

# City of Grayling

*"Heart of the North"*

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To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the City Council, Business Owners and residents of the City of Grayling, please accept this letter of support for the proposed I-75 North Down River Road Interchange and related road projects.

The City of Grayling is an old city where many downtown buildings have existed well before the need of wide roads. This has caused a bottle neck situation with our main state trunk line running north and south through the city. Interstate 75 runs through a portion of the city. Commercial and tourism traffic bound for the northwest lower peninsula, specifically the Grand Traverse region use the current Grayling exit to access these areas. This large volume of traffic is coming from southern Michigan and the Grayling exit is the most direct route to these areas.

There are three main goals that the City has identified for supporting this project, the first being that of safety. The emergency services for the area are situated on the north end of the city. To access areas south of the city for emergency response, these services must travel through residential neighborhoods and the very congested I-75 Business Loop causing safety concerns for motorists and pedestrians alike. The Ambulance service is situated next to the regions only Hospital and they must travel in front of the elementary school and primary route of school children accessing the school. The Hospital has identified that the majority of their ambulance traffic comes from areas south of the city causing many different ambulance vehicles to have to respond emergent to the hospital through this residential / school neighborhood. Fire and police vehicles are also situated at the north end of the city and have to travel through these areas to respond to emergencies. By having access to a full interchange at North Down River Road would allow most of these emergency vehicles to avoid these high risk areas thus reducing the risk of life safety.

The second goal identified by the city is to reduce the large number of military vehicle traffic. The Army National Guard maintains facilities northeast of the city as well as west of the city. The majority of the heavy and large military vehicles come from southern Michigan and access these facilities using the I-75 exit at the south end of the city. Camp Grayling is the largest National Guard training facility east of the Mississippi River. The Camp has traditionally used these facilities for summer time training. The military has informed us that they are planning to utilize the Camp as a year round facility in the future. Again, because of the design of the city and the roads this extra traffic could be alleviated by having a different access point to the expressway.

THE CITY OF GRAYLING IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER AND PROVIDER.

The third goal identified is to reduce the large volumes of traffic especially seen during the tourism season. Congestion caused by commercial and passenger traffic continues to rise in the region. We normally saw traffic backups during peak traffic times but now we are seeing these backups on a daily basis. We feel tht if this traffic had an alternate route, the city would see less congestion and less traffic accidents on the I-75 Business Loop.

The city's engineers recently completed a survey of the city's infrastructure and road conditions. In looking at the infrastructure (specifically water mains and sanitary sewers) within the area of the proposed project that is within the city limits, they found most of those utilities dating back to the 1940's. The engineers have placed these areas as high concern on their assessment. Because of this, the city passed a resolution at their October 10, 2011 City Council meeting to commit \$297,000.00 towards this proposed project for these improvements.

We would ask that you would please consider the TIGER Grant proposal for this project.

Sincerely,



Doug Baum  
City Manage / Police Chief