



March 18, 2021  
The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
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 Buttigieg:

I am writing this letter on behalf of OhioHealth to express our strong support and to reinforce the strong regional support for the joint City of Columbus and Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) INFRA grant application for Phase 4 of the Columbus Crossroads project.

OhioHealth is a 12-hospital healthcare system that has served the central Ohio community since 1891. We are a family of 35,000 associates, physicians and volunteers with over 50 ambulatory sites, hospice, home-health, medical equipment and other health services spanning a 47-county area throughout Ohio.

Columbus Crossroads is a community-led \$1.3 billion, multi-phase project to transform the crossroads of Interstates 70 and 71. The project improves one of the key corridors of the National Primary Highway Freight System; while at the same time leveraging this infrastructure investment to help restore and reconnect communities that were adversely impacted, first by redlining and second by constructing I-70 and I-71. Current and future phases of work, including Phase 4, from this multi-phase project are now integrated within ODOT's Downtown Ramp Up construction project.

Phase 4 is a \$230 million sub-phase focused on the freeway mainline in the physical overlap of I-70 and I-71; as well as the surface streets surrounding it, and the bridges spanning it. The freeway mainline in 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. While this major investment will replace obsolete highway infrastructure, Columbus Crossroads will also restore connections, build ladders of opportunity, transform communities, and revitalize Downtown Columbus and surrounding neighborhoods.

Phase 4 is especially significant to OhioHealth, as it will make it easier for patients and EMS transport to access Grant Medical Center, located in downtown Columbus and the largest and busiest level 1 trauma center in the state of 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.

We respectfully request that the U.S. Department of Transportation consider the importance of these improvements to the restoration of our communities, the prosperity of our region and state, and the resiliency of the national interstate highway system; and we urge your consideration of the application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shawna B. Davis", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shawna B. Davis  
Vice President of External Affairs and Foundation Operations

