and planning grants to 126 freight, highway, transit, port and bicycle/pedestrian projects in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

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This TIGER packs an infrastructure, jobs punch

The October 31 deadline to apply for DOT's third round of TIGER grants has passed. It shouldn't be a surprise to anyone that we received applications totaling far more than the \$527 million available for this competitive program. But the \$14.1 billion in combined applications does make an impression.

The sheer number of applications--828, from all 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia--also makes an impression. The tremendous demand for these grants clearly shows that communities across the country can't wait any longer for crucial upgrades to the roads, bridges, rail lines, and bus routes they rely on every day.

And because they can't wait, we won't wait to review their applications. Earlier this month, President Obama directed DOT to expedite application review and award the TIGER III grants by the end of 2011. Now, that's months ahead of schedule, and it will mean extra work for our TIGER III team.

But, it also means DOT will be doing what we can to help these communities put men and women back to work solving critical transportation problems.

That's what we did in the first round of TIGER grants. It's what we did with TIGER II. In 2009 and 2010, we received more than 2,400 applications for those programs, totaling \$76 billion, also far exceeding the combined \$2.1 billion available for those grants. In those two rounds, we awarded construction and planning grants to 126 freight, highway, transit, port and bicycle-pedestrian projects across the nation.

And we are absolutely ready to do it again. These vital investments will put Americans back on jobsites rebuilding transportation systems that badly need attention.

But, even the communities fortunate enough to have a project selected for TIGER III will tell you that more needs to be done. Economists, transportation engineers, and planners know that America's infrastructure needs transportation reauthorization.

So, for now, we'll be plenty busy at DOT reviewing the 828 TIGER III applications. But we've got miles of road, rail, and runway that need upgrading; we've got small businesses ready to put their equipment to work; and we've got men and women ready to do the job. Let's get busy.