

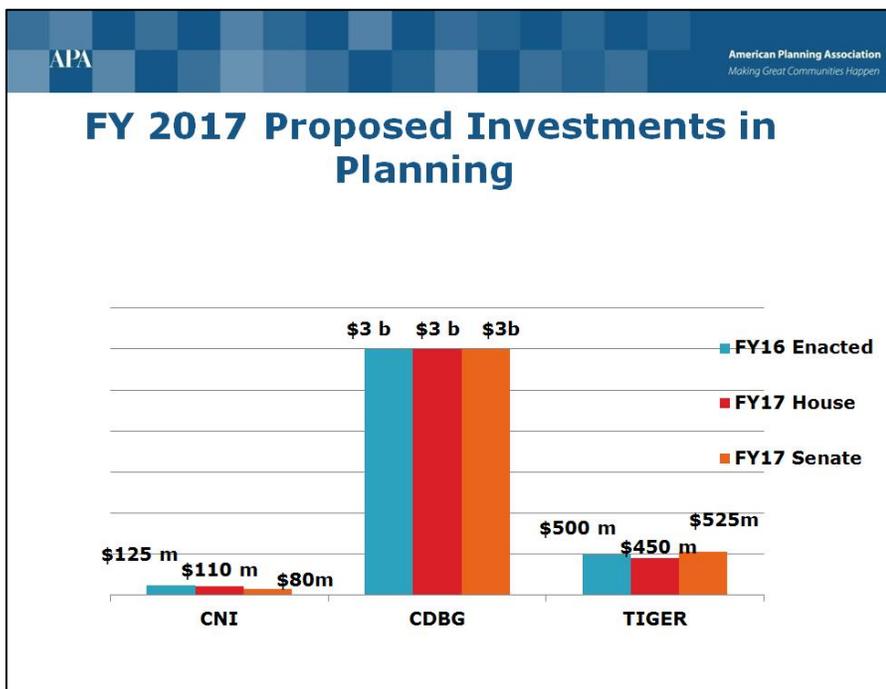


POLICY

SUPPORT FEDERAL PLANNING AND PLACE-BASED INITIATIVES

Recent research shows the profound impact that where a child grows up has on his or her future; being raised in one zip code rather than another directly correlates to future earnings as an adult. Throughout his tenure in office, President Obama has emphasized planning and place-based strategies in programs and initiatives aimed at community development and revitalization to improve outcomes for all residents. Providing funding, technical assistance, and advantages in federal grant applications, these initiatives have helped communities access resources to strategically plan neighborhood rehabilitation, better align federal dollars, coordinate on a regional level, and analyze best practices of similar communities. Congress has largely supported these efforts on a bipartisan basis, consistently providing funding for popular programs such as TIGER, the Community Development Block Grant program, and Choice Neighborhoods. *As the executive branch transitions to new leadership, it is vital that this emphasis on placed-based initiatives continue.*

Also critical to planning in local communities is the continued availability of reliable, consistent funding. Without a final spending bill in place, grants like CDBG and HOME are not awarded, placing communities in financial limbo for months on end. Please avoid funding FY 2017 on long-term or multiple continuing resolutions and quickly approve a year-long spending bill.



ASKS:

- **CDBG:** Provide at least \$3.3 billion in funding
- **Choice Neighborhoods:** Continue the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative at \$200 million
- **TIGER:** Continue the TIGER program at \$525 million
- **Continue to provide planning resources** such as technical assistance through programs like the Promise Zones and Strong Cities, Strong Communities



POLICY

IMPACT OF FEDERAL RESOURCES

- **Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG):** Provides nearly 1,200 state and local governments with consistent, direct funding to provide decent housing, a suitable living environment, and economic opportunities within their communities. Created in 1974, CDBG is arguably one of the federal government's most successful domestic programs supporting not only cash-strapped municipalities but also the many planning, design, construction, and development firms working on infrastructure projects. **Since FY 2010, CDBG funding has been cut by \$1 billion or 25 percent. Funding CDBG at \$3.3 billion would begin to restore these harmful cuts.**

- **Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI):** Provides competitive planning and implementation grants to communities to transform severely distressed neighborhoods into areas of opportunity. The planning grants allow communities to begin the process of developing comprehensive neighborhood plans and the implementation grants allow communities to put those plans into action. **Since FY 2010, CNI and its predecessor, HOPE VI, have been cut by \$140 million or nearly 53 percent. Continuation of CNI at \$200 million would allow additional communities the resources to plan and implement neighborhood transformations.**



Choice Neighborhoods Yesler Terrace project in Seattle

- **TIGER:** DOT's TIGER grants provides a unique opportunity for federal investment in road, rail, transit, and port projects that achieve critical national objectives. DOT received over \$9 billion in requests for only \$600 million available for FY 2014, including applications from 49 states, US territories, and the District of Columbia. **This demand is 15 times greater than available funding. Continuation of the TIGER program at the Senate level of \$525 million, including specific funding for planning grants, would allow additional communities to address critical, large-scale infrastructure needs.**

- **Promise Zone:** The Promise Zone initiative was originally outlined in the President's FY 2014 budget as a place-based initiative to help 22 communities connect key federal programs in order to foster economic opportunity. The first five communities selected have seen measurable successes; graduation rates in San Antonio have reached nearly 90 percent, 2,000 children in Los Angeles were employed during the summer through a youth employment initiative, 900 unemployed people in Southeastern Kentucky have gotten jobs, and 700 households and 50 businesses in the Choctaw Nation will have access to safe drinking water for the first time.

- **Strong Cities, Strong Communities:** Strong Cities, Strong Communities is a competitive program aimed to help distressed cities to develop actionable, innovative plans to foster job creation and economic development. Launched in 2011, 14 communities received technical assistance to coordinate federal programs and investments to spark economic growth in distressed areas and create stronger cooperation between community organizations, local leadership, and the federal government. SC2's work has enabled communities to more effectively utilize more than \$368 million in existing federal funds. As a result, Chester, PA leveraged resources through the First Lady's Lets Move Initiative to build its first grocery store in more than a decade. Cleveland, OH received assistance to overcome regulatory burdens preventing the development of a 40 unit affordable senior housing program. New Orleans gained access to a pilot program to combine DOT and HUD funding for a priority infrastructure project, securing \$4 million for roadway enhancements that created constructions jobs.