



WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR
TIM CARPENTER
SENATOR – 3RD DISTRICT

State Capitol • PO Box 7882 • Madison, WI 53707-7882 • Phone: (608) 266-8535

October 10, 2022

Faith Hall
Grant Lead, Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 RCP Program: Reconnecting Milwaukee – Reimagining WIS 175 Feasibility Study, (Milwaukee, WI)

Dear Faith Hall:

I am writing in support of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Discretionary Grant Program. The RCP funding would facilitate the Reconnecting Milwaukee – Reimagining WIS 175 Feasibility Study to evaluate options for reconnection of communities in the City of Milwaukee that are currently divided by the 1.5-mile stretch of WIS 175 from Wisconsin Avenue to Lisbon Avenue. The highway has a substantial impact on the 19 surrounding neighborhoods and the nearly 51,000 residents located within one mile of the project corridor.

The project aligns to the Biden-Harris Administration's policies and priorities as well as to USDOT's strategic goals for the RCP program by reconnecting communities harmed by transportation infrastructure. The study will focus on safety, economic strength, equity, climate and sustainability, transformation, and organizational excellence and is seeking funds to conduct community-supported planning activities. The project will support and engage economically disadvantaged and traditionally underserved communities to increase affordable, accessible, and multimodal access to daily destinations.

WIS 175 is a remnant of a larger freeway plan that never fully materialized and poses safety and operational issues through high crash rates and peak hour delays; mobility issues for local traffic, bicycles, pedestrians; and creates a barrier to business connectivity and other everyday destinations. The study is a partnership between various agencies and advocacy groups to further evaluate, incorporate comprehensive engagement input, and create innovative alternatives that blend the needs of all



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parties and modes of transportation, and to develop a land use strategy that spurs economic development of the region.

This project potentially fits into the broader economic development goals for our region. Questions worth asking include: How can we make sure it aligns in spirit with our goals for redevelopment in the area and our efforts to clean up brownfields? What would be the result of providing tax incentives for redevelopment, planting trees, and expanding bicycle infrastructure?

I commend USDOT for recognizing the need to reconnect communities by reimagining transportation facilities. The needs are immense. The original design for WIS 175 turned out to be a costly mistake, but it is one we can correct. Through proper analysis we can start the clock on bringing this roadway into the 21st Century. If we do so, and do it right, communities will reconnect, truck routes will make more sense, our streets will be safer with less speeding, land will return to productive use, and long term costs will decrease.

I support WisDOT's application for the funding of Reconnecting Milwaukee – Reimagining WIS 175 Feasibility Study and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Please give this 2022 RCP funding proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at 608-266-8535.

Sincerely,

Tim Carpenter

Wisconsin State Senator
3rd Senate District