



**Godman  
Guild**

**promoting  
strong families  
and strong communities  
since 1898**

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May 10, 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:

I am writing in support of the Columbus Crossroads Project. Columbus Crossroads is a \$1.3 billion, multi-phase project to transform the crossroads of Interstates 70 and 71 in Downtown Columbus and improve freight movement across Ohio and the Midwest. I write this letter to (1) express our support and to reinforce regional support for the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and City of Columbus joint INFRA grant application for Phase 4 of the Columbus Crossroads project; and (2) to urge your support for this catalytic project of national and regional importance.

Leveraging this major investment to replace an obsolete highway infrastructure, Columbus Crossroads also seeks to reconnect, restore, and revitalize Downtown Columbus and surrounding neighborhoods, which includes the Weinland Park neighborhood. Godman Guild Association is located in the Weinland Park community and serves as a resource for employment, adult education, after school care, summer camps, and other services in Weinland Park and surrounding communities throughout Columbus, Ohio. 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 this comprehensive vision. This project has a direct impact on the City of Columbus and our Agency, allowing for the continuity of services at over 10 locations throughout the city.

Phase 4 focuses on the physical overlap of I-70 and I-71. The overlap serves commuter traffic from across Central Ohio, and it serves freight from across the Midwest. The overlap carries 130,000 vehicles per day – including 17,100 commercial vehicles – and exceeds its design capacity by 50,000 vehicles. The overlap's trench creates a physical barrier between Downtown Columbus and the neighborhoods south of the overlap. Godman Guild Association partners with the Reeb Avenue Center located on Columbus' south side, a collaboration of 13 resource partners providing essential services to community members across the city. Phase 4, which costs approximately \$200 million, is essential for improving safety and reducing congestion for commuters and pedestrians; improving access



United Way  
of Central Ohio



to essential services and more than 100,000 jobs in Downtown Columbus; and reconnecting the southern neighborhoods.

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. The state recently passed a transportation budget that generates more revenue through higher gas user fees and increased registration fees for local governments and electric vehicles. 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 sustainability of our neighborhoods, 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,



Ellen L. Moss  
President and CEO

CC: Mr. Dan DeBono, Chief Infrastructure Funding Officer, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E. Washington, D.C. 20590