



May 13, 2020

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

**RE: City of East Moline "Greater Downtown Revitalization Project"
BUILD Grant Application**

Dear Secretary Chao:

On behalf of the City East Moline, I am writing to request your strong consideration of our Better Utilizing Infrastructure to Leverage Development (BUILD) discretionary grant application for the City of East Moline Greater Downtown Revitalization Project.

The proposed project addresses numerous issues within a blighted downtown district, and the two manufacturer brownfield redevelopment sites (The Quarter and The Bend). The City of East Moline has drastically suffered since the early 80's due to the major decline in manufacturing. Much of this was a result of manufacturers going overseas and factories closing across the rust belt region in the United States. Recently, the proposed Bend and Rust Belt developments have begun to bring back life to this area. This project will help build on this momentum and revive the greater downtown area as a vibrant business and entertainment district.

This East Moline project will also create a regional, multi-modal oriented destination for business, entertainment, and living that will drive economic and community activity. "Complete streets" implemented through the greater downtown area will provide safe, accessible connections for vehicles, pedestrians, buses, trains, boats, and bicyclists to the established commercial cores, nearby residential neighborhoods, Mississippi River Trail, and the Mississippi River. It will also dramatically enhance the area and create a uniform sense of identity to East Moline's "Greater Downtown" area with lighting, landscaping, gateway signs, wayfinding signs, parks, and green stormwater infrastructure. Our staff and officials have been working corroboratively with other agencies to increase accessibility improve safety for motorists, transit, bicycle, and pedestrians while connecting regions in our community.

Please take special note that **an analysis of our project indicates a benefit-cost ratio of 8.27** which shows the funding requested will yield a tremendous return on investment in new development, business, and jobs.

The East Moline City Council and I fully endorse this BUILD Grant application and respectfully request that you give it fair and full consideration. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Reggie Freeman'.

Reggie Freeman
Mayor – City of East Moline