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February 18, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

SUBJECT: FY2026 BUILD – Southeast Pennsylvania Multimodal Freight Optimization Plan

Dear Secretary Duffy,

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) is pleased to support the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority's (PhilaPort) application for funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation's (USDOT) 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant program to plan for a safe and efficient multi-modal freight network connecting the planned development of the Bellwether District with the Packer Avenue Marine Terminal (PAMT) in the City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. As the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the bi-state, nine county Greater Philadelphia Region, DVRPC collaborates with stakeholders to approve and advance federal transportation infrastructure investment that supports the vision laid out in our regional Long-Range Plan, *Update: Connections 2050*, for a safe, modern, multimodal transportation network.

The Bellwether District is located on the former Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery site in South Philadelphia and is currently being redeveloped by Bellwether District Holdings, LLC (BDH). A substantial portion of the planned development will support logistics and distribution uses, which are expected to generate increased cargo volumes through the PAMT and other regional port facilities. If funded, this project would assist PhilaPort, in partnership with (BDH), to plan and develop preliminary designs for a network of designated freight routes linking existing and planned commercial facilities in South Philadelphia with PhilaPort and the broader southeast Pennsylvania multimodal freight network.

The goals for the plan will be to enhance safety for all users along the designated freight corridor; strengthen economic competitiveness by revitalizing domestic maritime industries and alleviating freight bottlenecks; improve the state of good repair and resilience of multimodal transportation infrastructure; and leverage innovative technologies to support more efficient freight operations. Specifically, the Project will strengthen multimodal connectivity by planning for improved access to port facilities, highways, rail, marine routes, and Philadelphia International Airport. It will also identify opportunities to reduce conflicts between freight vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists in an area that has experienced a high number of crashes involving heavy trucks. Finally, the Project will support economic development by advancing good-paying jobs and workforce development opportunities, including access to transportation careers that offer family-sustaining wages without requiring a college degree.

Should this project be selected for the 2026 BUILD grant, DVRPC will work with local stakeholders to amend the TIP and Long-Range Plan, as required. It has been a continual challenge to secure adequate funding for all the transportation needs and projects in our region. PhilPort, as the project sponsor, will be responsible for identifying the supplemental funding needed to ensure that this TIP project is fully funded for implementation in a reasonable timeframe, and will coordinate with state and local agencies, as appropriate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ariella Maron".

Ariella Maron  
Executive Director

AM: sg