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September 28, 2009

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-1406

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The Honorable Ray LaHood  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing in strong support of the City of Muncie's application for \$6,295,000 in TIGER Grant funding for the City's Downtown Economic Enhancement Project. Muncie is an Economically Distressed Area and has identified its downtown area as a pivotal piece in reviving its economy and improving the quality of life for its residents. An investment of TIGER funds for both a Quiet Zone and Cultural Trail in Muncie will help preserve and create jobs while promoting economic recovery, and meets the objectives of the TIGER Grant program of providing investment in transportation infrastructure that provides long-term economic benefit and assisting communities affected by the current economic downturn.

The development of a Quiet Zone is of critical importance to downtown Muncie's economic viability. Muncie has three active railroad lines belonging to CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern Corporation. Approximately 78 trains pass through 26 intersections daily - each required to sound its whistle three times before entering an at-grade intersection - resulting in as many as 6,000 whistles per day concentrated in or near downtown Muncie. This has been a significant factor in the closing of major businesses, including the City's most historic hotel, and poses a major hurdle in attracting new business and job creation opportunities. Implementation of a Quiet Zone, per Federal Railroad Administration rules, will remove this foremost impediment to economic development and greatly increase the quality of life for the residents and businesses in Muncie. Significantly, the City of Muncie has partnered with CSX and Norfolk Southern to develop a plan to decrease the impact of the rail crossings, which includes the implementation of a Quiet Zone.

Muncie also is seeking a TIGER Grant investment for the development of a Cultural Trail that will encompass bike and pedestrian thoroughfares while linking the City's four cultural zones and the Cardinal and White River Greenways. The Greenways attract 250,000 visitors per year and linking them with downtown Muncie will spur economic growth and greatly enhance livability and quality-of-life in the area. Bike and pedestrian paths long have been a priority for the City and have been included in Muncie's Transportation Plan.

Importantly, the City is requesting TIGER Grant investments to supplement funding already identified for these projects and is not asking for the TIGER Grant program to provide the entirety of the funding.

I believe both projects are worthy for TIGER Grant investment and will provide real and long-term economic and livability benefits for the City of Muncie and the surrounding area.

For the reasons stated above, I would respectfully request that you give these requests for funding every appropriate consideration. Any questions or comments regarding these requests may be directed to my Deputy District Director, Kim Bennett, at [kiml.bennett@mail.house.gov](mailto:kiml.bennett@mail.house.gov).

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Thank you for your consideration of these most important and worthwhile requests.

Sincerely,



Mike Pence  
Member of Congress  
Sixth District, Indiana

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cc: Lana Hurdle; Co-Chair, TIGER  
Joel Szabat; Co-Chair, TIGER