

August 20, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:


This letter will serve as a strong letter of support for the application being submitted by the City of Berlin, the Town of Gorham, the Town of Shelburne, the Town of Colebrook, the Town of Milan and the New Hampshire Department of Transportation for a grant for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery ("TIGER") funding for a demonstration road pavement rehabilitation and management program project dealing with the paved roads in this economically stressed region of rural northern of New Hampshire. This region of New Hampshire, prior to the economic downturn, was already by far the most economically distressed region in the state due to the closing of the major pulp and paper mills which had been the economic engine of the region for a century before. Berlin and Colebrook have the highest unemployment rates in the state.

Due to the economic decimation in this region, the paved streets and roads in the City of Berlin and the surrounding towns have been deteriorating for many years and currently are in many cases in a state total disrepair. The closest interstate is I-93 some 43 miles distant. This economic future of this region is highly dependent on a rural road system which must be raised from its current patchwork condition to a reliable system that affords mobility to and through the region. The ability to attract and retain people and businesses is highly dependent on a first class rural road network.

This project will ensure a "best practice" approach to refurbish these paved roads to a standard and then managing their continued maintenance in a far more cost efficient way in the future which will result in a substantially lower cost of continued maintenance. These communities will benefit tremendously from this major improvement to their transportation infrastructure making them more marketable to outside businesses and the employees such businesses employ.

This project demonstrates what can be accomplished when the municipalities in a region work together with local state offices to accomplish an important regional improvement which may serve as a model for other regions.

Sincerely,



Yvonne Thomas  
NH State Representative  
Coos District 4