



Chamber of Commerce

*Be an original.*

February 9, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

On behalf of the Rowan Chamber of Commerce, we humbly request your support of the grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$14,980,340 in non-federal funds (37% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2214) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create manufacturing jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed."

We strongly encourage you to support the BUILD grant for our community. For more information, please contact me at (704) 633-4221 or [espalding@rowanchamber.com](mailto:espalding@rowanchamber.com)

Sincerely,

*Elaine Spalding*

Elaine Spalding, CCE  
President  
Rowan Chamber of Commerce  
Salisbury, North Carolina



PARTNERSHIP for ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
SALISBURY, NC

*Be an original.*

January 22, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I write in support of a grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$14,980,340 in non-federal funds (37% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2214) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed."

This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas, and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rod Crider", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rod Crider, CEcD,CCE  
President



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

JOSH STEIN  
GOVERNOR

DANIEL H. JOHNSON  
SECRETARY

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Subject: Support for the Town of East Spencer's BUILD GRANT Application

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I write in support of a grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$14,980,340 in non-federal funds (37% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2214) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; this project will provide direct access to I-85 which will not only provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed."

USDOT Secretary Sean Duffy  
Town of East Spencer's BUILD GRANT Application  
February 23, 2026  
Page 2

**This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.**

Sincerely,



John P. Rhyne, P.E.  
Division 9 Engineer  
North Carolina Department of Transportation

/jpr



CABARRUS COUNTY ◊ CHINA GROVE ◊ CLEVELAND ◊ CONCORD " GRANITE QUARRY " HARRISBURG ◊ KANNAPOLIS " LANDIS  
MIDLAND " MOUNT PLEASANT " ROCKWELL " EAST SPENCER " ROWAN COUNTY " SALISBURY " SPENCER ◊ FAITH

January 28, 2026

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

Subject: BUILD Grant Letter of Support

Dear Secretary Duffy:

The Cabarrus Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization (CR MPO) is pleased to offer this Letter of Support for the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project, converting an underpass to a full access interchange of I-85 in Rowan County.

This project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed." This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

Meredith Smith, Chair  
Cabarrus-Rowan TAC

cc: Secretary Daniel Johnson, NCDOT  
Mr. John Rhyne, NCDOT Division 9  
Mayor Barbara Mallett, Town of East Spencer  
Mr. Michael Douglas, Town of East Spencer

Greg Edds, Chairman  
Jim Greene, Vice-Chairman  
Mike Caskey  
Judy Klusman  
Craig Pierce



Aaron Church, County Manager  
Carolyn Barger, Clerk to the Board  
John W. Dees, II, County Attorney

## Rowan County Board of Commissioners

130 West Innes Street • Salisbury, NC 28144  
Telephone 704-216-8180 • FAX 704-216-8195

January 28, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590  
Dear Secretary Duffy,

I write in support of a grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$10,780,340 in non-federal funds (27% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2114) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed."

This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

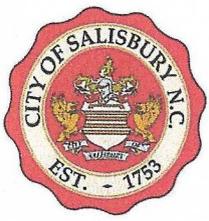
Gregory C. Edds, Chairman

Rowan County Board of Commissioners

Equal Opportunity Employer



recycled paper



# City of Salisbury

North Carolina

Office of the  
Mayor

January 29, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I write in support of a grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$10,780,340 in non-federal funds (27% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2114) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed."

This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

Pamara Sheffield  
Mayor

Town of China Grove, NC  
Mayor, Rodney Phillips



January 29, 2026  
The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I write in support of a grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$10,780,340 in non-federal funds (27% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2114) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed."

This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

*Rodney Phillips*  
Mayor, China Grove

Town of China Grove  
333 N. Main Street  
China Grove, NC 28023  
704.490.1632  
[rphillips@chinagrovec.gov](mailto:rphillips@chinagrovec.gov)





## Town of Rockwell

202 East Main Street  
PO Box 506  
Rockwell, NC 28138-0506

Phone: 704-279-2180  
Fax: 704-279-0454

January 30, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I write in support of a grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$10,780,340 in non-federal funds (27% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2114) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

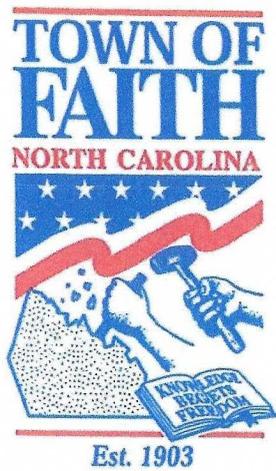
Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed."

