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April 13, 2022

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

RE: RAISE Grant Application for Town of Munster, Indiana

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, please accept this letter as our strong support for the Town of Munster's RAISE grant application for their Ridge Road Complete Street Project.

As the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Lake, Porter and La Porte Counties in Indiana, NIRPC's *NWI 2050* plan points to a Connected vision for our Region where "NWI's people have accessible, safe, and equal opportunities for working, playing, living and learning." We believe Munster's bold streetscape concept for Ridge Road embraces this vision by aiming to improve multi-modal access near the location of a commuter rail station now under construction. Munster's proposed project will leverage the significant USDOT investment in the West Lake Corridor commuter rail expansion and provide "last mile," multi-modal opportunities for connection while supporting Transit Oriented Development at this location.

The proposed project provides additional benefits including green infrastructure improvements for stormwater capture, additional tree cover to reduce heat island effects, and native plantings throughout the corridor. Taken together these enhancements will substantially increase the level of safety and aesthetic quality for residents and visitors to Munster alike. This in turn will serve to improve the economic vitality of an older urban core, helping to retain and attract business and to enhance Munster's overall quality of place.

We commend Munster for the care that has gone into planning for this corridor and appreciate your strong consideration of Munster's outstanding proposal.

Sincerely,

Ty Warner, AICP  
Executive Director