



The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
West Building – 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

DATE: July 16, 2019

Dear Madam Secretary:

I am writing to express support for the Bloomington Illinois Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant to complete the City's priority East-West corridor – Hamilton Road. The application requests \$5.325 million to complete the Hamilton Road corridor, safely connecting rural communities and the City's residents on the southwest side to jobs at many businesses, including one of the area's largest employers, State Farm.

Bloomington is at the cross roads of 3 major interstate corridors, connecting with Indianapolis and the Quad Cities on Interstate 74, Chicago to St. Louis on Interstate 55 and Interstate 39 to Madison Wisconsin. Bloomington Normal is home to Illinois State University, State Farm Insurance Company, Country Companies and now home to Rivian, a U.S. company producing car of the future.

Bloomington is a community in transition, rooted in its agricultural foundation and being home to the Illinois Farm Bureau, the Illinois Soybean Association and Country Companies insurance. The City is also home to State Farm Insurance Company ranking 36th on the Fortune 500 list. Bloomington Normal has been on the leading edge of transforming how medium sized cities think about transportation and the most efficient, environmentally friendly and cost-effective way for people to travel, completing an intermodal rail and bus hub development around its intercity passenger rail station in the last 10 years. That thinking is a regional mindset and has helped Bloomington Normal attract Rivian, the producer of all electric vehicles and a pioneer in autonomous vehicle production and technology.

Connect Transit's fixed route and paratransit system provided 2.45 million trips to Bloomington Normal residents this year. The Hamilton Road corridor will provide safe and efficient access to a very dense and underserved business district. Currently, this area is nearly inaccessible by bus route due to a lack of connecting streets and infrastructure such as sidewalks. These additions will enhance safety and improve quality of life and improve the area's economic opportunities. This project will also help mitigate congestion on Interstate 55, which will improve route speeds and on-time performance by reducing long wait times at intersections.

As a result of the project, the City will close two at-grade crossings in the City, close an unsafe intersection that is a 5% accident location and eliminate one at-grade crossing for many of



the region's motorists accessing State Farm Insurance. The completion of Constitution Trail, a multiuse facility, as part of the project will fill the gap and connect residents and tourists alike to recreational assets and jobs.

The City is strongly committed to this project and is providing 30% of the funding through innovative financing that leverages the State of Illinois' recent increase in the motor fuel tax rate and the resulting increase in the share for local governments.

Given this local commitment and the many public benefits associated with this project. I strongly urge you to award a BUILD grant to help Bloomington improve safety and grow American jobs. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Martin Glaze", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Martin Glaze
Interim Chief Operating Officer