



September 12, 2023

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Please accept this letter of strong support for the Maine Department of Transportation's grant application under the **2023 U.S. Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program**. The application outlines important plans to significantly improve the Libbytown neighborhood in Portland, Maine, via the elements included in the *Reconnecting Our Villages: Historic Libbytown* ("Project") to revitalize and reconnect this area as a result of the construction of Interstate 295 in the late 1960's. The work will improve connections throughout the community by:

- Reconstructing numerous streets to include traffic calming features and ADA-compliant sidewalks and crosswalks;
- Installing sidewalks and bikeways to encourage active transportation along right-of-ways that are safe and modern;
- Improving transit stops to support stronger community-wide accessibility; and
- Constructing a roundabout that is safe and improves traffic flow for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Project will lift burdens and support accessibility to housing, employment, retail, healthcare, tourism and recreation – including the state's \$14 billion tourism industry critical to Maine's economy.

Portland Trails is deeply committed to connecting communities via our existing network of trails, and this Project will vastly improve active transportation options for residents and visitors transiting from Libbytown to Bayside, the Portland Transportation Center and other areas in between such as Hadlock Field, Deering Oaks Park, and several retail and social services. We work regularly with the City of Portland to build and maintain trails and enhance

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Executive Director

Jon Kachmar

active transportation options for the city of Portland and surrounding communities.

We are pleased MaineDOT in coordination with the City of Portland are seeking assistance from USDOT for this very important Project and hope USDOT is able to assist funding these improvements. We recognize the importance of supporting USDOT merit criteria and providing equitable transportation options. Modernizing neighborhood transportation leads to safe and efficient connections and a better quality of life for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Kachmar". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Jon Kachmar
Executive Director