This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas, and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

Charles R Bowman III  
Mayor, Town of Rockwell



Post Office Box 37  
100 North Main Street  
Faith, North Carolina 28041-0037  
Telephone: (704) 279-7500  
Facsimile: (704) 279-0408

January 29, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I write in support of a grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the "Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development" (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$10,780,340 in non-federal funds (27% of the total project cost), would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2114) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and "no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed."

This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas, and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Randall Barger".

D. Randall Barger  
Mayor



*Town of Granite Quarry*

143 N Salisbury Avenue Granite Quarry, NC 28146

PO Box 351 Granite Quarry, NC 28072

704.279.5596 Office | 704.279.6648 Fax

February 12, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I write in support of a grant application from the Town of East Spencer, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the “Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development” (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$10,780,340 in non-federal funds (27% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2114) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities; therefore, this project that will provide direct access to I-85 not only will provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but will also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunities for advancement.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 by NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and “no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed.”

This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas and I would request that you provide careful consideration of this project.

Sincerely,

Brittany H. Barnhardt

Mayor of Granite Quarry, NC



704-633-2231  
spencernc.gov

Post Office Box 45  
Spencer, NC 28159-0045

February 5, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary 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, North Carolina, which, in partnership with Rowan County, North Carolina, is requesting \$25,000,000 in federal funding through the “Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development” (BUILD) grant program for the Town of East Spencer I-85/SR2114 Interchange Construction Project. The project, to be matched with \$14,980,340 in non-federal funds (37% of the total project cost) would convert Correll Street/McCanless Road (SR2214) from an underpass to an interchange on I-85 in Rowan County.

The project offers a vital opportunity to tackle the long-standing transportation and economic issues that the Town faces and will also greatly improve safety for motorists and pedestrians, including parents and children traveling to the adjacent Hanford-Dole Elementary School.

Historically, the Town of East Spencer has been isolated from neighboring communities. By providing direct access to I-85, this project will not only provide greater community connectivity and mobility for its citizens but, also attract needed investment to create jobs and opportunity.

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.

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-Mayor Jonathan D. Williams-

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.

A robust partnership of the Town of East Spencer, Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) has produced a significant amount of preliminary review, including the issuance of an Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023. In this, NCDOT that noted that the project had been reviewed by the FHWA and “no concerns were noted with the interstate access as proposed.”

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.

This grant represents a transformative opportunity for East Spencer and the residents of Rowan County and surrounding areas. On behalf of Spencer’s 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

105 S. Long Street  
Post Office Box 339  
East Spencer, North  
Carolina 28039



Telephone: (704) 636-7111  
Fax: (704) 639-7734  
Website: [www.eastspencer.gov](http://www.eastspencer.gov)

## *"HOME OF HERITAGE & PROMISE"*

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February 19, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the Town of East Spencer, I write to express unequivocal support for the Town's application to the 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program for the I-85/SR 2114 Interchange Construction Project.

With a total project cost of \$39,980,340, this initiative represents a generational infrastructure investment in a rural, economically distressed community seeking equitable access to opportunity. The Town has committed \$5,780,340 in non-federal funding, comprised of \$4,980,340 in capital funds and an \$800,000 loan, demonstrating significant local financial participation despite limited fiscal capacity. This level of commitment underscores both the urgency of the project and the Town's readiness to proceed upon award.

Safety improvements are central to this project. Currently, limited and indirect access to Interstate 85 forces freight and commuter traffic onto local streets not designed to accommodate heavy volumes or large commercial vehicles. This condition increases crash risk, strains aging infrastructure, and compromises emergency response times. The proposed interchange will provide direct, controlled access to I-85, reduce conflict points, improve traffic flow, and enhance roadway safety for residents, commercial drivers, and first responders alike.

From a freight and supply chain perspective, the project will significantly strengthen regional logistics efficiency along the Interstate 85 corridor, one of the Southeast's most critical freight corridors. Improved access will reduce travel times, lower transportation costs, and enhance connectivity for industrial and distribution facilities throughout Rowan County and surrounding areas. By improving interstate access, the project directly supports national freight mobility objectives and supply chain resilience.

Equity and rural investment considerations are also paramount. East Spencer is a small municipality with constrained financial resources and longstanding infrastructure gaps that have limited economic competitiveness. The absence of direct interstate access has hindered private

investment and perpetuated economic disparities. This interchange will serve as a catalyst for transformative development, expanding the tax base, creating jobs, and opening access to employment centers for residents. Federal participation through the BUILD program would represent a targeted investment in a community working to overcome historic disadvantage and advance inclusive economic growth.

