

**NIAGARA FALLS-** Today, Congresswoman Louise Slaughter announced that \$16,500,000 in federal grant funding would be coming to Niagara Falls to revitalize the Niagara Falls Customhouse which will soon be known as the Niagara Falls International Railway Station. The funding comes from the Department of Transportation's competitive TIGER grant program which was enacted as part of the stimulus bill.

"I'm delighted that this final \$16.5 million has been awarded to the City of Niagara Falls because after many years of work on this project know that it will spur local economic development," said Slaughter, who recently wrote to Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood in support of the funding and has been New York's leading advocate for high-speed rail stretching across Upstate New York. "More than 14 million tourists visit the Falls each year and to support this influx of tourists we need to provide safe, convenient, and fast travel options. The new intermodal station will put passengers in the heart of the Falls and provide seamless links to other modes of transportation including trolley services. More importantly, with this new station Niagara Falls will be prepared for the rollout of high-speed passenger rail service."

"The Niagara Falls Station will immediately energize our ongoing local revitalization efforts —to create a hub for transit-orientated economic development and a centerpiece for cultural tourism development," Mayor of Niagara Falls Paul Dyster said. "It no doubt means immediate construction jobs. However, this TIGER Program announcement delivers a project with real potential to 'change the economic dynamic' of Western New York, truly affecting the local and regional economy for decades to come."

The Niagara Falls Customhouse, which was built in 1863 and operated by the federal government from 1867 into the 1980's, will soon be known as the Niagara Falls International Railway Station and Intermodal Transportation Center. The new hub, which is slated for final completion in 2011, will house an Amtrak station that will allow New Yorkers to travel nationally and internationally, a border inspection facility and the Underground Railroad Interpretive Center which will feature historic exhibits detailing Niagara's role in Underground Railroad history as slaves escaped the south to find freedom in the north, and some continued on to Canada. The new complex will create a new economic dynamic in Niagara Falls by creating a transportation and cultural hub that will bring dollars, jobs and tourists to the area.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), more commonly known as the stimulus bill, was designed to put the brakes on the greatest economic recession since the Great Depression and lay the groundwork for economic growth and job creation. Today's

announced funding will invest in a project that will create jobs in the short term and lay the ground work for future economic development in Niagara Falls.

The TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Discretionary Grant Program was included in the Recovery Act to spur a national competition for innovative, multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional transportation projects that promise significant economic and environmental benefits to an entire metropolitan area, a region or the nation. Projects funded with the \$1.5 billion allocated in the Recovery Act include improvements to roads, bridges, rail, ports, transit and intermodal facilities.

Slaughter has worked tirelessly over the years to see the project through to completion securing millions in federal funds and helping the local community cut through red tape. Today's funding announcement will be a big step forward to the project's completion.

*On September 2, Congresswoman Slaughter wrote to Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood supporting the last piece of funding that was announced today. Her letter is below. For more on Congresswoman Slaughter's efforts on high speed rail, [click here](#).*

*September 2, 2010*

*Mr. Ray LaHood*

*Secretary*

*Department of Transportation*

*1200 New Jersey Avenue*

October 15, 2010

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Washington, District of Columbia 20590-0001

□

Dear Mr. LaHood,

*I am pleased to offer my support for the proposal submitted by the City of Niagara Falls to the United States Department of Transportation for funding from the TIGER II Discretionary Grants Program. □ Funding will be used to complete the final stage of the City's International Railway Station and Intermodal Transportation Center Project (IRS/ITC).*

*Phases one and two of the project are fully designed and are currently being implemented. □ Phase three seeks to relocate Amtrak's passenger terminal and establish a specialized border inspection facility adjacent to the U.S. Canadian Port of Entry at the Whirlpool-rapids International Bridge in Niagara Falls*

*, New York*

*. □ The historic Custom House is being renovated as part of Phase One to support the specialized border inspection facility. □ In addition to the construction of a new terminal, phase three will entail track and signal upgrades, a dedicated passenger rail designed to eliminate conflicts with freight traffic and an improved passenger rail platform and building.*

*Site work, which will consist of the reconstruction of Bath Avenue and Whirlpool Street and the construction of a parking lot, will accommodate multi-modal operations including parking, buses and taxis. □ When completed, this project will result in a modern, accessible transportation terminal that improves operating conditions, access, mobility and security, while meeting the City of Niagara Falls' goals of sustainability and livability.*

*Once again, I am pleased to write in support of the City of Niagara Falls' TIGER II application. □ I hope that their application will be given full consideration.*

October 15, 2010

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*Sincerely,*

*Louise Slaughter*

*Member of Congress*