

CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

200 West Madison Street, Floor 3 | Chicago, IL 60606-3402 | (312) 201-9830

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May 3, 2024

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The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

For the past five years, the Chicago Public Library Foundation has been pleased to partner with the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program and the 75th St. Corridor Improvement Project (CIP) to make possible Library programming that truly goes above and behind to meet the needs of our community.

The workforce of both today and tomorrow will need the 21st skills developed through quality STEM education, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, and sound decision-making. Thanks to support from the 75th St. Corridor Improvement Project, we have been able to provide a wide range of free programming at our Library—spanning from digital literacy to engineering, makerspaces to citizen science projects—that builds these skills.

The Library Foundation is aware that IDOT is applying for the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity (MPDG) and Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Programs funding on behalf of the CREATE Program. These grants will fund the first segment of the Belt Junction and 80th Street Junction Replacements project, known as EW2a. As we understand, the EW2a project will work to alleviate the congestion of Chicago's Belt Junction, where 30 Metra and 90 freight trains cross each day. The project would also improve neighborhood connectivity and increase capacity for future Amtrak intercity and Metra commuter rail service.

We hope that the efficiencies resulting from this project will support increased quality of life in neighborhoods located near railways as well as the movement of people and goods nationwide. In alignment with these long-term goals, the 75th St CIP project's current investments in K-12 education and workforce opportunities at our Library helps to enhance opportunities for learning and discovery every day in our community.

The Library Foundation deeply appreciates this investment and welcomes CREATE's continued partnership in ensuring that Chicagoans of all ages can access quality lifelong learning opportunities through our 81-branch public library system.

Sincerely,



Brenda Langstraat Bui
President & CEO