



CORNELL R. ROBERTSON, P.E., P.S.
FRANKLIN COUNTY ENGINEER

February 28, 2019

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: INFRA Grant Columbus Crossroads Phase 4

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing to express my support for the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and City of Columbus joint INFRA Grant application for Phase 4 of the Columbus Crossroads project. In my capacity as the Franklin County Engineer, I have a direct responsibility to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within the Franklin County limits. With 27 years of experience in the transportation industry, I also fully understand the importance of this project to the State of Ohio, as well as the United States of America.

As I have worked closely with ODOT, the City of Columbus and others on our roadway infrastructure priorities through the years, I believe the key aspects that make the Columbus Crossroads project so important are the following:

- Phase 4 focuses on the physical overlap of I-70 and I-71, which are two major interstate routes in the Midwest. The overlap serves both commuter traffic within Central Ohio, as well as interstate trucking and motorists traveling across the state and beyond. These roadways carry 130,000 vehicles per day, including 17,000 commercial vehicles, which greatly surpasses its current design capacity. Essentially this project's economic impact exceeds by far its local footprint.
- The project is also important to improving safety and reducing congestion for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians in the immediate area around downtown Columbus and to neighborhoods to the south of downtown. Over 100,000 individuals work in the downtown area. In addition, a large number of residents to the south need to traverse the I-70 / I-71 area for work, healthcare and entertainment. The proposed project will dramatically improve their travels.

The Phase 4 project with an estimated cost of \$200 million cannot be completed without leveraging additional funding from the INFRA Grants Program. While my office has had involvement in other recent U.S. Department of Transportation funding applications for projects where this office would have benefited financially more directly, I see the Columbus Crossroads project as the top funding priority in Franklin County.

I appreciate the U. S. Department of Transportation's consideration of this funding request. I see it as an extremely wise infrastructure investment that will reap significant economic and safety benefits. Any questions related to this letter may be directed to me at (614) 525-3030.

Sincerely,



Cornell R. Robertson, P.E., P.S.
Franklin County Engineer

CRR:tb

cc: W. Fritz Crosier, Ted Beidler