

**RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT APPLICATION TO U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION'S 2024 REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH  
SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY (RAISE) GRANT PROGRAM**

**Whereas** the U.S. Department of Transportation's ("USDOT") Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity ("RAISE") provides funding for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure;

**Whereas** the City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project;

**Whereas** Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe bicycle facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities, while also improving the pedestrian facilities along the corridor utilizing a Complete Streets model;

**Whereas** a corridor study is being finalized, which has evaluated the effectiveness of the existing cross section while considering other efficiencies that could be implemented;

**Whereas** intersection improvements have also been evaluated to increase safety for all users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, and detailed data collection has been completed to understand current directional travel flows and travel demands;

**Whereas** the corridor study has engaged residents, city leaders, and key stakeholders and has vetted potential recommendations to build support for the future vision of Garrison Boulevard;

**Whereas** in order to move toward implementation and capitalize on the positive momentum for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on Garrison Boulevard, a RAISE Grant application should be submitted;

**Now, therefore be it resolved**, that the Gastonia City Council hereby declares support for the Garrison Boulevard project and the RAISE Grant application for funding to construct proposed improvements along the corridor.

.....  
Resolution adopted this, the 6th of February, 2024, upon a motion of Council member Kirlin and seconded by Council member Barber by a vote of 6 affirmative votes to 0 negative votes.

Richard Franks  
Richard Franks, Mayor

ATTEST:  
Suzanne G. Gibbs  
Suzanne Gibbs, City Clerk



Certificate

The undersigned duly qualified City Clerk of the City of Gastonia certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted as a legally convened meeting of the City of Gastonia held on the 6th of February, 2024.

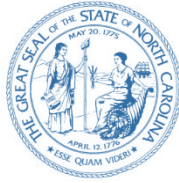
Suzanne Gibbs  
Suzanne Gibbs  
City Clerk

(seal)

February 6, 2024  
Date



Res2747



## North Carolina General Assembly House of Representatives

Representative John A. Torbett  
108<sup>th</sup> District

### COMMITTEES

Office: 538 Legislative Office Building  
300 N. Salisbury Street  
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925  
Phone: (919) 733-5868  
Fax: (919) 754-3612  
Email: [john.torbett@ncleg.gov](mailto:john.torbett@ncleg.gov)  
District: 210 Blue Ridge Drive  
Stanley, NC 28164  
Phone: (704) 263-9282

Chairman, Appropriations Education  
Chairman, Education K-12  
Chairman, House Select Committee on Education Reform  
Vice-Chairman, Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee  
Vice-Chairman, Appropriations  
Vice-Chairman, Redistricting  
Vice-Chairman, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House  
House Select Committee on Oversight and Reform  
Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations  
Oversight and Reform  
State Government  
UNC BOG Nominations

February 23, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing with my strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

The City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. A major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.

Garrison Boulevard currently consists of four travel lanes with a center turn lane. A corridor study is being finalized, which has evaluated the effectiveness of the existing cross section while considering other efficiencies that could be implemented. Intersection improvements have been evaluated to increase safety for all users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, and detailed data collection has been completed to understand current directional travel flows and travel demands. The corridor study has engaged residents, city leaders, and key stakeholders and has vetted potential recommendations to build support for the future vision of Garrison Boulevard.

The City of Gastonia's **Garrison LEARNS** Project is more than just a transportation project; it is crucial for improving multimodal safety and accessibility and serves as the cornerstone of a regional vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible corridor. By prioritizing transportation choice, affordability, and environmental responsibility, **Garrison LEARNS** aims to significantly improve the quality of life for everyone in our community.

This ambitious project will complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, transforming this corridor into a safe, convenient, and inclusive space for all. **Garrison LEARNS** will connect users to a multitude of valuable assets along the corridor, including the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, Lineberger Park, and the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, and Science).

I appreciate your serious consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John A. Torbett". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Representative John A. Torbett

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:



On behalf of the Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (GCLMPO), I am writing with our strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.



