

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 15, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We are pleased to support Baltimore City's application to the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) program for its Restoring Connections to Druid Hill Park project.

This application seeks a planning grant to conduct public outreach and develop preliminary engineering plans for a redesigned Druid Park Lake Drive that will be safer and more accessible for all road users, including bikers, pedestrians, transit passengers, and people using mobility devices.

Druid Park Lake Drive is a 2.3-mile, arterial roadway in Baltimore that divides several high-poverty, majority-Black communities from Druid Hill, a 745-acre site with the distinction of being one of the oldest public parks in the United States. Originally a two-lane residential street, Druid Park Lake Drive was widened in spite of community opposition between 1948 and 1963 to facilitate faster travel to and from the Baltimore suburbs. The result is the current, highway-sized roadway with limited crossings and an enduring barrier between the park and the local communities.

Drawing from Baltimore City's a Complete Streets Design Manual and other best practices, this proposal aims to provide the surrounding streets with a renewed sense of connectedness to Druid Hill Park, through calmer traffic, increased tree canopy, and safety-oriented design elements. The city has informed us that it plans to advance the existing 15 percent design concept plans through the preliminary engineering phase and support required environmental review.

We support the City of Baltimore's application, and we urge you to give this proposal your full consideration.

Sincerely,



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator