



# INFORMATION RELEASE

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### **CITY OF JONESBORO AWARDED FEDERAL GRANT FOR RAILROAD OVERPASS**

**LITTLE ROCK (9-26)** – The City of Jonesboro has been awarded \$1.2 million from the U. S. Department of Transportation for construction of a railroad overpass on Highway 18.

The award is one of 72 transportation projects in 46 states and the District of Columbia to receive 2014 TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) funds from the Department of Transportation.

The City of Jonesboro will use the TIGER funding to conduct an environmental review and develop design plans for a railroad overpass on Highway 18. The planned overpass will reduce delays and improve safety at a crossing that sees 14,000 vehicles a day. This planning project is part of a larger comprehensive action plan to improve rail grade crossings within the city limits, which handles approximately 60 trains per day through 44 rail grade crossings, contributing to significant delays for drivers and transit. The design plans will be for a single crossing at Highway 18 and the BNSF Railroad.

“This is probably one of the most important projects in the works in Jonesboro,” stated Mayor Harold Perrin. “It is definitely at the top of our list.”

“In the vicinity of this project we have schools and industries. To delay vehicle traffic for long periods of time with train traffic is an inconvenience as well as a safety issue for our emergencies vehicles. The new overpass will improve the safety of all of those in this area and eliminate those delays.”

Of the award, AHTD Director Scott Bennett stated, “We congratulate the City of Jonesboro on being a recipient of this TIGER grant. We were pleased to assist them in the application process. This is a project we were looking at and this will certainly expedite the process. To be selected is a reflection of the hard work and planning put into this project and also an indication of how important the project will be to the city and state once completed.”

The Department of Transportation received 797 eligible applications from 49 states, U.S. territories and the District of Columbia for the funding, an increase from the 585 applications received in 2013. Overall, applicants requested 15 times the \$600 million available for the program, or \$9 billion for needed transportation projects.

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