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United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510 - 3505

January 31, 2023

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I write to draw your attention to the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant application submitted by the City of Kent in partnership with Kent State University (KSU), the Portage Area Regional Transit Authority (PARTA), Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) and the State of Ohio for its *Reimagining the Gateway* East Main Corridor Project. This project will make significant improvements to a nearly one-mile car-centric section of East Main Street that includes KSU, entrances to neighborhoods, and small businesses.

Kent is Portage County's largest city, with 61 percent of its residents in the low- and moderate-income range. KSU is one of Ohio's leading public universities with more than 25,000 students on its main campus. PARTA provides fixed route and Dial-A-Ride services to over a million people every year. PARTA's vision is to be the provider of a multimodal alternative transportation network that sustains the region's economic vitality and air quality by providing mobility and accessibility to all constituencies of the population.

Traffic from the community, the university, and visitors has resulted in a five-lane car-centric road congested with motorists; a majority of the corridor is listed as the local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) region's worst crash corridor since 2014. This multi-year project will provide a solution that focuses on multimodal transportation safety and access to a diverse population. These improvements will provide easier access to PARTA's Central Gateway transit hub in downtown Kent, which will better serve the city's lower income population that often relies on transit as their means of transportation. These enhancements also integrate well with KSU's Gateway Master Plan.

The *Reimagining the Gateway* project has the potential to advance the goal of investing in sustainable transportation and creating more accessible transportation options. I ask the PARTA application be given full and fair consideration for funding in 2023.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown

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