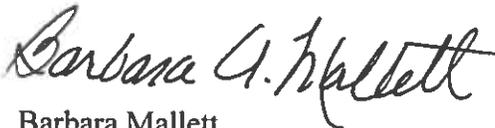
This project reflects extensive regional coordination and technical preparation. The Town has partnered closely with Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to advance the project through significant preliminary review. The issuance of the Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 demonstrates rigorous analysis, federal coordination, and project feasibility. This groundwork ensures the project is well-positioned for efficient implementation and responsible stewardship of federal funds.

The I-85/SR 2114 Interchange Construction Project directly advances BUILD program priorities by improving safety, enhancing freight mobility, investing in rural and economically distressed communities, and promoting long-term economic resilience. Federal investment at this pivotal moment will unlock transformative benefits that extend well beyond municipal boundaries and contribute meaningfully to regional and national transportation objectives.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your favorable consideration of the Town of East Spencer's 2026 BUILD Grant application. This project is not simply an infrastructure improvement, it is a strategic investment in safety, equity, and sustainable economic growth.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,



Barbara Mallett

Mayor

Town of East Spencer

(704) 636-7111

Mayor@eastspencer.gov

105 S. Long Street  
Post Office Box 339  
East Spencer, North  
Carolina 28039



Telephone: (704) 636-7111  
Fax: (704) 639-7734  
Website: [www.eastspencer.gov](http://www.eastspencer.gov)

## *"HOME OF HERITAGE & PROMISE"*

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February 19, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy:

I write to offer my strongest possible support for our Town's application to the 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program for the I-85/SR 2114 Interchange Construction Project.

This \$39,980,340 project represents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to transform transportation access, improve public safety, and expand economic opportunity for our residents. Despite our limited fiscal capacity as a small rural municipality, the Town has committed \$5,780,340 in non-federal funding—including \$4,980,340 in capital funds and an \$800,000 loan—to demonstrate our full commitment to advancing this critical infrastructure investment. Our financial participation reflects both the urgency of this project and our readiness to proceed.

Public safety is at the forefront of this initiative. The current lack of direct interstate access forces freight trucks and commuter traffic onto local streets that were never designed to carry heavy volumes or large commercial vehicles. This creates avoidable safety risks, increases congestion, accelerates roadway deterioration, and impacts emergency response times. Constructing the interchange will provide direct and controlled access to Interstate 85, reduce crash risk, improve traffic operations, and enhance safety for residents, businesses, and first responders.

From an economic and freight mobility standpoint, the project will significantly strengthen access along the Interstate 85 corridor—one of the Southeast's most vital freight corridors. Improved connectivity will support regional supply chain efficiency, reduce travel times, and attract industrial and commercial investment. For East Spencer, direct interstate access is essential to unlocking underutilized property, expanding our tax base, and creating meaningful job opportunities for our citizens and the broader Rowan County region.

Equally important is the equity dimension of this project. East Spencer is a rural community that has faced longstanding infrastructure limitations and economic challenges. The absence of direct

interstate access has hindered private investment and limited economic mobility for our residents. The proposed interchange is more than a transportation improvement; it is a pathway to equitable access, economic revitalization, and long-term resilience. Federal investment through the BUILD program would provide critical support to a community working diligently to overcome historic disadvantages.

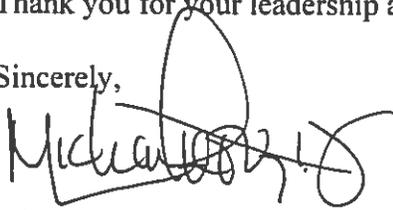
This project is the product of strong regional collaboration. The Town has worked in close partnership with Rowan County, the Cabarrus-Rowan Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to ensure thoughtful planning and technical advancement. The issuance of the Interchange Access Report (IAR) in July 2023 reflects significant preliminary review, coordination, and validation of the project's feasibility. This preparation ensures the project is positioned for timely implementation and responsible stewardship of federal funds.

The I-85/SR 2114 Interchange Construction Project aligns directly with BUILD program priorities by enhancing safety, strengthening freight mobility, investing in rural communities, and promoting equitable economic growth. Federal support at this critical juncture will help transform opportunity for East Spencer and contribute to regional and national transportation objectives.

On behalf of the residents of East Spencer, I respectfully request your favorable consideration of our 2026 BUILD Grant application. This project is essential to our community's future and to the broader economic vitality of our region.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Douglas", with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

Michael Douglas  
Town Manager  
Town of East Spencer  
(704) 636-7111  
townmanager@eastspencer.gov