



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Cuyahoga Valley National Park  
15610 Vaughn Road  
Brecksville, Ohio 44141-3097

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
10.D. (CUVA)

April 20, 2016

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington DC, 20590

Re: Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I am writing to offer enthusiastic support for the grant application submitted by Summit County Engineer to obtain funding from the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program. The application seeks funding for the "Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project," which will increase safety, livability, and ultimately aid in the economic success of an area that serves as the primary gateway to the national park.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) has over 2 million visitors every year, often being one of the top 10 most visited national parks. Tourism to CVNP created \$144 million in economic benefit to the area in 2015, supporting 2415 jobs. CVNP is relatively unique among national parks in that most roads within the boundary are owned by local jurisdictions and not by the National Park Service. The original rural routes were not designed to handle the amount of traffic they now receive due to popularity of CVNP. This project would fund improvements that coordinate with CVNP's plans to develop the Boston Mills Historic District as a visitor services hub, with a comprehensive visitor orientation center in the heart of the CVNP, providing greater accessibility and a pedestrian-safe environment for those visitors.

Specific improvements will include resurfacing roadways, paving shoulders for bicycle use, stabilizing landslide areas, replacing two road bridges, constructing a pedestrian bridge and pedestrian pathways for park visitors, relocating and constructing rail stations, improving rail crossings, creating a 24/7 national park orientation station, and making parking lot improvements for recreational vehicles and mass transit. The project would provide significant benefits to the safety and enjoyment of park visitors and area residents. I urge you to select the Summit County Engineer's grant proposal for TIGER funding.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical project.

Sincerely

Craig Kenkel  
Superintendent



1421 LONGWORTH BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
202-225-5261  
202-225-3719 FAX

**TIM RYAN**  
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
13TH DISTRICT, OHIO

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS  
DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING, AND URBAN  
DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE  
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

April 26, 2016

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Re: Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I write on behalf of the Summit County Engineer's office to offer my support for their grant application to obtain funding from the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program. The county is hoping to secure \$16,976,229 for the "Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project". This project will increase safety, livability, and ultimately aid in the economic success of the area.

While infrastructure improvements are always needed with the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, this particular request asks to fund improvements that coordinate with the national park's long-term plans to make the Boston Mills area a focal point within the CVNP, as well as provide greater accessibility and a safer environment. The CVNP has over 2 million visitors every year, making it the 10<sup>th</sup> most visited national park. Tourism to the CVNP created \$137 million in economic benefit in the area in 2012. That spending supported 2054 jobs in the local area.

Funding will allow Summit County to provide specific improvements that include stabilizing landslide areas, replacing two bridges, resurfacing roadways, paving shoulders for bicycle use, constructing a pedestrian bridge and pedestrian pathways for park visitors, relocating and constructing rail stations, improving rail crossings, creation of a 24/7 national park orientation station, and making parking lot improvements for RVs and mass transit.

I support these essential improvements because the original rural routes were not designed to handle the amount of traffic they now receive due to the popularity of the national park. The effort put forth by CVNP and the Summit County Engineer's office will ensure that CVNP maintains its high national standing within the park system. Their proven ability to work within federal guidelines and leverage outside funding sources to complete this safety and accessibility project is noteworthy.

Sincerely,

Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress

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WARREN, OH 44481  
330-373-0074  
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241 FEDERAL PLAZA WEST  
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April 26, 2016

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington DC, 20590

**Re: Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project**

Dear Secretary Foxx,

I am writing on behalf of the Summit County Engineer's office to offer my support for their grant application to obtain funding from the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program. The County, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and The Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park are hoping to secure funding for the "Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project". This project will increase safety, livability, and ultimately aid in the economic success of the area.

While infrastructure improvements are always needed with the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, this particular request asks to fund improvements that coordinate with the national park's long-term plans to make the Boston Mills area a focal point within the CVNP, as well as provide greater accessibility and a safer environment. The CVNP has over 2 million visitors every year, making it the 10<sup>th</sup> most visited national park. Tourism to the CVNP created \$137 million in economic benefit in the area in 2012. That spending supported 2054 jobs in the local area.

