



U.S. Department of Transportation
Ladders of Opportunity

“Every Place Counts Design Challenge”

Issue Date: 5/4/2016
Application Due Date: 6/3/2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
N/A	SUMMARY INFORMATION AND WEBINAR DETAILS	3
A	CHALLENGE DESCRIPTION	5
B	CHALLENGE INFORMATION	7
C	ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION	8
D	APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION	9
E	APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION	12
F	AGENCY CONTACTS	13

Summary Information

Opportunity Title:	Ladders of Opportunity - Every Place Counts Design Challenge
Technical Assistance Opportunity Summary:	Applicants will compete to Receive On-Site Technical Assistance from USDOT for the Ladders of Opportunity Every Place Counts Design Challenge
Federal Agency Name:	U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE Washington, DC 20590 Attn: Stephanie Jones, Chief Opportunities Officer
Announcement Type:	This is the initial announcement of this opportunity. This is not a follow-on notice.
Type of Award:	Up to Four Design Sessions with On-site Technical Assistance
Application Due Date:	Applications Due by <u>6/03/2016</u> at 5:00 pm Eastern Time by Email to ReconnectCommunities@dot.gov
Questions:	Submit Questions to: ReconnectCommunities@dot.gov

Informational Webinars

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) will host an informational session on the Ladders of Opportunity Every Place Counts Design Challenge (“Every Place Counts Design Challenge”). Participation is not mandatory in order to submit an application under this solicitation. However, we encourage potential applicants to take advantage of the opportunity to gather additional questions.

Please note that registration is required to participate in any of the sessions. Interested parties can register at www.transportation.gov/opportunity/challenge. An email confirmation will be sent to all individuals who register. The USDOT will post all virtual session presentations at www.transportation.gov/opportunity/challenge after completion.

Note: If necessary, the Government reserves the right to limit the number of participants from a party.

INFORMATIONAL SESSION

SESSION TITLE: Ladders of Opportunity Every Place Counts Design Challenge
DATE: 5/18/2016
TIME: 3:00 pm Eastern Time
LIVE STREAM: www.transportation.gov/opportunity/challenge

Note: The USDOT will also consider conducting additional virtual and/or in person information sessions for the Every Place Counts Design Challenge, as requested.

SECTION A – CHALLENGE DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) plays a critical role in connecting communities to economic opportunity. Transportation infrastructure choices made at the Federal, State, and local levels can strengthen communities and improve the quality of life for residents.

Transportation infrastructure—the road, water, air, and rail networks we depend on—are easily taken for granted and their impact often forgotten. Transportation Secretary Anthony R. Foxx has recently noted the long-reaching impact of our highway system on urban and rural communities across the country. In the 1950s, the United States paved the way to its future with local, state, and federal dollars building millions of miles of roads under President Eisenhower’s Interstate Highway program. What we now know as the modern highway system opened up new worlds to those who traveled along it.

As a result of the Interstate Highway program, the United States has a well-developed network of routes that link every state and connect the country like never before. However, we see today that the same infrastructure that brought massive expansion, too often reinforced dividing lines within communities and created physical barriers to opportunity.

The USDOT seeks to help local and tribal governments across the country ensure that current and future transportation projects connect and strengthen communities. At a time when much U.S. infrastructure will be repaired or replaced, it is an appropriate time for communities to reimagine existing transportation projects via innovative and restorative infrastructure designs that reflect a more inclusive America, reconnects people and neighborhoods to opportunity, and reinvigorates opportunities within communities by empowering and encouraging communities and decision-makers to work together to develop context-sensitive designs that reflect and incorporate the input of the people and communities they touch.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Every Place Counts Design Challenge will provide technical assistance to local and tribal governments through “community vision” design sessions to improve access to reliable, safe, and affordable transportation for disconnected communities in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The purpose of the challenge is to raise awareness about bifurcated neighborhoods, identify innovative practices to reconnect communities, and inform the transportation project life cycle.

The USDOT is accepting applications from local and tribal governments seeking assistance in correcting an existing transportation infrastructure problem by reconnecting a community or communities to jobs, healthcare, schools, grocery stores, and other essential services. USDOT will work with the selected Every Place Counts Design Challenge recipient to host a design session in their community.

The USDOT also invites regional and national design, architecture, engineering and planning firms to participate as technical experts in each design session.

The USDOT will select up to four recipients to receive a two-day design session, to be hosted by local and tribal governments in their community. The sessions will give recipients the opportunity to receive technical assistance on transportation and conceptual design from experts in the field. The USDOT intends for the design sessions to inform, prepare, and enable recipients to better engage in federal transportation planning, programming, the National Environmental Policy Act process, and funding programs.

KEY APPLICANT DATES

Date	Action
May 18, 2016	Informational Webinar
May 20, 2016	Applicant Registration Deadline
June 3, 2016	Applicant Submission Deadline

SECTION B – CHALLENGE AWARD INFORMATION

CHALLENGE AWARD

Selected challenge recipient(s) will receive two days of on-site technical assistance from USDOT, industry experts, transportation engineers, planners and design professionals in collaboration with community residents, public officials, and local stakeholders.

