



VANCE-GRANVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

President's Office

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April 4, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to express my support for the **North Carolina Regional S-Line Mobility Hub Plan** application for the Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program for fiscal year 2022. This grant is being submitted by the Town of Wake Forest in partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and other communities along the S-Line corridor.

The North Carolina Regional S-Line Mobility Hub Plan ("Mobility Hub Plan") will serve to advance regional multimodal transportation along the S-Line Rail Corridor in central North Carolina – enhancing mobility options, improving social equity, increasing the resilience of the transportation network, and spurring economic growth. The S-Line corridor is a key component in making the Southeast Corridor a reality. The Southeast Corridor is a planned network of passenger and freight rail lines that would run between Florida and Washington. The intent of the overall S-Line project is to have passenger rail stops that accommodate multiple modes of transportation at mobility hubs along the corridor.

Each mobility hub will be a place of accessible, multimodal connectivity, offering an integrated suite of mobility services, amenities, and supporting technologies, allowing passengers to transfer modes in a safe and convenient manner. The Mobility Hub Plan will focus on defining the scope and physical location of each mobility hub, evaluating potential environmental impacts, and completing preliminary design activities. These mobility hubs will address issues of social equity in communities by expanding access to jobs, healthy food, recreation, and social services. By planning and designing future S-Line rail stations as mobility hubs, each community will be prepared to maximize the benefits of the rail service by optimizing first and last mile solutions.

Vance-Granville Community College (VGCC) serves four counties in North Carolina: Vance, Granville, Franklin, and Warren. These counties are located just north of the Raleigh-Durham area – an economic powerhouse in NC. Rail service would be an equity game-changer for our service area to provide access to the many jobs available in the greater Raleigh area. Our region

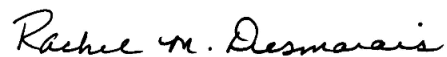
contains two Tier 1 designated counties and two Tier 2 counties. One of those counties (Vance) has been recently designated as a “persistent poverty” county by the Department of Commerce, Economic Development Association.

However, our service area is also rich in available land for businesses and homes, consumable water to support building, multiple lakes for recreation, and roads that connect towns to shopping and conveniences. As Raleigh and Durham are running out of land and workforce housing, our counties just to the north can provide all manner of options for buildable projects. As one of the 58 community colleges in the North Carolina system, VGCC provides quality learning options for traditional-aged, adult, and college-in-high-school residents. Our business is training a future-ready workforce, and we are ready for our community to prosper!

The S-Line corridor is both historically significant and important to the future of central North Carolina. The partnerships between the communities along the S-Line and regional and state agencies will further the economic strength of the region, leading to new economic opportunities in communities that were quite literally built on the success of rail. The Mobility Hub Plan will be an incredibly important factor in the connectivity, innovation, growth, and overall vibrancy of our communities.

I respectfully urge your full and fair consideration of the *North Carolina Regional S-Line Mobility Hub Plan* grant application.

Sincerely,



Rachel M. Desmarais, Ph.D.

President

Vance-Granville Community College