

**Notice of Funding Available**  
**Connecting Communities Planning Grant**

The Connecting Communities Initiative was developed to encourage the integration of land use and transportation planning. As part of that process, the Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program was established in 2010. The program is designed to provide communities with funding to develop transportation plans that will lead to the identification of projects eligible for AMATS funds. The grant program is intended to fund transportation plans that focus on livability, regional best practices identified in the Connecting Communities Initiative, and multimodal connections.

Eligible activities include activities that promote economic development as well as encourage alternatives to single occupant vehicles, such as:

- Development of transportation/land-use plans for corridors or neighborhoods, such as streetscape and access management plans
- Bicycle, pedestrian and transit-oriented development plans
- Examples of such projects include last year's grant recipients: The Village of Richfield and METRO RTA/City of Akron (see the attached summaries).

To be eligible for a Connecting Communities Planning Grant, a project must:

- Be intended for transportation planning
- Be site specific
- Result in transportation and land use improvements that are consistent with the Connecting Communities Initiative
- Be consistent with *Transportation Outlook* – the regional transportation plan

Ineligible activities include:

- Preliminary Engineering
- Final Design
- Preparation of environmental documentation
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Preparation of bid documents
- Construction

AMATS has incorporated part of the Department of Transportation's Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities Livability Principles,<sup>1</sup> as part of the Connecting Communities Planning Grant. Program applicants should consider the following principles:

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<sup>1</sup> To find out more about the Department of Transportation's Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities go to <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/2009/dot8009.htm>

- **Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health.
- **Enhance economic competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.
- **Support existing communities.** Target federal funding toward existing communities—through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.
- **Value communities and neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.

AMATS has made \$100,000 available for two \$50,000 grants to be awarded through the Connecting Communities Planning Grant Program. Projects may be a joint venture between sponsors, but each project is eligible for a maximum of one grant. Additionally, applications for no more than 2 projects may be submitted per community. A selection committee, The Connecting Communities Task Force, will be charged with reviewing sponsors' applications and making recommendations to the Policy Committee.

Important Dates:

**September 1, 2011** – AMATS will begin accepting applications. Applications will be available on the AMATS website.

**October 14, 2011** – Deadline to submit applications by 4:30 pm.

**December 7, 2011** – Approval of grants takes place at the Policy Committee Meeting.

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