



THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



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COMMISSIONER

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August 20, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

Please find enclosed an application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER II) Discretionary Grants program. It is being submitted by the State of New Hampshire for the "*Memorial Bridge Replacement Project - Portsmouth, NH - Kittery, ME*" and requests \$20 million of Federal stimulus funds under the TIGER II program. This project will address local multimodal transportation needs, and ensure the continued economic vitality of these two communities and the region.

The Memorial Bridge, built in 1923, links the downtown areas Kittery, ME and Portsmouth, NH, and as such supports the business, social, and cultural activities of both communities. Additionally, it is the only crossing of the Piscataqua River for pedestrians and bicyclists, and is part of the East Coast Greenway, a bicycle trail extending from Florida to Maine. If this crossing was not available, the detour for bicyclists is more than 22 miles. Many local residents also use this crossing to commute to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard (PNSY), located in Kittery, ME, which employs approximately 4,200 workers.

Due to the deteriorated condition of the truss structures and its importance to the region, the Memorial Bridge is the NHDOT's # 1 bridge priority. As a consequence of its age and harsh marine environment, the deterioration has progressed to the extent that it is now considered structurally deficient, and it has a Federal Sufficiency Rating of 6 (of 100). As a result of recent inspection efforts (June 2009) it currently has a weight limit restriction of 3-Tons and the superstructure is now rated in *Serious Condition*. These extreme deficiencies serve to further constrain the local economy by restricting the transport of needed goods and services.

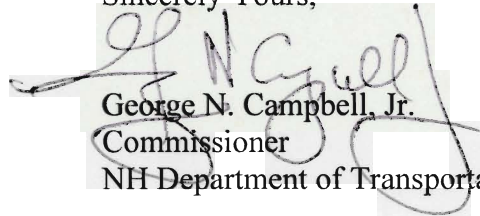
This bridge is critically important to the connectivity, economy, and quality of life of these two seacoast communities, which support economic development. Businesses in the area utilize this bridge daily to facilitate delivery of goods and services throughout the region. It serves as a link of the downtown areas of these two communities for retail, tourism, and service industries including the revitalized central business districts of Portsmouth and Kittery. Should this bridge be permanently closed, the impact to businesses in the region would be a significant burden, particularly in the current down economy.

Replacement of the bridge will also restore this crossing of the Piscataqua River for emergency response vehicles between Kittery, ME, the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and Portsmouth, NH, through their mutual aid system. Also important, this river crossing is an evacuation route for the region during emergencies. Further, since the bridge spans a shipping route, the center lift span must be in good repair to ensure that shipping and other marine traffic can pass through the channel.

This is a significant investment for the states of Maine and New Hampshire that would enhance the quality of life of the area residents and promote economic recovery and development. This investment is beyond the means of New Hampshire and Maine's normal programs to fund, and receipt of the requested TIGER II Grant Program funds would greatly assist our two states as we work to address significant transportation network deficiencies in this bi-state region.

New Hampshire is grateful for the opportunity to submit this application and appreciates the consideration of the U.S. Department of Transportation. We look forward to hearing from you upon completion of the review process.

Sincerely Yours,



George N. Campbell, Jr.
Commissioner
NH Department of Transportation