



September 10, 2009

Ray LaHood  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: Downtown Crossing, New Haven, CT**

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing in strong support of Downtown Crossing and the City of New Haven's TIGER grant application. Downtown Crossing includes the proposed conversion of the Route 34 East highway to an urban boulevard and the associated economic development of "Parcel D".


The Economic Development Corporation of New Haven is a private sector non-profit focused exclusively on growing the economy and job base in the city of New Haven through retaining, growing and attracting businesses. We work in collaboration with Mayor John DeStefano, Jr., and his staff on economic development initiatives that advance the goal of creating an economically vibrant city. The development of the proposed facility to be constructed in the Rt. 34 corridor is a critical component of continuing to grow the already robust biomedical industry in New Haven.

We believe the proposed improvements are highly consistent with our mission and the objectives of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The City and private development team are ready to go with a 400,000 s.f. commercial lab building in the heart of the New Haven health sciences community. This new development complements over \$2 billion in recent and planned investment as New Haven emerges from the recession as an international center of influence in biotechnology and health sciences.

Route 34 east is a grade-separated highway and there is no land in the immediate area to develop more much-needed lab space. TIGER program support is therefore essential for us to reclaim land and rebuild our economic base. Construction activities will create 2,000 jobs immediately and contribute \$184 million in direct and indirect spending over the next three years. Over the long-term, the new building will create nearly 1,000 jobs supporting cutting-edge medical research. These employees will generate \$114 million in annual economic activity from wage earnings of nearly \$80 million.

In no uncertain terms, these infrastructure improvements support our efforts to compete effectively in the global marketplace and that is the very essence of our economic development strategy. Thank you for your consideration and support of this essential project.

Sincerely,



Michele L. Whelley  
CEO

Cc: Mayor John DeStefano, Jr.