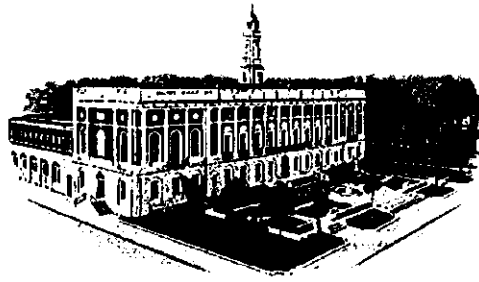


NEIL M. O'LEARY
MAYOR



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
THE CITY OF WATERBURY
CONNECTICUT

The Honorable Peter Buttigieg, Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

April 4, 2022

Re: City of Waterbury FY2022 RAISE Grant Application (W.A.T.E.R. Phase II)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

As Mayor of Waterbury, Connecticut, I am proud to submit the **Waterbury Active Transportation and Economic Resurgence Project (W.A.T.E.R.) Phase II** grant application to the United States Department of Transportation for FY2022 RAISE funding.

The City of Waterbury remains the largest Urban Area in Connecticut's Central Naugatuck River Valley. Addressing regional transportation connectivity, especially for our historically disadvantaged and Environmental Justice communities begins with Waterbury, where 23% of residents report not having access to reliable transportation (GWWP, 2020). Residents in our City are disconnected from other neighborhoods, the region, and other areas of the State. 25% of adults in the Greater Waterbury area reported food insecurity in 2020. Life expectancy in Waterbury is 76.8 years, versus the Connecticut State average of 80.3 and the United States average of 78.7. Our residents report barriers to health care due to a lack of adequate, accessible transportation. Without a doubt, this City, the 8th most distressed in Connecticut, requires pronounced and sweeping action to address these issues.

Waterbury continuously takes bold steps to rebuild its community as well as transition into a City of connected, livable neighborhoods. Waterbury is turning to its riverfront and transportation infrastructure to jump start economic recovery. Waterbury's multi-modal greenway will become the new multi-modal transportation spine of the City and Valley's river/rail corridor. This infrastructure will reconnect neighborhoods to each other, along with the City's newly-renovated downtown Train Station, government center and Central Business District. It will link neighborhood brownfields targeted for

sustainable redevelopment and local job generation. This project will join together municipalities throughout the region; connecting economies, industries, jobs, and people.

Most importantly, on a human scale, this project is about making Waterbury a truly livable city. Waterbury's residents without cars will benefit from the increased accessibility to appealing, safe, and pedestrian friendly accommodations.

The City of Waterbury's people deserve greater investments in physical infrastructure to walk & bike where none exists, as transportation infrastructure shapes a community's health and quality of life. This project will allow Waterbury residents and beyond to experience the recreational activities, educational benefits, and the beauty of flora & fauna that this natural treasure, our own winding, picturesque river, has to offer. Understanding W.A.T.E.R. Phase II is easy - it's about giving people access to the ladder of opportunity, making the climb a little easier and making Waterbury their City of Choice.

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for RAISE funding. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Neil M. O'Leary", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Honorable Neil M. O'Leary
Mayor
City of Waterbury