The City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. A major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.



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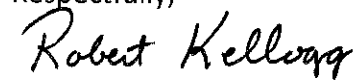
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the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, and Science).

I appreciate your serious consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Kellogg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "R".

Robert Kellogg, Board Chair  
Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln MPO

February 14, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of Gaston County, I am writing with our strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

The City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. A major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.

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I appreciate your serious consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,



Ray Maxwell  
Infrastructure & Asset Manager  
Gaston County Government  
128 W, Main Ave.  
Gastonia, NC 28052  
Tel: 704.866.3101  
ray.maxwell@gastongov.com



Juan G. Garcia  
Senior Transportation Planner  
Gaston County Government  
128 W. Main Ave.  
Gastonia, NC 28052  
Tel: 704.866.3770  
juan.garcia@gastongov.com



February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Gaston County Economic Development Commission, I am writing with our strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

The City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. A major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.

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The City of Gastonia's **Garrison LEARNS** Project is more than just a transportation project; it is crucial for improving multimodal safety and accessibility and serves as the cornerstone of a regional vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible corridor. By prioritizing transportation choice, affordability, and environmental responsibility, **Garrison LEARNS** aims to significantly improve the quality of life for everyone in our community.

This ambitious project will complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, transforming this corridor into a safe, convenient, and inclusive space for all. **Garrison LEARNS** will connect users to a multitude of valuable assets along the corridor, including the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, Lineberger Park, and the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, and Science).

I appreciate your serious consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donny Hicks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Donny Hicks,  
Executive Director  
Gaston County Economic Development Commission  
(704) 825-4046

THE  
**SCHIELE MUSEUM**



February 27, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of The Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium, Inc., I am writing with our enthusiastic support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

Upon completion of the City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan in May 2022 Garrison Boulevard was identified as a potential Demonstration Project. A major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations such as the regionally recognized Schiele Museum of Natural History and publicly-owned facilities such as the main branch of the Gaston County Library. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.

Garrison Boulevard currently consists of four travel lanes with a center turn lane. A corridor study is being finalized, which has evaluated the effectiveness of the existing cross section while considering other efficiencies that could be implemented. Intersection improvements have been evaluated to increase safety for all users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, and detailed data collection has been completed to understand current directional travel flows and travel demands. The corridor study has engaged residents, city leaders, and key stakeholders and has vetted potential recommendations to build support for the future vision of Garrison Boulevard.

The City of Gastonia's **Garrison LEARNS** Project is more than just a transportation project; it is crucial for improving multimodal safety and accessibility and serves as the cornerstone of a regional vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible corridor. By prioritizing transportation choice, affordability, and environmental responsibility, **Garrison LEARNS** aims to significantly improve the quality of life for everyone in our community.

This ambitious project will complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, transforming this corridor into a safe, convenient, and inclusive space for all. **Garrison LEARNS** will connect users to a multitude of valuable assets along the corridor, including the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, Lineberger Park, and The Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, and Science).

I appreciate your serious consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,

Karl L. McKinnon  
Assistant Director of Operations / CFO



February 21, 2024

**Gaston County Schools**  
*shaping our future*

**Morgen A. Houchard, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent

Central Administrative Office

943 Osceola Street  
P. O. Box 1397  
Gastonia, NC 28053  
704-866-6100  
FAX 704-866-6175

Department of  
Exceptional Children

215 West Third Avenue Gastonia,  
NC 28052  
704-866-6160  
FAX 704-866-6191

Division of  
Resource Management

1351 Bradford Heights Road  
Gastonia, NC 28054  
704-866-6129  
FAX 704-866-6193

School Nutrition Programs

500 Reid Street  
Lowell, NC 28098  
704-836-9110  
FAX 704-824-8442

Staff Development Center

240 Eighth Avenue  
Cramerton, NC 28032  
704-824-2828  
FAX 704-824-4918

Teacher Resource Center

366 W. Garrison Boulevard  
Gastonia, NC 28052  
704-866-6174  
FAX 704-866-6194

Mrs. Randi P. Gates, AICP  
Director of Transportation  
City of Gastonia  
Post Office Box 1748  
Gastonia, North Carolina 28053

