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Sandra A. Parker

October 26, 2011

The Honorable Raymond LaHood, Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: *City of Rochester Inner Loop East Reconstruction Project*

Dear Secretary LaHood,


On behalf of the Rochester Business Alliance, a regional chamber of commerce that represents nearly 2,000 employers, I am writing today to express my support for the City of Rochester's Inner Loop East Reconstruction Project through the FY 2011 TIGER Discretionary Grants program. This funding will be used to remove a deteriorated and underutilized section of the Inner Loop Expressway and replace it with a new high quality city street. This project will reconnect neighborhoods, remove two structurally-deficient bridges, and create more than nine acres of land for redevelopment.

Rochester is the third largest city in New York State and an internationally-significant economic center. The City of Rochester is successfully revitalizing its downtown area through strategic investments in infrastructure, economic development, and housing. A key piece of its downtown revitalization strategy is to reconnect adjacent vibrant neighborhoods with the downtown core. No project is more central to this approach than the Inner Loop East Reconstruction project.

The ten to twelve lanes of the Inner Loop and its frontage roads separate the downtown area from adjacent thriving neighborhoods including the Neighborhood of the Arts, Upper East End, Park Avenue, and Monroe Village. The Inner Loop serves as a physical and psychological barrier, discouraging walking and biking and hindering economic development. Replacement of this outdated expressway with a context-sensitive complete street will reconnect neighborhoods, promote walking and biking, and encourage private investment. The proposed project meets all of the TIGER Long-Term Outcomes and incorporates multiple innovative features.

For these reasons, Rochester Business Alliance supports the reconstruction of the Inner Loop and asks that you give this significant project your full consideration.

Sincerely,



Sandra A. Parker
President & CEO