UPTOWN CROSSING

October 11, 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 divided 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. It poses safety issues through reckless driving and speeding; 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. The study will blend the needs of all parties and modes of transportation, and to develop a land use strategy that spurs economic development of the region.

We commend USDOT for recognizing the need to reconnect communities by reimagining transportation facilities. WisDOT, Milwaukee County, City of Milwaukee and multiple stakeholders are aware and supportive of one another's applications. Funding these proposals would make an even greater impact towards removing physical and socioeconomic barriers.

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.

Sincerely,

Tracy Stoedter
Executive Director
Uptown Crossing BID #16