

ERIC JOHNSON
Mayor of Dallas



December 15, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington DC 20590
Via email: charles.small@dot.gov / maurice.henderson@dot.gov

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Congratulations on the enactment of the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA). IIJA represents a historic investment in the country's infrastructure needs, and I am pleased that two former mayors will lead the Biden administration's efforts to ensure that IIJA funds are invested efficiently and in a way that makes our nation more equitable and economically competitive.

I wanted to reach out to express my hope for your attention on three transformative, equity-driven initiatives in Dallas that IIJA can support:

1. **Interstate 30 reconstruction:** Interstate 30 includes an elevated portion that bisects East Dallas — which is primarily a white community with middle- and upper-middle-class neighborhoods — and South Dallas — a predominantly low-income minority community. This highway was designed to meet the needs of people driving through or away from our city, with little thought given to the needs, health, or safety of the Dallas residents who lived in its immediate vicinity. The freeway today stands as a clear symbol of the divide and the inequities that historically have been created by regional transportation infrastructure. Reconstructing this portion of the freeway and depressing it will allow us to reconnect our city's neighborhoods. This project, which can be funded in partnership with the state and local governments, fits perfectly with the Biden administration's priorities. In addition, it is a major component of the ambitious [Dallas CityMAP plan](#) — an assessment of the challenges, opportunities and redesign options for the aging interstate corridors and adjacent neighborhoods in and around downtown Dallas — that was developed in partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and, most importantly, with Dallas residents and other stakeholders.
2. **Harold Simmons Park:** In conjunction with the Dallas Floodway Project, the City of Dallas is working with the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Trinity River Corridor Local Government Corporation to create a new public park within the Trinity River levees. This park was seeded by a \$50 million donation from Annette Simmons, a Dallas philanthropist. Parks such as this one serve as perfect examples of how infrastructure projects can simultaneously improve a city's sustainability, safety, and quality of life. This project also will provide equity for residents in nearby low-to-moderate income neighborhoods, which have long lacked such access to amenities in the city center.

- Vision Zero plan:** I am pleased that IJA has a strong focus on neighborhood mobility, complete streets, and pedestrian and bicyclist mobility and safety. Dallas is working on a bold and ambitious [Vision Zero plan](#) that calls for eliminating traffic fatalities and cutting severe injuries in half by 2030. Our city has the second-highest traffic fatality rate among the nation's 15 largest cities, but we are determined to become a leader in improving safety and believe that we will have competitive proposals for grant programs targeted toward safe and complete streets. This plan will improve mobility and public safety by calling for investments in specific projects in the most dangerous locations and on the most dangerous corridors throughout Dallas.

I firmly believe that these three projects will be compelling candidates for the competitive grant programs included in IJA, and I respectfully ask that the United States Department of Transportation give them all due consideration. Dallas is a fast-growing top 10 American city that serves as the economic and cultural engine of the fourth-largest metropolitan region in the country. We are vital to the nation's economic future. And while we have great infrastructure needs throughout our city and will have other transformative ideas to discuss in the future, these projects, specifically, stand out immediately as top priorities for Dallas.

Dallas is a model city for such infrastructure projects, as demonstrated by the RAISE grants recently awarded to our city's projects. These grants, which are greatly appreciated, will be vital to our city's future growth. The planning grant for the Southern Gateway will go a long way toward addressing another historic transportation injustice by literally reconnecting communities cut off by the construction of Interstate 35E, increasing safety and mobility, and improving access to economic opportunities for one of our most distressed neighborhoods. The Inland Port mobility project will improve access to a burgeoning job hub for people without access to a car. And the LOOP trail project will help complete our city's extensive trail network and provide safe bicycle and pedestrian access to transit stations, jobs, education, and services.

Thank you for your leadership on IJA and for your attention to our city's priorities. We are ready to get to work putting IJA funds to good use, rebuilding Dallas' infrastructure in an equitable manner that meets the needs of all our residents.

I hope to meet with you soon to discuss these issues further, and I look forward to partnering with you to implement this historic law in the coming years.

Until then, if you have any questions, or if we can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me or the City's Director of Government Affairs, Brett Wilkinson, who can be reached at brett.wilkinson@dallascityhall.com.

Cordially,



Mayor Eric Johnson
City of Dallas