If Summit County is fortunate enough to receive funding, specific improvements will include stabilizing landslide areas, replacing two bridges, resurfacing roadways, paving shoulders for bicycle use, constructing a pedestrian bridge and pedestrian pathways for park visitors, relocating and constructing rail stations, improving rail crossings, creation of a 24/7 national park orientation station, and making parking lot improvements for RVs and mass transit.

These improvements are essential because the original rural routes were not designed to handle the amount of traffic they now receive due to the popularity of the national park. The park and the Summit County Engineer's office are dedicated to ensuring the CVNP maintains its high national standing within the park system and have shown a willingness to work within federal guidelines and leverage outside funding sources to complete this safety and accessibility project.

Thank you for consideration of this critical project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Curtis Baker", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Curtis Baker  
AMATS Interim Director

# CONSERVANCY

for CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

April 25, 2016

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx

Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: TIGER8 – FY16, Discretionary Grant application for Summit County Engineer, Ohio;  
*Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project*

Dear Secretary Foxx,

The Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park is pleased to support the Summit County Engineer's TIGER FY16 grant application. The grant request for public safety and access improvements will greatly enhance the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Visitor Center we are implementing on behalf of the National Park Service. The Visitor Center will be completed by 2019 and this grant will ensure that a new Scenic Railway Train Station as well as multi-modal parking, trail access and roadway improvements are integrated and realized within the same time frame for the greatest public impact.

The partnership between the Summit County Engineer, Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP), the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park (Conservancy), and the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad (CVSR), exemplifies the TIGER program intent of innovation and national significance. The project leverages the private philanthropic investment in a new National Park Visitor Center with County transportation access and critical safety improvements.

Since its inception in 1974, Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) has attracted 75 million visitors. Yet, despite its consistent ranking as one of America's most-visited parks, it lacks an essential infrastructure component; a full-service, centrally-located Visitor Center. Cuyahoga Valley National Park attracts local, regional, national, and worldwide visitors, with 2.5 million visits per year. Local and regional residents make up 80% of visits, with the number of out of state visitors consistently increasing.

The vision for the Visitor Center project is to transform a historic property on the banks of the Cuyahoga River (in the Village of Boston) into a central, one-stop destination where people will come to plan their visit to Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Ohio & Erie Canalway (a nationally designated heritage area and scenic by-way). Ideally situated to serve Cleveland and Akron, the Visitor Center will also provide orientation to services, accommodations, and other regional destinations and stimulate tourism.

The Visitor Center, coupled with associated transportation improvements, will be transformational due to: 1) location at the geographic and cultural center of the park; 2) pedestrian and bicycle access to the 85+ mile Towpath Trail, Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad, Cuyahoga River (and future water trail), and historic Boston Village; 3) close proximity to major interstate highways I-77, I-271, State Route 8, and the Ohio Turnpike; 4) location on the route of the Ohio & Erie Canalway and America's Byway linking Cleveland and New Philadelphia; 5) suitability of the site for improvements, including an outdoor visitor plaza and parking; 6) compatibility that the newly restored historic building will have with the portfolio of distinguished restoration work the NPS and Conservancy have accomplished in the Village of Boston (a National Register Historic District).

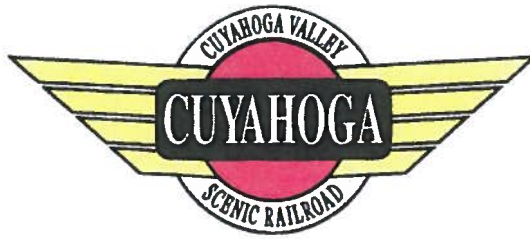
The federal government has invested over \$200 million in land acquisition and capital development in the park; a centrally located and connected visitor center will be a capstone to these accomplishments. As the primary welcome center for the park, the Visitor Center will serve over 60,000 people each year. With TIGER funding support, the philanthropic investment for the Visitor Center will be leveraged with multi-modal connectivity for over four million people who live within the Cleveland and Akron metropolitan areas.

