

ROBERT P. CASEY, JR.
PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEES:
FINANCE

HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 13, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I write today in support of the City of Pittsburgh and Manchester Citizens Corporation's joint application to the US Department of Transportation 2022 Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program. I urge you to give this project full and fair consideration.

Manchester is a historic neighborhood in Pittsburgh's North Shore located near the Ohio River. The community, however, has suffered from the impacts of redlining as well as harmful infrastructure decisions that severed and divided the neighborhood. In particular, I am told that the construction of State Route 65 (S.R. 65) separated Manchester from the adjacent Chateau neighborhood that sits right on the Ohio. This project isolated Manchester from surrounding areas and has had long-lasting, detrimental impacts on the population. Recent data shows that the population is 71% minority and median household income is \$40,323, which is below the city's \$50,536.

It is my understanding that this application seeks a planning grant to support a feasibility study and alternatives analyses for the S.R. 65 Viaduct to reestablish a connected street network and unified neighborhood. It has been explained to me that the development of alternatives for the S.R. 65 Viaduct was recommended by four recent studies; the city-adopted Manchester-Chateau Neighborhood Plan, the 2021 Manchester (Re)united Transit Revitalization Investment District study, an EPA Greening America's Communities study, and the 2021 Pittsburgh Regional Transit Long-Range Plan. It has been explained to me that, if awarded, this funding will help to bring the recommendations of these previous studies, and community conversations that have been underway for more than ten years, closer to reality.

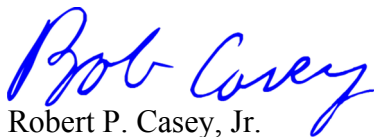
Further, I understand that this project is intended to engage vested stakeholders that include Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Metropolitan Planning Organization, the City of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Regional Transit, the Manchester Citizen's Corporation and many neighborhood residents. I am told that the City and Manchester Citizen's Corporation will seek robust input from these groups as they develop comprehensive, sustainable, community-based alternatives and impacts analyses. The project

stakeholders seek the opportunity to apply an equity lens in the development of alternatives, to address the wrongdoings of the past.

I am proud to advocate for funding for projects that address the structural inequities caused by previous investments in Pennsylvania and across the Nation. I was happy to see the Reconnecting Communities Pilot included in the infrastructure law and I am hopeful that significant funding from this program will come to disadvantaged communities in Pennsylvania.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration. Please include this letter in the official record of the application. Consistent with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, I also respectfully request that you keep me informed of the status of this grant application. Finally, if you have any questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my staff at (202) 224-6851.

Sincerely,



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator