



SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION

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April 14, 2014

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The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
400 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: FY2014 TIGER Discretionary Grant
Lower Hill Urban Redevelopment Infrastructure Project**

Dear Secretary Foxx:

This letter is to express support for the Sports & Exhibition Authority's TIGER application for the Lower Hill Urban Redevelopment Infrastructure Project. The grant would help to fund the construction of a new urban street grid and improvements to surrounding roads to support redevelopment at the former twenty-eight acre Civic Arena site located near the center of the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County. These improvements will reconnect the nationally significant Hill District neighborhood with the Central Business District of the City and create vibrant mixed-use traditional urban blocks for more sustainable urban development and job opportunities in our region's core community.

This project is recognized as a prime regional economic development priority by the City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County, and the region. The project is consistent with the overall goals and policy statements in the official 2040 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern Pennsylvania, the region's long range transportation and development plan, which emphasizes reuse of well-located vacant urban land in existing communities. This redevelopment of now vacant land is exceptionally well-located to leverage its close proximity to existing major transportation assets, including not only interstate connections and urban arterials, but also the region's major bus routes and intercity passenger rail connections, as well as existing pedestrian access to adjacent neighborhoods, downtown Pittsburgh, hospital facilities and a university campus within a ten-minute walk. A TIGER grant would be instrumental in making the important linkage of this site to the many nearby community assets.

As such, I respectfully request your consideration and support for this very important, highly visible and high-priority transportation and development project for the Southwestern Pennsylvania region.

Sincerely,

James R. Hassinger, Ph.D., AICP
Executive Director