Dear Mrs. Gates:

Gaston County Schools is pleased to support efforts by the City of Gastonia to secure federal transportation grant funding for “Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science.” We are confident that this project will improve transportation along the busy Garrison Boulevard corridor and enhance safety for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Gaston County Schools is building a new school campus for W.P. Grier Middle School at 1622 East Garrison Boulevard. The school is adjacent to the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium and the Gaston County Public Library and in close proximity to the Avon and Catawba Creeks Greenway and Lineberger Park. We are excited about this thriving, highly-traveled area in the heart of Gastonia becoming a renewed center for learning, research, exploration, and discovery; it is our intention to do everything we can to build on our long-standing partnership with the museum and library so we can contribute to the vision for “Garrison LEARNS” as a benefit for our students and school community. A key component to achieving this initiative is necessary improvements along Garrison Boulevard to meet future transportation needs while fostering a sense of harmony among vehicular traffic, bicyclists, and pedestrians and creating a space that is aesthetically pleasing and safe for all who use it.

The Gaston County Board of Education joins me in encouraging the U.S. Department of Transportation to give the City of Gastonia’s grant application its highest consideration. Without question, “Garrison LEARNS” is an ambitious project for our growing community, and it is one that will strengthen the quality of life for our citizens and visitors for many years to come. Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact my office, (704) 866-6111.

Sincerely,

Morgen A. Houchard, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools



February 19, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Garrison LEARNS (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science) Project is more than just a transportation project; it is crucial for improving multimodal safety and accessibility. On behalf of the Gaston Business Association (GBA), I am writing to express strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for Garrison LEARNS, aiming to enhance Garrison Boulevard as a safe, multimodal transportation facility. Garrison Boulevard, a vital east-west route in Gastonia, is earmarked for redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District. With a current focus on bicycle and pedestrian improvements, the project seeks to transform the corridor into a safe, inclusive space accommodating users of all ages and abilities.

The comprehensive bicycle plan completed in 2022 highlighted Garrison Boulevard as a potential demonstration project, emphasizing its significance in connecting various community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. The ongoing corridor study has assessed the existing infrastructure and proposed enhancements, including intersection improvements to enhance safety for all users. Engaging residents, city leaders, and stakeholders has ensured broad support for the future vision of Garrison Boulevard.

The project aims to complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, linking key assets such as the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, and recreational facilities.

As an accredited Chamber of Commerce, the Gaston Business Association recognizes the importance of such enhancements for Gaston County businesses, as well as residents. We urge your serious consideration and support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Patrick T. Mumford  
President & CEO



February 26, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Carolina Thread Trail, I am writing to express sincere support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science.

The Carolina Thread Trail is a regional network of greenways and trails that ultimately will connect 2.9 million people in 15 counties in North and South Carolina. Among the 400 miles of completed segments is Gastonia's Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, which intersects Garrison Boulevard. The greenway is part of a 6-mile, north-south, bicycle and pedestrian corridor in the city, connecting two major parks.

The proposed Garrison LEARNS Project on Garrison Boulevard would provide a safer, inviting east-west connection, tying into the north-south corridor and greatly expanding multi-modal access to and from the Carolina Thread Trail network. A high number of neighborhoods and community destinations (including a library, school, and museum) would be linked via active transportation facilities to the existing greenway, thus capitalizing on prior bicycle and pedestrian investments.

Our organization participated as a stakeholder in the City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan, completed in May 2022, which identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. A corridor study is being finalized. We and other stakeholders, along with city leaders and residents, have participated in planning the future of this corridor. Implementation of the city's Garrison LEARNS Project is the logical next step in realizing a regional vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible network for safely moving people, not just cars.

