

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC

February 13, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

I am writing regarding Hamilton County's application for the FY 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program for the Fort Washington Way Project: A Strategic Infrastructure Investment for Economic Growth. I understand the project, a partnership between Hamilton County, the City of Cincinnati, and the Cincinnati Regional Chamber, will advance project delivery and construct an elevated cap structure over Interstate 71 / U.S. Route 50 (locally known as Fort Washington Way) between Vine Street and Walnut Street, with room for all interior Tunnel Operating Systems to be built in the next phase. The cap will connect Cincinnati's central business district to our vibrant riverfront development, which is home to the Cincinnati Reds, the Cincinnati Bengals, and scores of businesses. The cap will create a safe space and implement a suite of roadway safety improvements.

Over the last 25 years, Cincinnati has seen an incredible revitalization of the riverfront into a regional destination for entertainment and recreation. Achieving this long-term vision was made possible by our community's 2000 project to narrow Fort Washington Way, opening up 45 acres of land for redevelopment and reconnecting the historic street grid over the highway. At this same time, Cincinnati laid the foundation – quite literally – for a future capping of Fort Washington Way. Hamilton County is now aiming to secure a FY26 BUILD award to reclaim the area above the highway for a marquee public space in Downtown Cincinnati.

Hamilton County, in close partnership with the City of Cincinnati, will use these grant funds to support the planning and design, advance engineering of the physical capping structure and associated safety systems, design the public space above and surrounding surface transportation safety improvements, and construct the first phase of this innovative project. The outcome of these efforts will bring us one step closer to achieving this long-planned physical reconnection of the city to the riverfront. This initiative will enhance economic development, improve safety for all modes of transportation, and improve the lives of our citizens.

I respectfully ask that Hamilton County's project proposal be given full and fair consideration in accordance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

Sincerely,



Congressman Greg Landsman