DESIGN SESSION INFORMATION

Each Design Session will be held over two days between July 6 - July 20, 2016.

APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITIES

If an Applicant is selected as a recipient, the Applicant will be responsible for providing the following, including but not limited to: a flexible host location for the workshop with capacity for up to 150 people; background materials and resource supplies for teams on the selected project; and, on-site transportation for trips to and from the infrastructure challenge site.

Applicants are **required** to involve community members through meaningful public engagement.

Recipients are expected to make the solutions and conceptual design proposals resulting from the Design Session available for public comment **no less than seven (7) days** following the event.

DEGREE OF FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT

The USDOT anticipates substantial Federal involvement with selected community teams during the course of the challenge. The anticipated Federal involvement will include, but not be limited to: on-site technical assistance, facilitation of design strategies, subject matter experts, guidance related to USDOT program funds, identification of resources and eligibility for implementation.

SECTION C – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

To be selected for a Every Place Counts Design Session, an applicant must be an Eligible Applicant and submit an Eligible Project.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants for the Every Place Counts Design Challenge are the official head of a local or tribal government in the 50 United States and U.S. territories listed in Section E “Application Review Information” who will lead their Community Teams as described below.

Community Teams

Applicants are required to convene a Community Team that includes elected officials, urban/rural planners, transportation and design professionals, and a cross-section of community residents who will participate in the design session – if selected.

Applicants must also submit Letters of Support from other entities and jurisdictions that are currently impacted by the infrastructure challenge identified and that will also benefit from its resolution. This includes Letters of Support from the State Department of Transportation, community groups, transit agencies, port authorities, MPOs, or other political subdivisions of State or local governments. Employees of these agencies, or similar, may participate on behalf of their agencies at the design session.

Eligibility Information

State governments, transit agencies, port authorities, metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and other political subdivisions of State or local governments are eligible to join an Applicant’s Community Team.

The Applicant will designate a primary point of contact, and also identify the primary transportation infrastructure challenge on behalf of the community.

Eligible Projects

Eligible Projects for the Every Place Counts Design Challenge are capital projects for transportation infrastructure that include, **but are not limited to**: (1) highway projects eligible under Title 23, United States Code (including bicycle and pedestrian projects); (2) public transportation projects eligible under Chapter 53 of Title 49, United States Code; (3) passenger and freight rail transportation projects; (4) port infrastructure investments (including inland port infrastructure and land ports of entry); and (5) intermodal projects.

An Eligible Project is one that is planned or being developed to improve or replace existing infrastructure that offers an opportunity to reconnect communities to jobs, healthcare, schools, grocery stores, and other essential services.

Projects that have received or are eligible for Federal funds are encouraged, and DOT will accept projects that could become eligible for Federal funds with further development.

Projects that have initiated a Notice of Intent for the National Environmental Policy Act process will not be eligible.

Entry Conditions

The Every Place Counts Design Challenge is subject to all applicable federal laws and regulations. Participation constitutes Applicant's full and unconditional agreement to these Entry Conditions and administrative decisions, which are final and binding in all matters related to the Every Place Counts Design Challenge. Eligibility for an inclusive design session is contingent upon fulfilling all requirements.

Designation of Official Point of Contact

Applicants must designate a primary point of contact, who may be someone other than the lead Applicant.

National and Regional Practitioners

The USDOT will also invite national and regional practitioners (e.g. architectural design firms, planners, engineers, University Transportation Centers, etc.) to offer their knowledge and expertise to help the selected communities create forward-thinking, cutting edge solutions to infrastructure problems caused by past decisions that cut off and isolated communities from opportunity. Practitioners may sign up at www.transportation.gov/opportunity/challenge to participate in any of the four design sessions nationwide.

SECTION D – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL

USDOT will select four (4) communities to receive a two-day design session.

Applications for this solicitation are due by 6/3/2016 at 5:00 pm Eastern Time by Email to ReconnectCommunities@dot.gov.

FORMAT OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Submissions must be no more than one (1) file containing a document limited to five (5) pages of written content and up to 5 photos and/or graphics. Letters of Support should be attached to the submission package, should not exceed one (1) page in length, and will not count against the page limit. Applicants may also include, at their option, a single cover page and a single Table of Contents and/or Listing of Tables/Figures page, which will not be counted toward the page limit, but serve to orient evaluators to the contents of the submission package.

CONTENT OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Applicants must provide a descriptive narrative of the transportation infrastructure challenge that illustrates how it limits or cuts off access to social or economic centers and other essential services, and the local or tribal government's goals for a Every Place Counts Design Challenge.

