



February 10, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

As the Technical Study Director of the Licking County Area Transportation Study (LCATS), I am writing on behalf of my organization in support of the City of Heath's RAISE Grant application for the planning and design engineering of the Thornwood Drive corridor in Licking County. Our organization strongly supports the efforts to modernize and expand Thornwood Drive and has made it the number one priority of our own in our funding.

Thornwood Dr. has seen a steady increase in traffic volume of about 1% annually over the past 20 year, and has reached a critical point in its design. By 2040, Thornwood Drive is projected to see growth in its traffic volume to 17,710 AADT, with 16% of the traffic volume to be truck traffic. Because of the large percentage of expected truck traffic, a two-lane road is no longer adequate for the needs of the community. As the growth in Licking County continues it is crucial that Thornwood Drive grows with it.

As the MPO for the Newark, Ohio urbanization area, LCATS and its Policy Committee, comprised of local leaders from communities all across Licking County, have made the Thornwood Drive corridor the number one priority for our funding since our 2004 Transportation Improvement Program. The continued improvements to the corridor will serve to better connect the different cities of our region, alleviate congestion in other portions of the county by providing better capacity for industrial and commercial traffic, and support the continued growth of Licking Counties booming Warehouse industry. The corridor will also act as an important route for the future Intel semiconductor manufacturing facility in Licking County, which has been identified by Local, State and Federal leaders as critical for both the economic and national security future of the United States.

We look forward to helping the City of Heath continue improving the Thornwood Drive corridor for the benefit of the population we serve. We continue to believe in this project and thank you for your consideration of this application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Matt Hill', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Matt Hill
Technical Study Director
Licking County Area Transportation Study