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Jim Leach
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The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of the City of East Moline's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant application for the proposed Greater Downtown Revitalization Project. This project would improve community connectivity, enhance quality of life and active transportation options, and ensure that all East Moline's citizens see the benefit of renewed economic growth and opportunity.

The proposed project would help revitalize and safely connect the City's downtown district and two nearby brownfield redevelopment sites (The Rust Belt 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 investment and development at the Bend and Rust Belt sites have begun to bring back life to this formerly industrial area. Railroad tracks and the lack of safe pedestrian infrastructure on 12th Avenue currently serve as a barrier between these new developments, the City's Greater Downtown, and nearby homes. This project will help connect these areas to build on this momentum and facilitate a vibrant business and entertainment district.

This East Moline project will also create a regional, multi-modal oriented destination that will drive economic and community activity. Walkable, complete streets throughout 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 riverfront. It will also dramatically enhance the area and create a uniform sense of identity to East Moline's Greater Downtown with lighting, landscaping, parks, and green stormwater infrastructure. Improved transit and bicycle connections will give residents additional options for accessing jobs and services in nearby communities. I applaud the City's collaborative efforts aimed at increasing accessibility and safety for motorists and active transportation users, while enhancing economic opportunities.

I fully endorse their RAISE Grant application and respectfully request that you give the City of East Moline's application fair and full consideration. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Jim Leach
John Deere Harvester Works