



704-633-2231  
spencernc.gov

Post Office Box 45  
Spencer, NC 28159-0045

January 27, 2025

Secretary Sean Duffy  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: BUILD Grant Letter of Support

Dear Secretary Duffy:

I write to offer my support and endorsement for the Town of East Spencer's application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for a Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant. Our neighbors are pursuing the grant to support the construction conversion of Correll Street/McCanless Road from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

Interstate I-85 from Raleigh to Charlotte has, for decades, been touted as the fertile crescent of economic development for central North Carolina. Until recently, however, most development activity has been focused in the Charlotte, Triad, and Triangle metro areas. As property costs and population densities have risen in those areas, new development opportunities are finally reaching counties like Rowan, including small communities like Spencer and East Spencer.

Rowan County has many assets to leverage, such as reasonably priced land supported by natural gas lines, rail access, electrical generation and water/wastewater treatment capacity, and an underutilized labor force. To maximize the opportunity for our community to contribute to industrial development, some infrastructure needs must be met. Collectively, these projects are known locally as the Northern Rowan Connector, to promote regional connectivity, enhance quality of life, and bolster the economies of Rowan County's northern gateway communities. The new I-85 exit is one of these key projects.

While the Town of East Spencer runs adjacent to I-85 for over four miles, access is currently limited to only one interstate interchange and few parallel access roads. To adequately serve existing industrial clients, residential developments, and to open new land for economic development, East Spencer needs an additional interchange.

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-Mayor Jonathan D. Williams-

This is one of several needed road and infrastructure improvements in our area. Combined with an exciting a former textile mill redevelopment and a bold vision for enhancing our pedestrian connectivity and outdoor recreation economy, we have many additional projects that will complement a new interchange serving East Spencer and beyond. The success of all these projects would create a big impact in housing opportunity, job creation, and growth in our local tax base.

While our neighbors in East Spencer are leading this project, we wholeheartedly support this effort that will lead to increased economic opportunity for everyone in our area. Additional employment, housing, commerce, and recreation options will be a direct result of a new interstate interchange and are significant needs for northern Rowan County. We have seen similar projects to our south have transformative effects, with a positive impact on a broad area surrounding the improvements. Spencer, the unique High Rock Lake area, and other communities surrounding East Spencer all stand to count this project as a win.

On behalf of the Board of Aldermen and our community, I thank you for your consideration and ask you and your team to support this important request.

Sincerely,



Jonathan D. Williams  
Mayor