Thank you for your consideration of this transformational project, and I urge you to select the Summit County Engineers, TIGER grant proposal for funding.

Sincerely,



Deb Yandala, Chief Executive Officer  
Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park



April 21, 2016

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: TIGER Discretionary Grant application for Summit County, Ohio  
and Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Accessibility Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Foxx,

On behalf of Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad, I am writing to express our support for the Summit County TIGER grant request for public safety and access improvements in association with a new Cuyahoga Valley National Park Visitor Center to be completed by 2019. These improvements within the Cuyahoga Valley National Park are being undertaken as an innovative partnership between:

- Summit County, Ohio;
- National Park Service;
- Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, an Ohio 501(c)3; and
- Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad, an Ohio 501(c)(3).

This project exemplifies the intent of the TIGER program for innovation and national significance. The project leverages private philanthropic support for a new national park visitor center with County transportation access and safety improvements. The unique cooperative and comprehensive approach ensures that the national park will realize its potential to welcome and orient out of state visitors to the assets of the region as well as continue to fulfill the health and human well-being needs of local and regional residents.

With over 2.3 million visitors a year, the park is experiencing consistent growth in visitation including significant increases in visitors from out of state. The new Visitor Center will orient and inform these visitors about the attractions of Northeast Ohio and serve as a portal to introduce users to the national park system. The federal government has invested over \$200 million in land acquisition and capital development in the park since its inception in 1974, although a central facility, conveniently located and fully connected via multi-modal opportunities remains to be accomplished. With the funding support from this grant, this critical piece will be realized.

The Visitor Center for Cuyahoga Valley National Park is being developed by the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park for the National Park Service. With nearly \$4 million of private philanthropic support in hand, the Visitor Center is on schedule to be complete by 2019. The addition of the partnership of Summit County Engineers for the associated transportation, access and safety improvements to the connecting pedestrian, vehicular, train and bicycle

**CUYAHOGA VALLEY SCENIC RAILROAD**

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circulation leverages public and private investment for regional impact and economic recovery. The National Park Service's on-going commitment for operational support, currently at \$11 million annually, ensures the improvements will have lasting and substantial value.

As Cuyahoga Valley National Park's alternative transportation provider, Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad wholeheartedly supports this proposal. The addition of a new train station near the new Visitor Center will result in increased ticketing and boarding capacity, an ADA accessible boarding area, customer-friendly parking and additional programming capacity.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical project. I urge you to select the Summit County Engineer's grant proposal for funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig B. Tallman", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Craig B. Tallman  
President & CEO  
Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad



April 25, 2016

The Honorable Anthony R. Foxx  
Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington DC, 20590

Re: Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Foxx,

I am writing on behalf of the Summit County Engineer's office to offer my support for their grant application to obtain funding from the Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program. Summit County, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, and The Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park are hoping to secure funding for the "Cuyahoga Valley National Park Safety and Accessibility Improvement Project". This project will increase safety, livability, and ultimately aid in the economic success of the area.

While infrastructure improvements are always needed with the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, this particular request asks to fund improvements that coordinate with the national park's long-term plans to make the Boston Mills area a focal point within the CVNP, as well as provide greater accessibility and a safer environment. The CVNP has over 2 million visitors every year, making it the 10<sup>th</sup> most visited national park. Tourism to the CVNP created \$137 million in economic benefit in the area in 2012. That spending supported 2054 jobs in the local area.

If Summit County is fortunate enough to receive funding, specific improvements will include stabilizing landslide areas, replacing two bridges, resurfacing roadways, paving shoulders for bicycle use, constructing a pedestrian bridge and pedestrian pathways for park visitors, relocating and constructing railway stations, improving rail crossings, creation of a 24/7 national park orientation station, and making parking lot improvements for RVs and mass transit.

The Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Summit County Engineer's office are dedicated to ensuring the CVNP maintain its high national standing by improving the original rural routes to accommodate the increased traffic flow brought about by the increased popularity of the park. I ask for your support to leverage outside funding sources to complete this safety and accessibility project.

Thank you for consideration of this critical project.

Mayor Bill Goncy