



July 2, 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 Lehigh Structural Steel.

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. 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 particularly appreciate the scope of the project, as when this gap is closed there will be over 100 miles of contiguous trail connecting the Philadelphia and Allentown regions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Leonard Bonarek". The signature is written in a cursive style and includes a small orange circular logo with a bicycle wheel design.

Leonard Bonarek
Regional Planner