



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

MAY 01 2014

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

RE: Puerto Rico Eastern Region Multimodal Transportation Plan: Connecting People to Jobs and Services TIGER Grant Request, San Juan, PR

Dear Secretary Foxx:

Region 2 of the Environmental Protection Agency supports the application of the Puerto Rico Eastern Region Multimodal Transportation Plan: Connecting People to Jobs and Services, for TIGER funding in support of the development of a regional, multimodal transportation plan between the eastern municipalities of Ceiba and Naguabo to the islands of Vieques and Culebra. The project is an integral element of the efforts to promote sustainable economic development and improve the current transportation disadvantages that the people of Vieques and Culebra are facing.

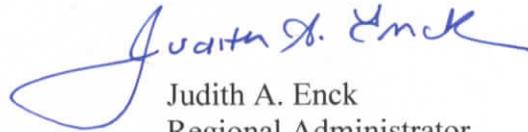
For decades, Puerto Rico has experienced high poverty and unemployment levels of all jurisdictions within the United States. Within Puerto Rico, the eastern municipalities of Ceiba and Naguabo and in particular the islands of Vieques and Culebra have consistently had even worse indicators. Transportation inefficiencies have affected competitiveness, impacting the movement of residents, freight, including goods necessary for daily and economic activities, as well as visitors and tourists.

The proposed planning project subject of this grant application aims to develop a regional, multimodal transportation plan between Roosevelt Roads, in Ceiba, and Vieques-Culebra in order to (i) diversify the opportunities for mobility of residents, visitors and cargo (via a new maritime route) between Vieques, Culebra and the rest of Puerto Rico; (ii) repair and enhance Roosevelt Roads' surface connections with neighboring urban centers of Ceiba and Naguabo; (iii) enhance multimodal connections in Vieques and Culebra and between these island-municipalities and the East of Puerto Rico for residents and visitors; and (iv) connect Vieques and Culebra residents to the economic activities planned for Roosevelt Roads in order to foster their economic mobility.

These elements are consistent with the transportation challenges identified above and identified through the Vieques Sustainability Task Force (a recommendation on the President's Puerto Rico Task Force Report, dated March 2011). The project's scope of work is also consistent with the mission of the TIGER grant funding.

If you need additional information please do not hesitate to contact me at 212-637-5000 or have your staff contact Claudia Gutierrez, Caribbean Senior Advisor, at 212-637-5036.

Sincerely,



Judith A. Enck

Judith A. Enck
Regional Administrator

cc: Ingrid Vila, Chief of Staff to Governor Garcia-Padilla, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico
Dr. Carlos Severino, Commissioner for Vieques and Culebra
Brenda Torres, Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration, New York Office
Jose Font, Environmental Protection Agency, Caribbean Environmental Protection Division
Claudia Gutierrez, Environmental Protection Agency, Office of the Regional Administrator