



First National Bank

January 25, 2023

One Federal Plaza West, Youngstown, OH 44503  
330-743-4321

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

**RE:** Mahoning Valley Leveraging Infrastructure for Transportation (LIFT) Project.  
United States Department of Transportation  
Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to support the Western Reserve Transit Authority's (WRTA) 2023 RAISE grant application for the Mahoning Valley *Leveraging Infrastructure for Transportation (LIFT)* Project. This Project will aid in existing revitalization efforts that seek to transform the City of Youngstown's Market Street Corridor into a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use community and aligns investments in transit with the region's vision for growth and economic development. Many residents of the Market Street corridor have lower incomes, are older and/or are members of minority groups. Furthermore, these neighborhoods have experienced decades of disinvestment and depopulation.

This Project, rooted in Transit-Oriented Development principles (TOD) and the goal of this Project is to enhance the already good bus service that WRTA provides along Market Street with infrastructure investments at their primary transit hub, Federal Station. This Project inherently contributes to equity by improving transit, pedestrian, and bike facilities used primarily by lower-income and minority citizens at WRTA's Federal Station. It takes advantage of public investment in transit to attract private investment that benefits neighborhoods and drives smart and sustainable growth. An emphasis of this TOD Project is to ultimately empower communities to become dynamic places where people live, work, and play.

First National Bank wholeheartedly supports WRTA and their efforts to obtain a RAISE grant. I strongly encourage the Department of Transportation to invest in Youngstown, the Mahoning Valley, and the state of Ohio; a community that has suffered with disparities in income, education, and health outcomes.

Respectfully,

Peter J. Asimakopoulos  
Executive Vice President  
Small Business Banking  
Youngstown Market President