



## Durham Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission

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September 19, 2023

The Honorable Secretary Buttigieg  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC, 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (the Commission), I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Durham to receive funding under the FY23 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program. The Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission is a citizens group whose purpose is to advise Durham's City Council and Board of County Commissioners on bicycle and pedestrian issues.

The City is submitting its Reimagine Durham Freeway (the Project) application under this program to continue advancing the community-led planning study to analyze and re-envision the Durham Freeway Corridor from the East End Connector to the Swift Avenue interchange in Durham.


The Durham Freeway was initially built during the 1970s to provide a high-speed vehicle connection from Research Triangle Park (RTP) to central Durham but created a path through Durham that destroyed well-established African American communities such as Durham's Hayti and West End communities, among others. In Fall 2023, the City of Durham is kicking off the first phase of its Reimagine Durham Freeway study, which will begin developing a community supported vision for the Durham Freeway. The first phase will also begin to identify and evaluate alternatives for the conversion of the Durham Freeway to a facility that maximizes multimodal safety and access.

The Project will build upon the first phase of study by developing preliminary designs and traffic analysis of the community identified alternatives and continuing the robust community and stakeholder engagement efforts. The Project will also study the inclusion of open and green spaces to enhance the community's livability. The Project aligns with the City's commitment to prioritize improvements that address racial equity and benefit vulnerable users, along with prioritizing safety and multimodal transportation projects.

The Commission is strongly in favor of undoing the harms caused by the building of the Durham Freeway. We believe that the Reimagine Durham Freeway project is an important step towards sharing the benefits of Durham's growth with our historically disenfranchised communities and towards a much safer and more accessible bicycle and pedestrian network.

Thank you for your consideration of this application – we look forward to supporting the City’s Reimagine Durham Freeway project, which will help reconnect vital communities in the heart of Durham.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deniz". The signature is enclosed within a large, loopy circular stroke that starts at the top left, loops around the top, and ends at the bottom right.

Deniz Aydemir  
Chair, Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission