

May 16, 2020

Secretary Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: 2020 BUILD Grant

Dear Secretary Chao:

On Behalf of Duke University, I write in support of the BUILD Discretionary Grant application by the City of Durham to provide the necessary funds to proceed with the construction of the Durham Belt Line Trail.

The Belt Line is a green ribbon project that received private and TIGER grant planning funding. The increased mobility, economic competitiveness, and environmental enhancements provided by the Durham Belt Line will make use of an abandoned railway, connect the community, and offer public recreation space in Durham as our economy recovers.

Duke University strongly supports and recommends that the 2020 BUILD Grant be awarded to the City of Durham.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Stelfanie Williams
Vice President for Durham & Community Affairs
Duke University

Cc: Tallman Trask, Duke University Executive Vice President
Scott Selig, Duke University Associate Vice President for Capital Assets



Reinvestment
PARTNERS
PEOPLE • PLACES • POLICY

May 20, 2020

Secretary Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

Reinvestment Partners is a nonprofit community development corporation based in Durham, North Carolina. Our mission is to foster healthy and just communities by working with people, places and policy. We are active in the neighborhoods affected by the proposed Durham Belt Line Trail.

Reinvestment Partners supports the City of Durham's application for a BUILD Discretionary Grant that would provide funds to move forward with the construction of the Durham Belt Line Trail.

The Durham Belt Line is a 1.75-mile, 17-acre rail corridor that is no longer in use and was purchased by the City of Durham in 2018. The Durham City Council in 2018 adopted a master plan for the trail that was funded by a TIGER planning grant.

The Durham Belt Line Trail will enhance overall mobility, livability, environmental sustainability, and economic competitiveness in Durham and regionally. The trail will connect people to transit and jobs throughout the Triangle by improving bicycle and pedestrian access to downtown Durham, the Durham Station (local and regional bus service), and the Durham Amtrak Station.

The Durham Belt Line Trail will help to alter the pattern of regional sprawl by attracting some of the region's future growth to the corridor, while seeking to enhance and preserve existing communities along the trail, and working to ensure equity through Durham's Blueprint for Equitable Community Engagement. The trail will improve health and quality of life by increasing access to parks and open space, restoring the environment, and showcasing art, culture, and history.

Reinvestment Partners strongly supports and recommends that the 2020 BUILD Grant be awarded to the City of Durham. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Peter Skillern
Executive Director