

September 23, 2024

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

**Re: Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program: Reconnecting East Greensboro**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Southern Environmental Law Center, I write to support the City of Greensboro's application for a planning grant under the U.S. Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program, prepared in partnership with the N.C. Department of Transportation and Greensboro Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization.

The Southern Environmental Law Center is a non-profit organization that works to protect the basic right to clean air, clean water, and a livable climate; to preserve our region's natural treasures and rich biodiversity; and to provide a healthy environment for all. We advocate for equitable land use and transportation solutions that reduce carbon emissions and promote better connected communities. I believe the *Reconnecting East Greensboro Plan* will further those goals.

I understand the grant would be used to study the neighborhoods around seven miles of US Highway 29 between I-40 and I-785 in East Greensboro, a 75-year-old, access-controlled highway bisecting a historically Black community. Its construction destroyed important community assets, and this physical barrier continues to limit mobility and community connectivity. The neighborhoods impacted by the construction of US 29 have a generational legacy of poverty and disconnect stemming from the barrier created by this multi-lane highway.

An inclusive, community-driven planning process will define issues, identify solutions, and create integrated solutions tailored to our community. Local stakeholders will be engaged in each step, and we believe this focused community involvement will help rebuild community trust and provide valuable insight into the lived experience of residents. A shared vision for the community will meaningfully address the historical inequities created by US 29 and inform future transportation improvements within the corridor.

East Greensboro residents have a prominent history of fighting, and in some cases dying, for equal rights when students from schools in this corridor led one of the first non-violent sit-in protests in the U.S. Greensboro's Plan continues this legacy by creating a multimodal blueprint to retrofit this critical corridor, mitigate past harm, and serve the community it has marginalized.

Please grant this funding request.

Sincerely,



Megan Kimball  
Senior Attorney