



GRAYLING TOWNSHIP

P.O. Box 521 ♦ 2090 Viking Way
Grayling, Michigan 49738
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March 27, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx, Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: 2014 TIGER Grant Application

Dear Honorable Secretary Foxx,

As the Grayling Charter Township Supervisor and a resident of Grayling for 42 years, I and many lifelong residents have seen the decline of our local economy. There are many reasons. Grayling's primary exit that routed traffic through Grayling's business loop created confusion to the point it discouraged many from even exiting because of the inconvenience and confusion to re-enter I-75 somewhere along the business loop. Grayling showed signs of decline, in part, because of better I-75 access in other north Michigan towns and lack of available private land (Crawford County is approximately 76% state and federal land and Home of Camp Grayling). Grayling was left behind by tourists, entrepreneurs, distributors and larger investors. The same people needed to create and sustain long term economic growth.

Many agree that we need to plan for long term growth. A full access interchange in combination with an expanded Rail spur and non-motorized trail system at truly the heart or hub of Northern Michigan would be the foundation or catalyst to promote growth, not only in Crawford County but radiating growth in every direction. This would greatly benefit Camp Grayling and MATES, Mercy Hospital, all emergency services, all trucking related to the military, oil and gas exploration and foresting, all local business, local government, tourism, our state parks, and our residents. In addition to our rich lumbering heritage, we are proud to be home to "Camp Grayling" a Regional National Guard Training facility, Mercy Hospital, Crawford AuSable School system, Hanson Hills (a small nonprofit ski hill). We enjoy canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, biking, hiking, skiing as well as a plethora of other water sports and activities in our many lakes and two world famous rivers, the AuSable and the Manistee. In addition we have many rustic and full facility state and local campgrounds and parks, ATVs trails and a recently added non motorized trail system that connects the city of Grayling with Hanson Hills, Hartwick Pines, Bright and Glory lakes our High School and more.



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As a community we are fortunate to have a group of ambitious concerned citizens and municipal leaders that are working to re-establish Grayling as a destination. Grayling Charter Township has been an active partner in this endeavor. We have countless hours invested as well as contributing to the nearly \$180,000 that has been spent so far to get to this point. Additionally we have granted easements and right of ways over township property to help make this happen. The proposed interchange would be the catalyst to bond together all the remaining pieces needed to succeed at recreating Grayling as a destination. The paved trail system is designed to work together perfectly with our existing trail system to create a network of non motorized trails that will attract young and old, families, and groups. The full interchange will help to save lives because of reduced response times of emergency services created by a shorter, faster, safer route. Our roads would be safer and our environment would be cleaner as a result of relief in heavy truck traffic on local roads generated by Camp Grayling. This interchange will provide the opportunity to market and showcase all of the things people have grown to love about northern Michigan. Our community has committed financially and emotionally to support and promote our area and northern Michigan, to encourage people everywhere to share the beautiful place we are so fortunate to live in. Please consider carefully the positive impact that the Tiger Grant would have on way more than just Crawford County. Help us be a part of helping brightening the future of Northern Michigan.

Respectfully,



Richard M. Harland

Grayling Charter Township Supervisor