



CITY OF PALM DESERT

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September 14, 2023

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

Re: Letter of Support for H. N. & Frances C. Berger Foundation's Reconnecting Communities Program (RCN) Funding

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the City of Palm Desert, I am writing this letter to wholeheartedly express our strong support for the H. N. & Frances C. Berger Foundation's application to receive federal funds for the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) Program, Office of the Secretary of Transportation, U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). The Berger Foundation has consistently demonstrated a remarkable commitment to addressing community needs and fostering connections crucial for our society's betterment.

The Reconnecting Communities Program, as proposed by the Berger Foundation, aligns perfectly with the pressing needs of our communities. In today's fast-paced world, our communities often face challenges related to disconnection, social isolation, and limited access to essential services. The RCN program's emphasis on fostering connections, promoting inclusivity, and providing resources to underserved populations will undoubtedly profoundly impact the lives of those who stand to benefit from it.

Berger Foundation's track record of successful initiatives speaks to its ability to effectively execute and manage projects that yield tangible results. Their commitment to accountability, transparency, and community engagement ensures that any funding received will be utilized judiciously and directed toward achieving the program's intended goals.

Moreover, the RCN program addresses immediate needs and contributes to our communities' long-term resilience and sustainability. The program will pave the way for stronger, more cohesive neighborhoods that can withstand future challenges by empowering individuals with the tools, knowledge, and opportunities they need to thrive.

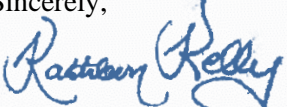
This funding will allow for stormwater flood control measures that will greatly reduce the impact to the I-10 freeway, and associated frontage roads, rail lines and egresses to many residential communities. The area to be improved by this project lies in an unincorporated territory of Riverside County. Currently on the location is a Catholic high school and the proposed site of a new charitable community hospital that is desperately needed to serve the community.

Federal funds invested in the Reconnecting Communities Program will undoubtedly yield multiple-fold returns in terms of improved community well-being, reduced social disparities, and increased civic engagement. The Berger Foundation's dedication to collaboration, evidence-based strategies, and innovative solutions makes them an ideal candidate for such support.

In conclusion, the City of Palm Desert wholeheartedly endorses the H. N. & Frances C. Berger Foundation's application for federal funds for the Reconnecting Communities Program. The transformative impact of this program on our communities cannot be overstated, and I believe that the foundation's vision, expertise, and dedication make them deserving recipients of the funding. I am confident that the Reconnecting Communities Program will set a shining example of how community-based initiatives can drive positive change locally and nationally.

Thank you for considering our endorsement of this important initiative. I eagerly anticipate the positive outcomes that will certainly result from the partnership between the Berger Foundation and the federal agency.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathleen Kelly, Mayor
City of Palm Desert