

August 11, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Texas Department of Transportation's application for Tiger II discretionary funds to support the Tower 55 Multimodal Improvement Project in Fort Worth, TX. As the elected Board of Education Trustee for District One of the Fort Worth Independent School District, located to the north of Tower 55, I have a vested interest in supporting this project, the goals of which will positively impact the families and students I represent.

The Tower 55 project attacks three significant transportation challenges: insufficient transportation infrastructure for future expected growth, community livability and safety, and environmental conservation. These challenges threaten constituents and economic competitiveness at the local, state and national level, and further delay in addressing them will only add to the challenges and costs at each level. The Texas Department of Transportation places Tower 55 at the top of its project priority list.

The Tower 55 project provides a carefully studied approach to achieve the shared long-term objectives of both public and private stakeholders in this investment. New track and signals will provide for a more efficient rail intersection, avoiding rerouting and idling, both of which bear significant economic and environmental costs. Closed grade crossings and improved bridges and underpasses will promote safer and more efficient circulation for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians in an Economically Distressed Area where lost productivity due to rail-related delay is especially burdensome. Improved neighborhood access for emergency vehicles and decreased delay for passenger rail add to the livability benefits. The project provides for 16 or more years of capacity for expected rail tonnage growth, avoiding over \$1.1 billion in estimated incremental transportation, inventory, and environmental costs should the project not move forward.

I strongly urge your favorable consideration of the Tower 55 Multimodal Improvement Project application for TIGER II funding.

Sincerely,

Carlos Vasquez

Dr. Carlos Vasquez
1214 Circle Park
Fort Worth, Texas 76164
817.975.7152