



TOWN MANAGER'S OFFICE

August 16, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I write to ask for your support for a project critical to transportation infrastructure improvements in Cary, North Carolina. Specifically, I request that you give a favorable recommendation on an application submitted by the Town of Cary for the Walker Street Extension Project. Funding is being requested as part of the TIGER II Discretionary Grant Program.

The Walker Street Extension project is in downtown Cary. The town is bisected by two railroad tracks running east-west; the 200' railroad right-of-way is controlled by North Carolina Railroad (NCR), Norfolk-Southern Railroad (NS), CSX Transportation (CSX), with Amtrak passenger rail service renting the tracks. This rail corridor is also part of the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) line, and is also being considered for regional-wide transit use by the Triangle Transit Authority. All of the north-south roadways within the downtown area include gate-controlled, at-grade rail crossings of the NCR corridor. There are no grade-separate rail crossings. Increased development, vehicular and rail traffic, and congestion in the town are a growing concern. At-grade intersections with the rail line severely impacts traffic flow, congestion, emergency response, and pedestrian and bicycle safety.

To address these concerns, the Town of Cary intends to extend Walker Street by 0.2 miles and construct a grade-separated crossing under the railroad track. The new, extended road will incorporate green infrastructure techniques such as bike lanes, wide pedestrian sidewalks, and storm water quality treatment devices. A railroad grade separation bridge will be provided for CSXT Rail, Norfolk Southern Rail, North Carolina Rail Road, and Triangle Transit Authority. The project will provide safety benefits associated with rail traffic separation, relieve area-wide congestion, improve emergency vehicle response, and enhance economic re-development in nearby downtown Cary.

It is my hope that the Department of Transportation will look favorably upon the application for federal funds.

Sincerely,

Benjamin T. Shivar  
Town Manager

TOWN of CARY