



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Vwhskhq#Z hqvp dq/#DIF'S/#JOD#
Sølgq:qj #G lhfwru#

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

January 20, 2023

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to express my support for the *Walk NC: Creating Safer Crossings for NC Communities* application for the Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program for fiscal year 2023. This grant is being submitted by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

WALK NC will fund pedestrian countdown signal heads, crosswalks, and accessible routes at signalized intersections in more than a dozen towns and cities in North Carolina. RAISE grant funding will improve pedestrian safety at hundreds of NCDOT-maintained signals in historically underserved communities. These proposed changes will improve accessibility for people at signalized intersections and provide pedestrians with dedicated WALK phases and marked crosswalks. Additional signal timing improvements will be implemented, and sidewalk gaps constructed where feasible and needed. These pedestrian improvements will address issues of social equity in communities by providing safe crossings and connecting networks, expanding access to jobs, healthy food, recreation, and social services. These types of improvements are especially important to places like Smithfield, as our Downtown area is split by Highway 70, Business Route which carries heavy traffic throughout the day.

The WALK NC improvements are important to the future of our North Carolina community. The partnerships between the selected communities and regional and state agencies will further connect and improve the quality of life. WALK NC will also foster innovation, growth, and overall vibrancy of our communities.

I respectfully urge your full and fair consideration of the *WALK NC: Creating Safer Crossings for NC Communities* grant application.

Sincerely,

Stephen Wensman
Planning Director, Smithfield, NC