The ambitious Garrison LEARNS Project will significantly improve the quality of life by providing transportation choice and affordability, while promoting environmental responsibility. All of these benefits are the type of outcomes that drive our own organization's mission of linking people to places. For these reasons, the Carolina Thread Trail strongly supports the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE grant application. We appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this opportunity to advance Gastonia's transformative project.

Respectfully,



Bret Baronak, Director



February 16, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature,  
Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Gaston Community Foundation, we are writing with our strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

The City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. As a major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia can prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.

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The City of Gastonia's **Garrison LEARNS** Project is more than just a transportation project; it is crucial for improving multimodal safety and accessibility and serves as the cornerstone of a regional vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible corridor. By prioritizing transportation choice, affordability, and environmental responsibility, **Garrison LEARNS** aims to significantly improve the quality of life for everyone in our community. The City of Gastonia will be richer on my levels for this improvement.

This ambitious project will complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, transforming this corridor into a safe, convenient, and inclusive space for all. **Garrison LEARNS** will connect users to a multitude of valuable assets along the corridor, including the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, Lineberger Park, and the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, and Science).

We are grateful for your serious consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,



Ernest W. Sumner  
President



Lauren S. Vanacore  
Community Engagement Officer





February 14, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of Gaston Together, I am writing with our strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

The City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. A major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.

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improving multimodal safety and accessibility and serves as the cornerstone of a regional vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible corridor. By prioritizing transportation choice, affordability, and environmental responsibility, **Garrison LEARNS** aims to significantly improve the quality of life for everyone in our community.

This ambitious project will complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, transforming this corridor into a safe, convenient, and inclusive space for all. **Garrison LEARNS** will connect users to a multitude of valuable assets along the corridor, including the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, Lineberger Park, and the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, and Science).

This project directly aligns with the programs and initiatives of Gaston Together and we are pleased to support this application. I appreciate your sincere consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leslie Lee", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Leslie Lee  
Executive Director  
Gaston Together



**KEEP GASTONIA BEAUTIFUL, INC.**  
KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

CITY OF GASTONIA  
*Housing & Community Engagement*  
*Office of Keep Gastonia Beautiful*  
• PO Box 1748 • Gastonia, NC 28053-1748 •  
(704) 869-1938 • (704) 866-6067 fax

February 23, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of Keep Gastonia Beautiful, I am writing with our strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

The City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. A major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.

Garrison Boulevard currently consists of four travel lanes with a center turn lane. A corridor study is being finalized, which has evaluated the effectiveness of the existing cross section while considering other efficiencies that could be implemented. Intersection improvements have been evaluated to increase safety for all users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, and detailed data collection has been completed to understand current directional travel flows and travel demands. The corridor study has engaged residents, city leaders, and key stakeholders and has vetted potential recommendations to build support for the future vision of Garrison Boulevard.

The staff of Keep Gastonia Beautiful, and our board of directors, were happy to be included in the corridor study and were so inspired by the prospects of the project that we have since engaged with the Gaston County Library to install a piece of public art on their campus that will be installed late May 2024. We are thrilled to be part of the enhancements to this corridor and hope to continue our beautification efforts, whether through more public art installations to simply organizing community lead cleanups.

The City of Gastonia's **Garrison LEARNS** Project is more than just a transportation project; it is crucial for improving multimodal safety and accessibility and serves as the cornerstone of a regional vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible corridor. By prioritizing transportation choice, affordability, and environmental responsibility, **Garrison LEARNS** aims to significantly improve the quality of life for everyone in our community.

This ambitious project will complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, transforming this corridor into a safe, convenient, and inclusive space for all. **Garrison LEARNS** will connect users to a multitude of valuable assets along the corridor, including the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, Lineberger Park, and the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, and Science).

I appreciate your serious consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Juliann Lehman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Juliann" being more prominent than the last name "Lehman".

