

February 17, 2023

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

Re: **Hartford Main Street North Streetscape Improvements RAISE Grant**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) is pleased to support the city of Hartford's 2023 RAISE grant application and proposal for Main Street North Streetscape Improvements. By incorporating best practices that embrace current design standards, the project envisions upgrades to roadways, signals, lighting, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to bring this important commercial corridor to a state-of-good-repair.

As the Executive Director of the Capitol Region Council of Governments, I know that key transportation infrastructure improvements in core city neighborhoods produce benefits which extend far beyond their immediate environs to strengthen and bolster the entire region.

Project plans call for installation of upgraded bus shelters at prominent locations along Main Street with real-time schedule and vehicle location technology. Bus travel times will be improved, and new bus stop designs will enhance accessibility and ease of boarding while introducing signal pre-emption for buses.

This initiative will also include numerous safety improvements, including protected bike lanes, pedestrian-scale lighting, more accessible sidewalks, and crosswalks that meet ADA requirements, as well as bump-outs to reduce curb-to-curb travel distance. Furthermore, by replacing existing diesel buses with electric buses, the project will help to reduce health impacts associated with emissions. Diversion of trips from auto to transit and non-motorized transportation will be critical to improving air quality, which has been a long-standing issue in Hartford.

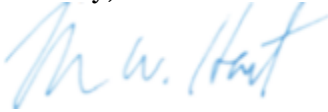
The project is sited within a designated Area of Persistent Poverty and the federally designated North Hartford Promise Zone (NHPZ), aiming to provide greater access to jobs, healthcare, recreation and social services in this historically underserved community. Long-running racial disparities caused by historic highway investments have isolated this neighborhood from the rest of the City and the Connecticut River, and this plan will help to address those disparities.

The initiative will facilitate creation of new jobs during its construction phase, with a commitment to local labor, while also improving access to local and regional employment opportunities for

neighborhood residents—a significant economic benefit to the entire Hartford metropolitan area and the approximately one million people that live in it. CRCOG looks forward to continuing our partnership with the City of Hartford to cooperatively advance this effort and ensure its placement in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and CRCOG's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

I appreciate your favorable consideration of this proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I might be of any assistance in your review of the application.

Sincerely,



Matthew W. Hart
Executive Director

CC: Mayor L. Bonin, City of Hartford
P. Sucato, Connecticut Department of Transportation
CRCOG Policy Board & Transportation Committee
R. Aloise, Director of Transportation Planning
C. Radzins, Deputy Director of Transportation Planning