

October 27, 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,

I am writing 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.

This area is key to expansion of the annual Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival (XRIJF), which has fast become one the nation's largest music events, attracting more than 181,000 people this year from more than 25 states and 15 countries. The festival has an estimated minimum \$8 million plus economic impact on the region annually. It has become Rochester's signature cultural arts event, showcasing the region and enhancing its status as a tourism destination.

As co-owner and producer of XRIJF, my business partner, John Nugent and I are interested in investing in growing the festival. But currently the festival is divided by the Inner Loop, which limits expansion and potential increased economic impact. 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. Replacement of this outdated expressway with a context-sensitive complete street will reconnect neighborhoods, promote walking and biking, and encourage private investment.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.

I appreciate your full consideration of this important project. If you have any questions, or desire further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Marc Iacona
Producer / Executive Director
Xerox Rochester International Jazz Festival

