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Reconnecting America to assist the Gulf Regional Planning Commission as part of Livability Solutions work

(January 18, 2012) Reconnecting America, as a partner in Livability Solutions, has been selected to provide technical assistance to the Gulf Regional Planning Commission in Gulfport, Mississippi. Reconnecting America will be working with the Gulf Regional Planning Commission to develop a typology for transit-oriented development (TOD) and to explore mixed-income TOD strategies to lower housing and transportation costs for residents of the region.

“I’m encouraged that the Livability Solutions team has selected Gulfport, Miss.,” said Reconnecting America President and CEO John Robert Smith, a former mayor of Meridian, Miss. “This region, like many others on the Gulf Coast, has seen its share of issues and challenges over the past several years. This opportunity will help lay the groundwork for future thoughtful investments in community building that will support all people in the Gulf region and make it more resilient in the future.”

Ten communities were selected to receive free technical assistance this year from among 64 applications. The 10 governments and organizations selected represent a diverse group of communities from across the United States, from large cities to rural counties. All have a strong commitment to sustainability and smart growth and are poised to implement positive change by making use of the assistance offered by Livability Solutions partners.

In addition to the Gulf Regional Planning Commission, the other nine recipients are:

- University City District, Philadelphia, Penn.
- West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, Eau Claire, Wis.
- Lower Eastside Action Plan, Detroit, Mich.
- Toledo-Lucas County Sustainability Commission, Maumee, Ohio
- Colfax on the Hill, Inc., Denver, Colo.
- City of Blue Springs, Mo.
- Charlotte County, Fla.
- Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention, Little Rock, Ark.
- Anthithesis Research, Wellpoint, Wash.

Each community will receive a one- or two-day training session with a livability expert from Project for Public Spaces or one of the Livability Solutions partners on the issue of their choice. In addition to Reconnecting America, the partners who will be delivering technical assistance this year are:

- Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT)
- Congress for the New Urbanism
- Local Government Commission
- National Charrette Institute
- Walkable Livable Communities Institute

This technical assistance is made possible by a grant to Project for Public Spaces from the United States Environmental Protection Agency Office of Sustainable Communities under the Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities Program. The Building Blocks program funds quick, targeted assistance to communities that face common development problems. Three other nonprofit organizations — Forterra (formerly Cascade Land Conservancy), Global Green USA, and Smart Growth America — also received competitively awarded grants under this program this year to help communities achieve their sustainable development goals.

Interested communities are encouraged to check the Livability Solutions website at livabilitysolutions.org periodically for additional opportunities for technical assistance. Interested foundations, organizations, and individuals who want to support assistance to one of the 53 other qualified applications are encouraged to contact Livability Solutions at livabilitysolutions@pps.org.

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About Livability Solutions

Livability Solutions is a coalition of professionals who can help others put their planning priorities into action. The partnership was initiated by 10 leading nonprofit organizations with deep experience in sustainable development. Their common purpose is to work with communities on transportation, land use, Placemaking, environmental issues, and public involvement, with the goal of achieving livability, smart growth, and sustainability. For more information visit their website livabilitysolutions.org

About Reconnecting America

Reconnecting America is a national nonprofit that is helping to transform promising ideas into thriving communities - where transportation choices make it easy to get from place to place, where businesses flourish, and where people from all walks of life can afford to live, work and visit. Reconnecting America is the managing partner of the Center for Transit-Oriented Development, the only national nonprofit effort funded by Congress to promote best practices in transit-oriented development. Reconnecting America is also a founding partner of Transportation for America, a broad coalition of housing, environmental, equal opportunity, public health, urban planning, transportation and other organizations focused on creating a 21st century national transportation program. For more information visit our website, www.reconnectingamerica.org.