



R. DANIEL LAVELLE



Councilman, City of Pittsburgh-District 6

Chair, Public Safety

April 20, 2016

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: FY2016 TIGER Discretionary Grant
I-579 "Cap" Urban Connector Project

Dear Secretary Foxx,

As the Pittsburgh City Councilperson to District 6, which encompasses the Hill District, I am writing to express my strong support of the Pittsburgh and Allegheny County Sports and Exhibition Authority's TIGER grant application. Funds from the grant would be used to help pay for the construction costs of the I-579 Urban Connector, also known as the "Cap".

As part of urban renewal in the 1950s, the Hill District, then a predominantly African American community, was declared blighted. 95 acres were demolished and 8,000 people and 413 businesses were displaced. The Hill District is one of Pittsburgh's oldest residential neighborhoods, but since the 1950s it has lost more than 80% of its population. The Greater Hill District remains a distressed neighborhood with 17.2% unemployment and 39.2% of residents living below the poverty line.

The "Cap" project is a critical part of the overall Lower Hill redevelopment project, which will be transformative for the Pittsburgh region. This project will reconnect the underserved and disadvantaged Lower Hill District with downtown Pittsburgh, and it's a critical piece to support the new, mixed-use redevelopment of the 28-acre site of the former civic arena. The "Cap" project will be an important part in a cohesive corridor between Downtown and Oakland, two large centers of employment, education and essential services.

The project strongly aligns with US DOT's priorities and "ladders of opportunity" by creating i) new and safe connections needed to reconnect people from a historically distressed neighborhood (Hill District) to centers of employment, education and essential services (downtown central business district), ii) promote workforce development, and iii) contribute to community revitalization.

It is my hope that you take into serious consideration and approve the SEA's application, which would help support a redevelopment project that will help revitalize the Hill District and Strengthen Pittsburgh and Allegheny County as a whole.

Sincerely,

R. Daniel Lavelle

510 City-County Building • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

412-255-2134 • Fax: 412-255-0737

daniel.lavelle@pittsburghpa.gov

[Facebook.com/LavelleDistrict6](https://www.facebook.com/LavelleDistrict6) [Twitter.com/RDLavelle](https://twitter.com/RDLavelle) www.pittsburghpa.gov/district6/