



COLUMBUS CROSSROADS

Phase 4 INFRA Application | February 25, 2020



Financial Commitment

The Ohio Department of Transportation has received substantial financial commitments from both the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and the City of Columbus. Letters confirming commitment of this funding towards the Columbus Crossroads Phase 4 are enclosed.



MID-OHIO REGIONAL
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PLANNING COMMISSION

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February 25, 2020

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 Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), I write to express our 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. Accordingly, we urge your support for this transformational project of national and regional importance.

Columbus Crossroads is a community-led \$1.3 billion, multi-phase project to transform the crossroads of Interstates 70 and 71, and improve one of the key corridors of the National Primary Highway Freight System. These changes not only remove a major bottleneck for interstate commerce on these two important commercial arteries, the ongoing effort to improve the connection brings strong local and state support. Phase 4 of the Project, which costs approximately \$265 million, is essential for improving safety for commuters and pedestrians; reducing congestion; and enhancing access to essential services and more than 100,000 jobs in the region.

As the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Columbus, Ohio urbanized area, MORPC is comprised of more than 70 local governments and regional organizations in the quickly growing Central Ohio region. The Columbus Crossroads project is included in our 2016-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and was identified as a top priority for the region through the Competitive Advantage Projects (CAP) initiative. CAP is an initiative of One Columbus and MORPC that prioritizes and advances strategic infrastructure investments across Central Ohio.

Phase 4 of this project focuses on the physical overlap of I-70 and I-71. The overlap serves commuter traffic from across the state and freight traffic from across the nation. The overlap carries 130,000 vehicles per day – including 17,100 commercial vehicles – and exceeds its design capacity by 50,000 vehicles. As a result, this area contains three of Ohio's top ten freeway crash locations. The overlap's trench also creates a physical barrier between Downtown Columbus and the neighborhoods south of the overlap. Leveraging this major investment to replace obsolete highway infrastructure, Columbus Crossroads will also reconnect, restore, and revitalize Downtown

William Murdock, AICP
Executive Director

Rory McGuinness
Chair

Karen J. Angelou
Vice Chair

Erik J. Janas
Secretary

Columbus and surrounding neighborhoods. ODOT, the City of Columbus, MORPC and a diverse group of community stakeholders and business entities have collaborated over the last decade to develop and implement this comprehensive vision.

We have submitted earlier iterations of this project to the Department for consideration and have been grateful for the feedback and consideration received. Since our last application to the INFRA process, we have continued to advance this project with state dollars. Additionally, MORPC has supported the Columbus Crossroads project with a \$20 million commitment of federal attributable funding, specifically Surface Transportation Program (STP) / Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program funds. This commitment includes the MORPC funding outlined in the application for Phase 4 project components. Last year, the state passed a transportation budget that generates more revenue through higher gas user fees and increased registration fees for local governments and electric vehicles. As a result, we were able to dedicate significant funding for that work; however, this project cannot be completed without leveraging additional funding from the INFRA program.

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. Importantly, it resolves major safety, congestion, and capacity issues for the two major interstates in the state.

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 urge your consideration of the application.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William Murdock". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "William" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Murdock".

William Murdock, AICP
Executive Director
Mid- Ohio Regional Planning Commission

February 24, 2020

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

**Re: City of Columbus, OH Financial Commitment to the Columbus Crossroads
INFRA Program Grant Application**

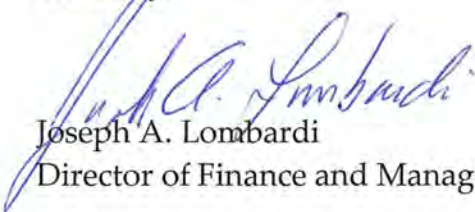
Dear Secretary Chao:

The letter is to express the City of Columbus's financial commitment towards Phase 4 of the Columbus Crossroads project.

The total project cost for Phase 4 of the Columbus Crossroads project is currently estimated to be \$265 million. This cost will be shared by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), the City of Columbus, and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC).

The City of Columbus has or will have sufficient funding available to cover its share of the future eligible project costs, which is currently estimated at \$23.7 million and subject to annual appropriations by Columbus City Council. The City of Columbus' share of the project costs will be provided to ODOT, who is managing the project, upon ODOT's request and final authorization from the Columbus City Council.

Sincerely,


Joseph A. Lombardi
Director of Finance and Management

