



Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

RiverCOG, 145 Dennison Road Essex, CT 06426 | +1 860 581 8554 | www.rivercog.org

July 19, 2018

Secretary Elaine Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Haddam Swing Bridge 2018 BUILD Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

The chief elected officials of the seventeen municipalities of the Lower Connecticut River Valley in Connecticut voted unanimously, acting as the MPO Policy Board, on May 23, 2018 to support the Haddam Swing Bridge BUILD grant application. A walkway over the Connecticut River will provide a unique opportunity in Connecticut to cross New England's largest river on foot and bicycle and provide needed economic development to two small rural communities. It is hard to understate the potential of the walkway project, considering the incredible density of tourist attractions and transportation modes within a few hundred feet of each side of the bridge. We strongly urge you to select this project for BUILD funding.

The RiverCOG MPO previously approved the overhaul of the Haddam Swing Project, including the walkway, as part of its regional Transportation Improvement Plan adopted May 2017. The project is also recommended in our long range regional transportation plan, as an important bicycle and pedestrian linkage connecting multiple transportation facilities (train, marinas, and airport). Although the larger rehabilitation of the Haddam Swing Bridge is in the TIP, and the project is being designed and permitted, the construction of the walkway component is not funded.

The rehabilitation is planned to start in 2019 and is expected to extend the life of the bridge by 30 to 50 years. The project will require the closure of the bridge, thereby providing a once in a generation opportunity to add a walkway. Without the opportunity presented by the larger overhaul project, this important linkage will not be possible and the economic potential of this area will continue to be under-realized.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding the Haddam Swing Bridge Walkway proposal or RiverCOG's support of it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Samuel S. Gold", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Samuel S. Gold, AICP
Executive Director

RiverCOG

Chester | Clinton | Cromwell | Deep River | Durham | East Haddam | East Hampton | Essex Haddam | Killingworth | Lyme | Middlefield | Middletown | Old Lyme | Old Saybrook | Portland | Westbrook