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April 22, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

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

Dear Secretary Foxx,

UPMC and UPMC/Mercy Hospital are writing you to strongly endorse the Lower Hill Urban Redevelopment Infrastructure Project and to request you provide the grant funding to the Sports & Exhibition Authority of Pittsburgh (SEA) and Allegheny County in their TIGER Discretionary Grant application. Some specifics of project are as follows:

- The TIGER VI grant would help to fund (i) construction of a portion of a new urban street grid (roads, sidewalks, street lighting, stormwater planters, and storm, sewage and water utility lines) for the 28-acre site, (ii) improvements to surrounding roads of Centre Avenue, Bedford Avenue, Crawford Street and Washington Place, (iii) streetscape improvements to Fifth, Washington Place and Crawford & Pride Street, and (iv) the final design of a “cap” over Interstate 579 Crosstown Boulevard.
- A portion of the project is currently underway. TIGER VI funds will be used as gap funding to complete the remaining elements.
- The infrastructure improvements strongly align with US DOT’s priorities and “ladders of opportunity” by creating multi-modal choices (i.e. new pedestrian connections, enhanced bus routes, shared and dedicated bike paths, connections to light-rail transit station and possible future BRT) needed to connect people from a historically distressed neighborhood to centers of employment, education and essential services.

- I-579 Crosstown Boulevard has been a physical barrier between the Hill District and Downtown for over 50 years. Funding will provide for final design of a “cap” over the interstate highway, which will eventually reconnect the 28-acre site to Downtown when constructed. The “cap” will provide urban open space, opportunities for development, and pedestrian and bike-friendly access to the City’s central business district.
- The planned infrastructure improvements will support the redevelopment of a 28 acre site located in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.
- The development program is anticipated to have a significant economic impact on the region. It is anticipated that the development will create approximately 4,000 jobs during construction and approximately 3,000 permanent jobs when fully built-out. It is anticipated to attract private investment of over \$379 million, and provide 606,000 sq ft of Class A office space, over 254,000 sq ft of commercial space, a 150 room hotel, a 2.8 acres of urban open green space, and 1,191 residential units. The program is anticipated to help to spur further development, create jobs and provide added investment in the Greater Hill District.

UPMC/Mercy hospital is immediately adjacent to the Lower Hill and shares the vision of the SEA and County for the revitalization of this important area of the City of Pittsburgh. We encourage you to act favorably toward the TIGER grant application and provide this vital funding to the project.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Eric Cartwright
Vice President