



March 16, 2012

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington DC, 20590

**RE: Support for the joint City of Oakland and Port of
Oakland's TIGER 2012 Grant Application**

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of the Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce (OAACC), I am pleased to offer my support for the Port of Oakland and City of Oakland TIGER 2012 grant application to convert the former Oakland Army Base (OAB) into a thriving Trade and Logistics Center by developing the Port's Phase I Intermodal Rail Project.

It has been more than ten years since the Oakland Army Base was decommissioned. It is way past due for economic redevelopment. The proposed 20 million dollar TIGER 2012 grant application will help to facilitate a nearly four-fold expansion in rail cargo transfer capacity by building additional rail access in the OAB area. The total project cost is 43 million dollars. This investment will complement the ongoing development plans and goals of both the City of Oakland and Port of Oakland to install new trade infrastructure. It will prepare the OAB site for additional trade and logistics development. This rail project will make access to the Port more efficient for existing shippers and thus solidify the Port's position as a premier export gateway for a range of intermodal and commodity types.

Additionally, this project will allow enhanced intermodal and bulk transfer capacity for the Port of Oakland. There will be substantial emissions reduction due to the expanded use of the rail. A significant increase in the economic competitiveness of the Port and the region will also result. Hundreds of near-term construction and long-term permanent job opportunities present a compelling vision for a community that is experiencing sustained unemployment. This vision enables the community to eagerly take hold of these ongoing development plans for the former Oakland Army Base by allowing them to come into fruition in the near future.

Again, I am pleased to convey the support of the OAACC for this application. I ask that you give it your full consideration under the TIGER 2012 grant competition.

Sincerely,

Wil Hardee
President & CEO

PRESIDENT & CEO

Wil Hardee
PG&E, Retired

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