

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4606

August 17, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Floor 9
Washington, DC 20003-3660

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I write today in support of the City of Newport News, Virginia's grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program to assist with the designing and planning of the Southeast Community Greenway Reconnector.

The 28th Street Bridge passes over Interstate 664 (I-664) in the City of Newport News. This project seeks to transform the structure into a multimodal bridge with a publicly accessible park and recreation space that connects the majority-minority Southeast Community of Newport News with the Downtown districts. These improvements will create greater accessibility to economic opportunities, businesses, grocery stores, retail, and health care facilities for residents of the Southeast Community.

Historically, I understand that the Southeast Community has faced substantial hurdles in the equitable distribution of resources and economic opportunity. When I-664 was constructed, the community was almost completely divided from the Downtown districts. The interstate was largely constructed along the previous formal redlining boundary that separated the low-income neighborhoods of Newport News with the rest of the city. While the practice of redlining was outlawed in April 1968, the planning and construction of I-664 created a physical barrier separating the previously redlined communities from the rest of Newport News.

The awarding of funds to the City of Newport News for the redevelopment of the 28th Street Garden Bridge will allow the city to create a meaningful way of reconnecting Newport News while still allowing for the economic benefits associated with the presence of I-664. I ask that you give this proposal every appropriate consideration. To the extent possible, please continue to update my office on the status of this grant by emailing GrantSupport_Warner@warner.senate.gov.

Thank you for your service on behalf of my constituents.

Sincerely,



MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

MRW/aw

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