



February 26, 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: Support for the Columbus Crossroads INFRA Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the board of trustees for Capital Crossroads Special Improvement District (SID), I am writing to offer strong support for a joint INFRA grant application by the Ohio Department of Transportation and City of Columbus. The SID is an association of 550 commercial and residential property owners in downtown Columbus who are assessed the cost of managing the public realm, promoting downtown, and providing transit access for commuters.

This grant application seeks to reconnect, restore, and revitalize neighborhoods surrounding a section of highway shared by Interstates 70 and 71 in downtown Columbus. ODOT, the City of Columbus, the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), and a diverse group of community stakeholders and business entities have collaborated over the last decade to develop and implement a comprehensive vision.

Reconstructing this section of interstate, which costs a total of approximately \$200 million, is essential for reducing congestion for commuters and improving safety for pedestrians. Grant funds will also help address a physical barrier between downtown Columbus and the neighborhoods south of Interstate 70.

Completion of the Columbus Crossroads project has been identified as a top priority for the City of Columbus, the Central Ohio region, and the State of Ohio. However, this project cannot be completed without leveraging additional funding from the INFRA grants program. We respectfully request that the U.S. Department of Transportation consider the importance of these improvements to the prosperity of our region and state, and the resiliency of the national interstate highway system; and we respectfully urge your support for the application.

Sincerely,

Cleve Ricksecker
Executive Director

