



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JOSH STEIN  
GOVERNOR

J.R. "JOEY" HOPKINS  
SECRETARY

January 28, 2025

US Sean Duffy  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Support for the Town of East Spencer's DESIGN BUILD Discretionary Grant Application

Dear Secretary Duffy,

On behalf of North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), I am forwarding this letter in support of the Town of East Spencer's application to the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) for a Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant opportunity to support the construction conversion of Correll Street/McCanless Road from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The Developing an East Spencer Interchange for a Growth Nexus (DESIGN) project represents a crucial opportunity to address the long-term transportation and economic challenges facing the Town, which is both a Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC) and an Area of Persistent Poverty (AoPP).

This project is a key to addressing East Spencer's long-term transportation barriers. The Town is historically predominantly African American and, like many similar towns, East Spencer was largely detached from nearby communities. Historically East Spencer has been cut off to the west by the railroad, to the east by Town Creek, and without direct connections to the south, the Town relied on one road (Long Street) to access adjacent communities.

The DESIGN project will enable East Spencer to address many of its long-term socio-economic and mobility challenges. Town residents will benefit from a more direct access to I-85. This access will decrease traffic on Long Street, reducing demand on that aging facility and making bicycle and pedestrian use less problematic. An access point to I-85 will open the East Spencer Extraterritorial Jurisdiction to sustainable light industrial development including the 15 million square feet of industrial space under development along the I-85 corridor. In addition, with interchange funding in place, the Town can pursue electronic vehicle charging stations as well as improved bicycle and pedestrian access through the project area, improving access to employment as well as to Hanford-Dole Elementary School. This grant represents an opportunity to transform East Spencer, breaking the cycle of disinvestment and opening pathways to economic prosperity for its residents.

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USDOT Secretary Sean Duffy  
Town of East Spencer's DESIGN FY2025 BUILD grant program application  
January 28, 2025  
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I appreciate your consideration of the Town of East Spencer's BUILD grant application and your support for this transformation project.

Sincerely,

Signed by:  
*Mark T. Gibbs, PE*

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Mark Gibbs, PE  
Western Deputy Chief Engineer  
North Carolina Department of Transportation