



July 13, 2018

Elaine Chao; Secretary of Transportation
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590
United States

RE: East Haddam and Haddam, Connecticut Federal BUILD Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao,

On behalf of Goodspeed Musicals, I write in full support of the proposed project to add a pedestrian sidewalk to the East Haddam, Connecticut Swing Bridge.

Goodspeed Musicals is a two-time Tony Award winning theatre and top tourist attraction in Connecticut. Each year we draw over 120,000 patrons to the area, most of whom are searching for shopping and dining choices when they attend the theatre. We employ over 300 actors, directors, designers, artisans and technicians each season who live in our East Haddam housing but are not able to safely cross the bridge to Haddam without a car.

We strongly support this proposal because our staff, patrons and actors will benefit greatly from improved connections between our historic Goodspeed Opera house in East Haddam and the shops and tourist activities in Haddam.

The proposed sidewalk project will be a safety enhancement and economic development generator for both Towns on the Connecticut River by:

- Providing a direct link between Goodspeed, Essex Steam Train and the river boats docked at Eagle Landing State Park leading to increased tourism and cross promotion between the attractions.
- Providing means to access shopping and restaurants for actors and employees of the Goodspeed who come to East Haddam from New York City and rely on walking to get to goods and services.
- Providing safe walking access to shopping and restaurants in Haddam for Goodspeed patrons.
- Connecting Goodspeed staff and actors in East Haddam with the 9-Town Transit public transportation system that departs from Haddam.

We believe that this project is critical to our future and to the future economy of this region and stand together with the towns of East Haddam and Haddam to ask for funding of this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Gennaro', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Michael Gennaro
Executive Director

cc:

Lizz Milardo
First Selectwoman, Haddam, CT

Emmet Lyman
First Selectman, East Haddam, CT