



[www.ParsonsArea.com](http://www.ParsonsArea.com)

**PAMA**

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Bob Leighty

**General Members Meeting:**

1st Wednesday  
9:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.  
Columbus Public Library  
Meeting Room  
1113 Parsons Avenue

**Trustee Meeting:**

On 1st Thursday of  
February, May,  
August & November  
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.  
Columbus Public Library  
1113 Parsons Ave

**Executive Board Meeting:**

Last Wednesday  
12 Noon – 1:30 p.m.  
Scrambler Marie's  
567 E Livingston Ave

Last updated: 4/28/2019

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:

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 Midwest. I write this letter to express PAMA's strong 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 to urge your support for this catalytic project. Leveraging this major investment to replace obsolete highway infrastructure, Columbus Crossroads seeks to reconnect, restore, and revitalize Downtown Columbus and our surrounding neighborhoods in South Columbus. This project replaces the dangerous gash of an obsolete freeway design with a new people-friendly front door, easing pedestrian and bicycle movement between downtown and South Columbus, spurring more sustainable redevelopment along the way.

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 our South Columbus neighborhoods. Phase 4, which costs approximately \$200 million, is essential for improving safety and reducing congestion for commuters and pedestrians; improving access to essential services and more than 100,000 jobs in Downtown Columbus; and reconnecting our South Columbus 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 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,

Bob Leighty

Executive Director, Parsons Area Merchants Association (PAMA)

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