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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510 - 3505

July 5, 2018

Secretary Elaine Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

As the U.S. Department of Transportation ("Department") considers applications for the Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grant Program, I write to bring your attention to the application for Youngstown's SMAR^{2}T Corridor submitted by the Eastgate Regional Council of Governments. Funding the SMAR^{2}T Corridor project would help finance important transportation improvements to redevelop downtown Youngstown.

Investing in this project would help invigorate Northeast Ohio, particularly Mahoning Valley and Youngstown, areas that were starkly impacted by economic downturns. The SMAR^{2}T project would provide greater multimodal access between key employers in the Mahoning Valley and Youngstown area and enhance rights-of-way patterns to improve safety for pedestrians and drivers in the Youngstown Central Business District- an innovative hug of higher education, healthcare, entertainment, and advanced manufacturing. It would also provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities improvements and transit shelter enhancement.

Further, the SMAR^{2}T Corridor would build off of existing investment in transportation infrastructure and connect public and private ventures like the Mahoning Valley Innovation and Commercialization Center at Youngstown State University, the Youngstown Foundation Amphitheater, the Mill Creek MetroParks Connector Trail, Mercy's Health Campus, Youngstown Business Incubator's additive manufacturing cluster, and the Chill Can advanced manufacturing facility.

The SMAR^{2}T Corridor has widespread regional support and is a collaboration between Eastgate, the City of Youngstown, Youngstown State University, WRTA, Mercy Health, Eastern Gateway Community Colleges, and Mill Creek MetroParks. I urge you to give this proposal full and fair consideration as you evaluate applications for BUILD Grants. For additional information, please contact Leah_Hill@brown.senate.gov in my office. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sherrod Brown

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

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