

Greater
New Haven
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

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September 9, 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 a site known as "Parcel D". Approval of this grant application will create a framework for significant economic development in new Haven, leading to business growth and new jobs.

The Chamber represents nearly 2,000 businesses and organizations in 15 cities and towns in south central Connecticut. The Chamber is one of the area's strong advocates for economic growth, bringing together businesses and non-profit agencies to cooperate toward the goal of a higher quality of life for the region. We are proud that our membership represents a diverse spectrum of the region's business and institutional community, including corporate and non-profit sectors.

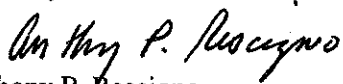
We believe the proposed improvements are highly consistent with both our mission to keep the region an attractive place to live and work, and with the objectives of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The City of New Haven and private development team are ready to go with a 400,000 sq.ft. commercial laboratory building at this location, in New Haven's health sciences community. Adjacent to Yale-New Haven Hospital and Yale University School of Medicine, this new development will complement over \$2 billion in current and planned investment. Together, these investments add to New Haven's strong position as an international center of influence in biotechnology and health sciences.

Route 34 East is part of a previously-abandoned plan for a grade-separated highway. Outside the highway right of way, there is no land in the immediate area to develop more lab space to address the high demand. TIGER program support is essential for us to reclaim land and rebuild our economic base. Construction activities will create 2,000 immediately jobs and contribute \$184 million in direct and indirect spending to the regional economy over the next three years. Over the long-term, the new building will create nearly 1,000 jobs supporting cutting-edge medical research. The City estimates that these employees will generate \$114 million in annual economic activity from wage earnings of nearly \$80 million.

New Haven is fortunate to have a high density of top-tier medical and higher education institutions within its borders, which are at the heart of our economic development strategy. The Chamber is in full agreement with the City and its team that the proposed Route 34 infrastructure improvements will build our capacity to compete effectively in the global marketplace.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this essential project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anthony P. Rescigno". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'A'.

Anthony P. Rescigno
President

cc: Michele Whelley, New Haven Economic Development Corporation