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February 14, 2024

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

Re: Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to support the 2024 RAISE grant application partnership between the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC), the City of Lathrup Village and the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) to support the reconfiguration of the Southfield Road corridor in the City of Lathrup Village in Oakland County, Michigan. All three agencies have identified the need to improve safety, congestion and transit access along the corridor. This project will revitalize an essential thoroughfare, improving mobility, accessibility and comfort for all users utilizing all modes of travel. The total project cost is \$25,908,325 with a federal RAISE grant request of \$20,726,588 and a combined local match of \$5,181,647 from all three agencies. The City of Lathrup is committed to providing a local match of \$1,909,142 to support this project application.

This project begins at Meadowood Avenue and ends at Cambridge Boulevard. The scope of work will transform this section of Southfield Road into a divided boulevard, which will improve access to businesses, residential areas and job centers throughout the region. The scope of work includes reconstruction of the existing roadway into a six-lane roadway (three travel lanes in each direction) with a median, transit and active transportation infrastructure enhancements, signal modernization, pedestrian crosswalk upgrades to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), drainage enhancements, congestion mitigation measures and utility enhancements. SMART will also enhance amenities to bus stops along the corridor by adding shelters, real-time arrival screens, ADA walkways and trash cans.

Southfield Road is a major collector with a daily traffic volume of more than 70,000 vehicles. It serves as an access point for I-696 and the "main street" for Lathrup Village. The corridor is culturally diverse and provides access to a variety of commercial and retail buildings, recreational facilities and a variety of

housing ranging from apartment complexes to single-family homes. The project corridor provides access to adjoining historically disadvantaged communities and areas of persistent poverty.

Southfield Road is one of SMART's most-delayed bus routes, this SMART 420 bus serves 42 bus stops though the City of Southfield to the City of Royal Oak. Although the 420 bus provides key access for healthcare workers and a transit dependent community, congestion in the area has created air quality and travel time reliability issues. SMART bus stop facilities are also in need of upgrades to provide passengers with amenities that provide comfort and accessibility. In addition to serving as the main business corridor for Lathrup Village, this section of Southfield Road is also a main north/south corridor for the region. Southfield Road's condition and level of service must be improved to meet the demand of the region.

I respectfully request the USDOT give full and fair consideration to RCOC's partnership application.

Best Regards,

Fred Prime
DDA Chair

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