



January 26, 2023

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 transit investments 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 goal of this project, which is rooted in Transit-Oriented Development principles (TOD), is to enhance the existing bus service that WRTA provides along Market Street with infrastructure investments at their primary transit hub, Federal Station, in downtown Youngstown.

The LIFT project also contributes to advancing 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.

The Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County (PLYMC) serves many WRTA riders and as such, we wholeheartedly support WRTA and their efforts to obtain a RAISE grant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Aimee Fifarek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Aimee Fifarek
Director and CEO
The Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County