April 28th, 2021

The Honorable David E. Price  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies  
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
Subcommittee on Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Price and Ranking Member Diaz-Balart:

I am requesting $2,000,000 for the Gillespie Downtown Streetscape project in fiscal year 2022. The entity to receive funding for this project is City of Gillespie located at 115 North Macoupin Street, Gillespie, IL 62033. The project itself is located within a five-block area on either side of Macoupin Street bounded by Elm Street on the North, Madison Street to the West, Montgomery Street to the East and Pine Street to the South.

The funding would be used for a streetscape project to promote economic development that includes water and sewer work, sidewalks, curb and guttering, repaving, and related infrastructure improvements in the central downtown business district. The City has already done some streetscape preliminary engineering and design along with sewer videotaping. The City would first perform subsurface work including required storm and sanitary sewer repairs and storm sewer replacement. They would then proceed to the streetscape improvements of sidewalks, curb and guttering, and repaving.

The entire area is within the Macoupin County Enterprise Zone and it is the heart of the City’s business community. Gillespie has experienced annual declines in sales tax collections for the past decade. The streetscape project would provide a needed boost for the central commercial district. To that end, Gillespie has worked with University of Illinois Extension, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville’s Successful Communities Collaborative, and Rural Partners to develop a community wide redevelopment plan. The streetscape project is the cornerstone of that plan and it was adopted by the City in 2019. This project will benefit the whole community including nearby low- and moderate-income households, businesses located in the project area, and the entire downtown business district. The project has eight sub-goals.

- Revitalize the central business district and make it more pedestrian friendly
- Introduce stormwater best management practices to better deal with excessive rainfall and provide much needed green space
- Improve ADA accessibility throughout downtown
- Improve night visibility and lower streetlight costs by installing efficient LED lighting
• Increase traffic flow and create new parking spaces
• Use design elements such as corner bump-outs and landscaping to provide safe corridors for pedestrians to cross Macoupin Street with an average daily traffic count of nearly 10,000 cars a day
• Create an Arts Corridor that can be used for special events
• Develop pocket parks and pedestrian amenities so that the downtown area can remain a gathering place even during COVID restrictions

I thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,

Rodney Davis
Member of Congress