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USDOT Secretary Foxx Releases Final Report on the Every Place Counts Design Challenge

Four Cities Envision Reconnecting their Communities in USDOT Challenge

WASHINGTON – U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced the release of the *USDOT Ladders of Opportunity Every Place Counts Design Challenge* report summarizing the experience and lessons learned from the four selected cities – Spokane, WA; Nashville, TN; Philadelphia, PA; and Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN – that participated in the Every Place Counts Design Challenge. USDOT convened residents, state and local transportation officials, city staff, and urban design professionals for a dynamic conversation about the respective community’s needs and vision for improved transportation connectivity. The Every Place Counts Design Challenge aimed to raise awareness and identify innovative community design solutions that bridge the infrastructure divide and reconnect people to opportunity.

“In many cities, transportation infrastructure created physical barriers to opportunity,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. “The Every Place Counts Design Challenge was a chance for these neighborhoods to envision a 21st Century transportation system that corrects past mistakes, creates jobs and opportunity, reconnects neighborhoods to essential services, and builds stronger communities.”

Four cities were selected from over thirty highly competitive applications for this technical assistance award. In July, USDOT partnered with each city to engage directly with neighborhood and transportation leaders through a workshop that identified key mobility challenges, such as connectivity, safety, complete streets, and historic preservation. The selected cities’ transportation projects were:

- In Spokane, WA, participants discussed strategies for reconnecting the East Central neighborhood across Interstate 90, as well as the unbuilt connection of US 395 and I-90, and generated potential solutions that would maximize connectivity while minimizing the impact of I-90 and US 395 on the community.
- In Nashville, TN, community leaders from historically African-American North Nashville discussed reconnecting and revitalizing the neighborhoods along Jefferson Street where I-40 divides the community. Residents, business owners, academic institutions, and the arts community convened to generate design strategies and explore implementation funding sources to improve connectivity and restore a sense of place that honored the community’s past.

- In Philadelphia, PA, city and regional agencies, community leaders, and residents collaborated on strategies to mitigate I-676's impact on the surrounding neighborhoods, specifically Chinatown, and important higher education, medical, and faith-based civic institutions.
- In Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN, residents and local officials led a conversation about the historic impact of I-94 on minority communities and strategies to reconnect these communities across the interstate. The Twin Cities' goal was to demonstrate their commitment to connectivity, inclusivity, and positive community engagement.

“Nashville was grateful to have participated in supporting Secretary Foxx’s vision for reconnecting and revitalizing urban neighborhoods bifurcated by construction of Interstate Highways in the 1960s and 70s,” said Nashville Mayor Megan Barry. “As a result of the Every Place Counts Design Challenge, Metro is working closely with neighbors, businesses, HBCUs, and other Historic Jefferson Street stakeholders on the feasibility of implementing some of the nearer-term corridor improvements recommended in this report. Additionally, we are optimistic that talk of new investments in transportation infrastructure at the state and federal levels could help make USDOT’s mid- and long-term recommendations a reality.”

The final *USDOT Ladders of Opportunity Every Place Counts Design Challenge* report is available at <https://www.transportation.gov/policy-initiatives/opportunity/every-place-counts-design-challenge>.

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