State of Kansas

# Susan Wagle

Senate President

April 20, 2016

Anthony R. Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: FY 2016, Letter of Support for the City of Wichita's U.S. Department of Transportation's TIGER Discretionary Grant Application

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I write in strong support of The City of Wichita's **TIGER** application, **Multi-Modal Transportation Connections for the Wichita State University Innovation Campus** which complements and builds on the strategic vision of the WSU and the regional advanced manufacturing strategy as outlined in the Investing in Manufacturing Partnership. Wichita and South Kansas received one of the first 12 Manufacturing Community designations awarded through the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the proposed TIGER project demonstrates a strong, ongoing collaboration among a broad range of stakeholders and an outcome of a robust planning process.

The innovative, cross-modal proposals includes Ladders of Opportunity projects that will increase connectivity to employment, education, and services; support workforce development increasing apprenticeship and experiential learning opportunities; and contribute to community revitalization, particularly for low income groups, persons with visible and hidden disabilities, elderly individuals, and minority persons.

This project's transit component will connect the metropolitan area's low- and moderate-income and historically underutilized business (HUB) zone neighborhoods; university; K-12 schools, downtown business district; hospital district; Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation residential care complex; and the Envision, Inc. workforce locations with commercial, educational, healthcare, social services, and employment opportunities. The development of improved transit service to neighborhoods will facilitate development along the HUB Zone corridors.

Wichita State University anticipates a period of significant growth over the next several years. Student population is growing and the campus will nearly double in size with the development of the Innovation Campus which will attract cutting-edge businesses to the Wichita area creating job growth. Along with employment growth and the establishment of Wichita State as a destination, there comes additional transportation related needs. Transit, improved streets and signaling technology, and bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure will play a key role in providing access to Wichita State University for students, faculty and employment and visitors. Increased access to and expanded capacity of the Innovation Campus will move our economy up the value chain of global competitiveness by growing the firms, networks, and traded sectors that drive broad-based prosperity.

The City of Wichita's **Multi-Modal Transportation Connections for the Wichita State University Innovation Campus** will provide the following outcomes:

- A safe, connected, and accessible transportation system for the multi-modal movement of people and innovation.
- A strong foundation for the commercialization of ideas, and the creation and expansion of firms and jobs via proximity and collaboration.
- A vehicle for both revenue growth as well as a more efficient use of existing and strategically planned infrastructure.
- The opportunity for expanding employment and educational opportunities for disadvantaged populations, given that the Innovation Campus is located in low- and moderate-income and historically underutilized business (HUB) zone neighborhoods.
- The potential for denser residential and employment patterns and the leveraging of mass transit.

I believe that making strategic long-term investments in the innovation and industrial ecosystem of Kansas will operationalize the vision to out-innovate the rest of the world and spur the development of twenty-first century jobs and industries.

Sincerely,

Senator Susan Wagle
Kansas Senate President

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