The submission document shall include the following, which will serve as criteria for the Design Session selection:

- **Problem Identification and Community Assessment:** a description of the nature of the transportation infrastructure challenge, the problem or potential problem(s), how it limits or cuts off residents' access to essential services, social or economic centers, neighborhoods, or other affected jurisdictions or entities.
- **Type of Project:** applicants must identify the type of infrastructure challenge using the following categories, defined as—
 - Highway – full or partial removal of highway segments or spurs that are linear barriers and manage capacity on other routes; conversion of highways to urban boulevards that connect to the urban grid; small scale treatments such as partial capping and pedestrian/bicycle overpasses or underpasses.
 - Transit – increased or improved service of bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, and rail, along with station and stop improvements to accommodate all users; walking and biking connections to public transit; park n' ride lots; coordination with shared use mobility providers (vanpools, carpools, car shares, bike shares).
 - Passenger or Freight Rail – at grade rail, no or limited pedestrian access, safety improvements to accommodate all users, noise abatement.
 - Port Infrastructure – access roads to ports, air quality mitigation, noise abatement.
 - Airport Infrastructure/Development Design – airport design, tools, and approaches that mitigate impact to the natural environment and local community.
 - Multimodal Connection – provides access between passenger intermodal facilities and the principal arterial system. These roads are often the important “last mile” connecting critical intermodal facilities, such as rail, bus, and bike/pedestrian facilities.
- **Project Location:** a detailed description of the location of the eligible project, including a land use map showing where the project is physically situated in relation to essential services, social or economic centers, local neighborhoods, and other affected jurisdictions or entities.
- **Current Condition:** a summary description of the current condition of the eligible project, including relevant data on the disconnecting infrastructure age, functionality, and structural deficiencies, right-of-way permits (including air space)

and constraints; pending projects associated with the infrastructure (for example, structural repairs, retrofits, surface treatments); associated utility projects; traffic and safety data including status of existing multi-modal options for shifting traffic in the corridor or surrounding area.

- **Impact of Infrastructure Challenge:** submissions must include a description of how addressing this infrastructure challenge would impact the community locally, economically, and/or regionally.
- **Community Vision for the Design Session:** applicants should identify a vision, goal, and/or assistance they would like to receive through the challenge.

The submission should also include the following for informational purposes only:

- **Brief history of the infrastructure challenge and community:** Describe how the project came to be constructed in the community, any changes to the community over time as a result of the project's construction and operation, and any community perspectives on the project, in addition to any other descriptive information that would provide context.
- **Current funding status:** Describe any current funding awarded or obligated to addressing this infrastructure challenge.
- **Project priority:** Identify the priority of the project at the regional, state, or local level as applicable. Also indicate the project's status on the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) or Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) as applicable.

SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

Applicants must register by May 20, 2016 before submitting an application. Applications from Applicants that have not registered will not be considered.

Deadline: Applications must be submitted in their full and complete form, including all required sections, by 5:00 PM EST on June 3, 2016 via email submission. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make submissions in advance of the deadline.

Late applications will not be considered.

USE OF INFORMATION FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTAL PURPOSES

Information collected from all applicant submissions may be used for government purposes, including to understand the range of Every Place Counts activities planned and ongoing in communities, and to determine maturity of communities within this framework. In addition, information gathered through this Notice may be used to conduct outreach and engagement related future similar opportunities.

SECTION E – APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The USDOT will evaluate applications based on the following criteria, which are of equal importance. Applicants should demonstrate how they plan to incorporate the following criteria in their Design Session.

Project Partnerships: The USDOT will assess whether and to what extent the Applicant's submission demonstrates the use of partnerships and visible community involvement to identify the transportation infrastructure challenge, and develop a proposed vision to address the problem.

Problem Identification and Community Assessment: The submission demonstrates an understanding of the community, the history, cause, and nature of the transportation infrastructure challenge, and its impact and costs on the community, surrounding entities and other jurisdictions.

Project Impact: The USDOT will assess whether and to what extent the proposed vision will measurably improve the ability of residents to access social and economic centers and essential services from the affected community. What initiatives were undertaken to ensure that efforts of this project are implemented in an equitable manner and impacts to individuals and underserved (minority and low income) communities are minimized? How is a commitment to interagency partnerships for projects, policies, or programs demonstrated?

Project Type and Condition: The submission describes the type of infrastructure challenge; the impact of the current condition of the infrastructure on its usefulness to the community; and describes the magnitude of influence that the infrastructure challenge has on its surroundings. (See Section C for definitions)

REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The USDOT will select four recipients to receive a two-day design session, one from each region – North, South, Mid-America, and West – to ensure a diverse representation of projects and communities.

- North: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont
- South: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virgin Islands, Virginia, West Virginia
- Mid-America: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Wisconsin
- West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Northern Mariana Islands, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

A multimodal review panel, chaired by the Chief Opportunities Officer, will assess the submitted solutions and make recommendations to the Secretary of Transportation for final selection.

The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this notice.

USE OF INFORMATION FOR OTHER DEPARTMENTAL PURPOSES

Each Applicant grants to USDOT and others acting on behalf of USDOT, a royalty-free non-exclusive worldwide license to use, copy for use, distribute, perform publicly all parts of the submission for the purposes of The Challenge until one year after the announcement of selected community. This license includes posting or linking to the submission on the official USDOT Website and making it available for use by the public. Information collected from all applicant submissions may be used for government purposes, including to understand the range of Every Place Counts activities planned and ongoing in cities, and to determine maturity of communities within this framework. In addition, information gathered through this Notice may be used to conduct outreach and engagement related future similar opportunities.

SECTION F – FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

Address any questions to: ReconnectCommunities@dot.gov