



April 15, 2025

Secretary Sean Duffy
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Duffy,

As you review the Department's programs, policies and grants, we are writing to share with you the many ways that active transportation infrastructure is essential to the success of America. Investments made in walking and biking directly support the Department's goals of improving economic opportunity, mobility, health, safety and quality of life across the nation, and we urge you to continue this support, which has been transformative for thousands of communities.

As local and state leaders, we know trails promote economic development by catalyzing new businesses, and creating connected, vibrant communities that attract and retain skilled workers and drive tourism. We see every day that dedicated walking and biking infrastructure increases access to jobs and education while making it safer and easier for children and families to get around. Our country's trail system already generates more than [\\$34 billion in economic activity](#) annually. As we further connect our trail and active transportation networks, the resulting economic impact could more than quadruple each year, all while reducing traffic fatalities and improving mobility.

A strong federal partnership has built the nation's transportation system, and a continued strong federal partnership is necessary to achieve the economic, mobility, health, safety and quality of life goals we share. Federal discretionary funding inspires and enables local innovation and complements formula and local funding. As with other transportation modes, a combination of federal, state and local investments is necessary to develop connected active-transportation networks.

A National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) study found that projects such as sidewalks and bike lanes make the greatest contributions to direct construction job creation among transportation investments. Additional studies [supported by the Federal Highway Administration](#) have found that federal investment in active transportation helps the government to contain rising health-care costs and improve the efficiency and safety of the roadway system for everyone, including motorized users.

By enabling Americans to walk or bike instead of drive for short trips, the federal government avoids underwriting more expensive strategies for reducing congestion, managing road wear or serving the mobility needs of those who cannot drive. These outcomes align with the Department's goals described in the DOT Order titled: [Ensuring Reliance Upon Sound Economic Analysis in Department of Transportation Policies, Programs, and Activities](#).

Our communities are choosing to invest in active transportation to realize the economic and

quality-of-life goals we share. We seek a productive and reliable partnership with the federal government to catalyze investments that will improve and benefit communities nationwide. For these reasons, we urge the Department to continue to obligate funding for awards previously announced through the following programs: 1) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE); 2) Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A); 3) the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program; 4) the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program; and 5) the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program. Awards announced under these programs support a variety of important investments across the country, including for active transportation networks.

Further, we urge the Department to continue to invest in active transportation in future discretionary grant award cycles, including through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant program and SS4A.

National

Rails to Trails Conservancy

State and Local

More than 175 state representatives, mayors, county officials, chambers of commerce and more from Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming and Washington, D.C.