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August 10, 2022

Ryan Emerson, Director  
Multimodal Transportation Fund  
PA Department of Community and Economic Development  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225

**RE: DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund  
Grant Application  
Carsonia Avenue Improvements  
Project  
Lower Alsace Township, Berks County,  
Pennsylvania**

Dear Mr. Emerson:

The Berks County Planning Commission is in receipt of the Lower Alsace Township application for the Carsonia Avenue Improvements Project under DCED's Multimodal Transportation Fund Program along with a request for compliance with the Berks County Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed project would involve improvements along Carsonia Avenue in Lower Alsace Township within the existing legal right of way, consisting of the construction of curbing, a five (5) foot wide concrete sidewalk on the south side of Carsonia Avenue, ADA curb ramps at each intersection, and associated storm sewer improvements and pavement restoration. The curbing, sidewalk, and ADA curb ramps are located within the municipal boundaries of Lower Alsace Township from Logan Street to Parkview Avenue for an approximate distance of 2,480 linear feet.

There is currently no existing sidewalk within this section of Carsonia Avenue but would connect to the existing sidewalk network along Carsonia Avenue southwest of Parkview Avenue and the sidewalk that will be added northeast of Logan Street associated with a PennDOT bridge replacement project. The proposed sidewalk will allow for safe pedestrian passage. Safe pedestrian access is especially needed at this location since a majority of students use Carsonia Avenue to access Antietam School and associated facilities.

Lower Alsace Township has indicated that the plans submitted for the proposed project are only conceptual. They will be obtaining PennDOT approval for exact location of sidewalks, possible inclusion of a wider shoulder and parking lane, as well as securing permitted access for existing businesses and residences located along Carsonia Avenue where the proposed improvements would occur.

The Multimodal Transportation Fund application process requires applicants to provide a letter from the appropriate planning agency certifying that the proposed project is in compliance with the comprehensive land use plans. This letter fulfills that requirement.

The project, located in the legal right of way, is in an area of Existing Development in Lower Alsace Township as identified by the Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030 Update. Within this area, the plan calls for:

“A variety of reinvestment, rehabilitation, and revitalization efforts, will be promoted to take advantage of the extensive infrastructure network in place, to improve the tax base of the urban centers, and keep our older urban areas vibrant. Municipalities are encouraged to create public/ private partnerships that jointly support a community-driven comprehensive strategy to revitalize, stabilize and grow older neighborhoods.”

Additionally, sidewalks along Carsonia Avenue in this area were listed as a medium ranked project with timing of implementation proposed within 6 to 10 years based on the number of goals included in the Berks County Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan the project would fulfill and the amount of time and costs to fulfill this project. The implementation of this project not only supports multiple goals in the Berks County Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan, but it also supports the Berks County Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan’s vision:

Healthy, vibrant, and economically strong communities encourage and value transportation connectivity. Berks County will be a place where people of all ages and abilities can safely, comfortably, and conveniently walk or bicycle everywhere.

The Carsonia Avenue Improvements Project also meets the County’s goals to protect and maintain the current bicycle and pedestrian network, connect communities in ways that support walking and bicycling as viable transportation options, create and maintain safe bicycling and walking infrastructure and support walking and biking options as ways to grow a vibrant local economy.

The proposed improvements help meet these goals and as such are compliant with the Berks County Comprehensive Plan. The Berks County Planning Commission supports this project and asks the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to fund this project.

Ryan Emerson  
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The Berks County Planning Commission thanks you for the opportunity to review this grant application.

Sincerely,

Jodi L. Gauker  
Chairwoman  
Berks County Planning Commission

DBH

cc: Don Pottiger, CPA, CGMA, Township Manager, Lower Alsace Township  
Joseph P. Rogosky, P.E., Great Valley Consultants