



July 12, 2019

Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: United States Department of Transportation, Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant 2019: Riverside Drive Multimodal Revitalization Corridor Project

Dear Ms. Chao:

We're writing to offer our support for the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission's request for a 2019 BUILD grant. The grant funding is imperative to the implementation of the more than \$50 million Riverside Drive Multimodal Revitalization Corridor project.

The collaboration of more than 20 local, public, private and non-profit organizations, Riverside Drive will be a 3.25-mile project that reclaims a vacant rail bed to become a centerpiece of a more than \$300 million brownfields redevelopment project known as the Waterfront, in the City of Allentown.

The two-lane thoroughfare, paired with a 10-foot hiking and biking commuter trail, will provide the connective tissue for a project that will include a Riverwalk, public plazas, floating docks and a Main Street through an office and housing development on the former site of the long-closed Lehigh Structural Steel.

The project's ADA accessible design connects Allentown residents, commuters, recreational trail users and tourists from established commercial and mixed-use developments to the new cultural, recreational and smart growth redevelopment projects occurring along Allentown's waterfront.

It will close Pennsylvania's highest priority trail gap, providing a critical commuting link in the 165-mile Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Trail network and offering an alternative travel option to regional trail systems. It improves connectivity between rural and urban areas of the Lehigh Valley and eastern Pennsylvania, providing a new commuting corridor to job centers, while strengthening the spine of the region's recreational trail network.

Whether linking workers to their jobs, rural to urban, consumers to the businesses, or goods to the deliverers - this investment transcends social and economic barriers.

We offer our support for a project we believe will not only provide greater access to all residents, but continue the rebirth of the Lehigh Valley's urban core.



The Leader in Emergency Medical Services, Transportation and Community Health Resources

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Cetronia believes a project such as this will help our local residents gain more access to recreational activities and engage all age groups in a healthier and more active lifestyle. This ultimately results in heart healthy activity and reduction in obesity. We sincerely believe this will encourage our residents and even our lifesaving teams to increase activity therefore reducing the instances of heart and many other sedentary disease processes.

Cetronia Ambulance Corps is a nonprofit 501c3 organization. Since 1955 it has proudly served Lynn, South Whitehall, Upper Macungie, Weisenberg and Whitehall townships, as well as portions of Lowhill, Salisbury, Greenwich and Albany Townships, and the Borough of Coplay in Eastern Pennsylvania. Our mission is to be the leader in emergency medical services, transportation and community health resources.

Cetronia Ambulance Corps is one of the largest providers of ambulance services in Eastern Pennsylvania; employing 135 full- and part-time career associates, 20 active volunteers and boasting a total fleet of 41 vehicles, including 19 ambulances, 20 para-transit vehicles, a supervisor's vehicle, and a special services unit. As the regional leader in High Performance EMS, Cetronia Ambulance Corps fields over 60,000 calls annually, covering an emergency service area that spans across 130 square miles, touching more than 226,000 people, and a non-emergency coverage area that encompasses five counties. Cetronia Ambulance Corps is proud to support the residents of the Greater Lehigh Valley and Pocono Mountains and remains dedicated to community involvement, outreach and education in the communities it serves.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration and look forward to having your help in supporting this very important project here in the Lehigh Valley.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Larry Wiersch', written in a cursive style.

Larry Wiersch, MS

Chief Executive Officer