Juliann Lehman  
Keep Gastonia Beautiful Administrator  
[Juliann.lehman@gastonianc.gov](mailto:Juliann.lehman@gastonianc.gov)  
704-869-1938



02/27/2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of Parkwood Baptist Church, I am writing with our strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

The City of Gastonia's Comprehensive Bicycle Plan was completed in May 2022 and identified Garrison Boulevard as a potential Demonstration Project. A major east-west route bisecting Gastonia, Garrison Boulevard has a mixture of character zones with different land uses, including a high number of community destinations and publicly-owned facilities. With the City's goal for future redevelopment around the York Chester Historic District and initiatives to make the corridor a public gateway, Garrison Boulevard serves as a key opportunity where Gastonia could prioritize bicycle and pedestrian improvements to create a safe, multimodal transportation facility that would appeal to users of all ages and abilities.

Garrison Boulevard currently consists of four travel lanes with a center turn lane. A corridor study is being finalized, which has evaluated the effectiveness of the existing cross section while considering other efficiencies that could be implemented. Intersection improvements have been evaluated to increase safety for all users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, and detailed data collection has been completed to understand current directional travel flows and travel demands. The corridor study has engaged residents, city leaders, and key stakeholders and has vetted potential recommendations to build support for the future vision of Garrison Boulevard.

The City of Gastonia's **Garrison LEARNS** Project is more than just a transportation project; it is crucial for improving multimodal safety and accessibility and serves as the cornerstone of a regional vision for a vibrant, sustainable, and accessible corridor. By prioritizing transportation choice, affordability, and environmental responsibility, **Garrison LEARNS** aims to significantly improve the quality of life for everyone in our community.

This ambitious project will complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, transforming this corridor into a safe, convenient, and inclusive space for all. **Garrison LEARNS** will connect users to a multitude of valuable assets along the corridor, including the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, Lineberger Park, and the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium (Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, and Science).

I appreciate your serious consideration of the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application and your support for it.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'Z' followed by a horizontal line that loops back under the 'Z'.

Zachary Grier  
Support Pastor

William Gross  
1104 Dumbarton Road  
Gastonia, NC 28054-1503

February 16, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: 2024 RAISE GRANT – Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science  
City of Gastonia, NC**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Laurel East Community Watch, I am writing to voice our strong support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE Grant application for **Garrison LEARNS: Library, Education, Art, Recreation, Nature, Science**.

In May 2022, the City of Gastonia's *Comprehensive Bicycle Plan* identified Garrison Boulevard – a major east-west route that bisects our city – as a potential Demonstration Project. In this capacity it would serve as a public gateway, a multimodal transportation facility with bicycle and pedestrian improvements for users of all ages and abilities, and an instrumental support for the redevelopment of the York Chester Historic District.

Garrison Boulevard consists of four travel lanes with a center turn lane. A corridor study, now being finalized, evaluated the effectiveness of the existing cross section while considering other efficiencies. Potential intersection improvements have been drafted to increase safety for all users and includes detailed data analyses on directional travel flows and travel demands. The study engaged area residents, including members of our community watch, city leaders, and vetted recommendations to build a new vision for Garrison Boulevard.

This ambitious project will complete a network of interconnected pathways for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users, transforming it into a safe, convenient, and inclusive corridor for all. **Garrison LEARNS** will also connect users to valuable assets along the boulevard, including the Gaston County Library, Grier Middle School, Avon & Catawba Creeks Greenway, Lineberger Park, and the Schiele Museum of Natural History and Planetarium.

As our community lies immediately south of Garrison Boulevard, we strongly endorse **Garrison LEARNS** as it will make our roads safer, increase opportunities for our residents to safely walk and ride bicycles, and help preserve our diverse and tree-lined neighborhood.

On behalf of the Steering Committee of the Laurel East Community Watch, I appreciate your serious consideration and support for the City of Gastonia's 2024 RAISE application.

Respectfully,



William Gross  
Steering Committee  
Laurel East Community Watch