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February 22, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing today to express One Columbus' strong support for MORPC's RAISE Grant Program funding application for the Thornwood Drive Corridor project.

One Columbus is the economic development organization for the 11-county Columbus Region. Working with local and state partners, One Columbus serves as the business location resource for companies across Central Ohio and around the world as they grow, innovate and compete within the global economy. Our experienced team has worked with hundreds of companies and helped to secure over \$10 billion in capital investment, over 50,000 direct jobs and more than \$2 billion of new payroll across the Columbus Region. Transportation infrastructure fuels the economic engine of Columbus by providing for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods across the 11-county Region. Ensuring that this essential infrastructure is safe and equitable for the Region's 2.2 million residents is therefore a top priority for our organization.

The Thornwood Drive Corridor is currently the fastest way for traffic to leave the area being called the "Silicon Heartland" in Licking County, Ohio, which includes the Intel semiconductor manufacturing site. Today, over 8,500 individuals are employed in existing manufacturing businesses in the corridor. With over 800 industrially zoned acres of property available for development, the corridor is receiving heavy interest from semiconductor supply chain operations, as well as operations tied to the construction of electric vehicles. The development of residential housing units is also being considered on land just west of Thornwood Drive, and traffic from there will need to utilize the corridor daily.

One Columbus' mission is to lead a comprehensive regional growth strategy that develops and attracts the world's most competitive companies, grows a highly adaptive workforce, prepares our communities for the future and inspires corporate, academic and public innovation throughout the Columbus Region. This mission is impossible to successfully achieve without a strong regional transportation infrastructure system. In metro areas like Columbus that drive the American economy, solid transportation infrastructure is critical to attracting employers, sustaining economic growth and ensuring that all workers can safely access jobs. This project was recently ranked as the #1 infrastructure project of the Licking County Transportation Improvement District, Licking County Area Transportation Study and GROW Licking County Community Improvement Corporation, and is essential to the ongoing economic development of the Columbus Region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Patton".

Mark Patton
Executive Vice President and General Manager