

Hammond Area Economic and Industrial Development District

April 17, 2014

**Mr. Anthony R. Foxx**, Esq., Secretary  
Office of Infrastructure Finance and Innovation  
Office of the Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20590-001

Secretary Foxx:

Please add HAEIDD—Hammond Area Economic and Industrial Development District’s—support to the City of Hammond’s TIGER grant application. This is a timely request because more businesses are considering locating on Pride Drive—provided that it is not a dead-end street as it is now. The grant will enable the City to plan the extension of University Avenue (LA 3234) to Pride Drive, an industrial corridor connecting Hammond Northshore Regional Airport to US 190. This extension would complete an east-west corridor directly connecting the airport to I-55. And this corridor would intersect Morrison Boulevard (US 51), Cherry Street (LA 1065), and Morris Road (LA 443)—providing new and convenient transportation choices to these centers of employment, training, education, and services in the Hammond Urbanized Area.


The University Extension would have profound implications for HAEIDD as we work to attract new businesses and industries to the Hammond area and to retain and expand jobs among existing businesses. First, we see the extension as critical to the success of the Airport Plaza Job Creation Incentive, which has the potential to bring 400 new jobs to the Pride Drive/airport area. Second, helping to drive east-west traffic through Hammond, the extension would stimulate additional commercial development and, consequently, increase residential real estate values along the entire University Corridor. Third, the extension would connect our region’s two centers for higher learning, Southeastern Louisiana University, located on University Avenue, and Northshore Technical Community College, located on Pride Drive—facilitating their collaboration in developing a better-educated, more-highly-skilled workforce. Fourth, directly connecting I-55 and Hammond Northshore Regional Airport, the extension would create a new multimodal transportation system for airport operators, like the Louisiana National Guard and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, as well as Pride Drive companies, like CHEP, Graham Packaging Company, and MidContinental Chemical Company.

For all of these reasons and more, HAEIDD is excited by the prospect of a University Extension, which we feel strongly is vital to the future growth and prosperity of our city and South Tangipahoa Parish as the “Crossroads of the South.”

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We urge your office to give the City of Hammond's grant application the utmost consideration which we are optimistic that you will come to the same conclusion as we.

Sincerely,

  
Robby Miller  
President