

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 28, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We write to express our strong support for the application submitted by the City of Waterville, Maine, for funding through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program to fulfill local transportation and economic needs by making critical infrastructure improvements in the city's downtown district. The City is seeking \$7.4 million in federal funding to design and construct the Waterville Downtown Transit Corridor, Gateways, and Revitalization Project.

The City of Waterville, located on the Kennebec River and home to both Colby College and Thomas College, has been making significant plans and investments to revitalize its downtown area to spur much-needed economic development and job growth. Waterville has a rich and enduring history as an industrial and manufacturing center for textiles and pulp and paper, and as an important employment hub and service center for Central Maine. The decline of manufacturing in the latter part of the 20th century has had a profound impact on the city and region. The aim of the multipronged and interconnected project is to create the conditions that are conducive to long-term economic growth and job creation.

If selected for funding, the City will reconstruct five key gateway interchanges and upgrade traffic signaling and channeling. The project will also convert the existing two-lane, one-way roadways into two-way vehicle traffic, creating safer traffic flows and improving lines of sight and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Based on completed traffic studies, Waterville estimates that these improvements will reduce traffic times and crashes and will reduce congestion and increase connectivity of Main Street businesses. Importantly, this project will leverage more than \$65 million in development projects in downtown Waterville by Colby College, as well as other investment by the private sector on Main Street. This public-private partnership will create long-term economic development in Waterville and the surrounding region.

The City of Waterville's BUILD proposal will be a central step towards revitalizing its downtown by modernizing infrastructure in key areas. We strongly believe the outlined improvements will aid in generating economic activity and enhancing the Waterville community, ultimately ensuring the city's long-term commercial viability and overall vibrancy.

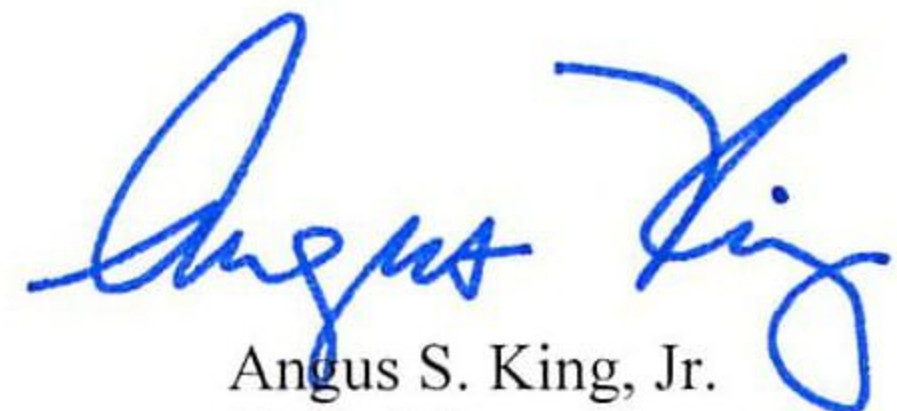
Thank you for your attention to this proposal. We respectfully request that the Department give careful consideration to the City of Waterville's application, subject to all applicable laws and regulations, and ask that your staff notify [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] when a final decision has been made.

Sincerely,



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator