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EDWARD G. RENDELL, Governor

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**GOV. RENDELL: INVESTMENTS IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY
PROJECTS WILL CREATE JOBS, STIMULATE ECONOMY
ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR 12 PROJECTS THAT WILL CREATE, RETAIN
MORE THAN 6,700 JOBS**

PITTSBURGH – Governor Edward G. Rendell stressed the importance of investing in projects that create jobs and strengthen communities today as he announced support for 12 projects in Allegheny County that will generate nearly a half of a billion dollars in total investment for the region and create or retain approximately 6,750 jobs.

The Governor said Pittsburgh has received a number of accolades recently for its revitalization after more than six years of strategic investments that have made it one of America's most livable cities.

“Pennsylvania has not been immune to the challenges of the national recession, but here in Allegheny County, we’re seeing a solid return on our investments in projects that create jobs and improve the quality of life,” Governor Rendell said.

“We’ve invested in this region and reinvigorated downtown Pittsburgh by building on our strengths—our workforce, some of the world’s best universities, and our talents in the creative economy. Now, Pittsburgh and the surrounding area have proven that investments made in cities can benefit entire regions. Recently, Pittsburgh was called a ‘model’ for other cities and been rated the nation’s 10th most livable city by Fortune Magazine.”

The Governor added that the commonwealth has invested more than \$1.8 billion in Allegheny County since 2003 and now, its unemployment rate is more than a full percentage point lower than the statewide average.

The 12 projects for which Governor Rendell announced support today will receive \$27 million through the state’s Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, which will generate \$476.8 million in total investment.

The projects and respective RACP grant amounts include:

- \$2 million to help turn 300 acres of formerly strip-mined land in Findlay Township into the Chapman Commerce Center;

- \$4 million for the Castle Shannon Transit Village project;
- \$4 million to help build an 849-space parking garage as part of the \$115 million Bakery Square project, in the city's Larimer neighborhood;
- \$3 million for the Lysle Boulevard mixed-use development to connect the nearby main public roadway with RIDC Industrial Center of McKeesport;
- \$3 million to help build a new, nearly 43,000 square foot YMCA in Pittsburgh's Hill District;
- \$2.5 million for infrastructure improvements that will help continue progress on the Oak Hill mixed-income housing development in the Hill District;
- \$2 million for traffic improvements in the East Liberty neighborhood;
- \$2 million for infrastructure improvements and renovation costs associated with restoring the Garden Theater building in the Federal North redevelopment project;
- \$1.5 million to continue developing the August Wilson Center for African American Culture;
- \$1 million to help support renovation work that will transform George Westinghouse's original air brake factory into a new home for the Pittsburgh Opera;
- \$1 million to make needed improvements to Heinz Hall—the landmark home of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra; and
- \$1 million to convert the Monroeville ExpoMart into office space while transforming the former Wickes Furniture building into the new, 102,000 square foot convention center that will also house the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Greater Monroeville.

“These investments will put people to work in the next few months creating construction jobs, filling orders for steel and concrete, improving roads and making communities safer for pedestrians, and putting engineers to work designing these projects,” said Governor Rendell. “And once they’re completed, we’ll have new homes for families, new centers of commerce, more vibrant communities, and cultural attractions that will enrich our neighborhoods and improve the quality of life in the region.”

The Governor added that recent unemployment numbers underscore the need for government to continue to be proactive. He cited figures that showed Pennsylvania's economy shed 41,000 jobs in February – the largest job loss in a single month in 13 years. Over the last year, Pennsylvania has lost more than 115,000 jobs.

“Given these challenges, it’s important that we do everything we can to advance those projects that put our people to work and make our communities stronger,” said the Governor. “Now is the time to invest in ourselves—in our workforce, our communities, and our employers—so that we can stimulate the economy and hasten a lasting and sustainable recovery.”

For more information and details on Governor Rendell's 2009-10 budget proposal to provide relief to struggling families and spark an economic recovery, visit www.pa.gov.

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The Rendell administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell's initiatives and to sign up for his weekly newsletter, visit www.governor.state.pa.us.