

February 21, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I write to express L.L.Bean's support for the RAISE grant application submitted by the Maine Department of Transportation in partnership with IDEALS (Initiative for Digital Engineering and Life Sciences) and in coordination with the City of Portland and Northeastern University. The grant's intention is to make numerous infrastructure improvements to Portland's historic but disadvantaged East Deering neighborhood. Specifically, the grant would improve safety, create connectivity, and reduce reliance on motor vehicles by installing modern multi-use pathways for active transportation and facilitating bicycle/pedestrian connectivity.

The catalyst for this opportunity is the Roux Institute at Northeastern University, which is set to make East Deering its home in 2027. The Roux Institute is a graduate program that integrates data science, technology, and the advanced life sciences to spur innovation, build talent, and drive economic growth in Maine and the Northeast. Many companies, including L.L.Bean, have already benefited from the program and the grant will help the Institute achieve ambitious goals for alternative modes of transport that reduce reliance on motor vehicles.

Collectively, the grant would improve the environment and the community by enabling modes of transportation that encourage people to be outside. These outcomes marry our company purpose – to enable people to experience the restorative power of being outside – with our stakeholder philosophy, which guides us to add value to the stakeholders that have a vested interest in L.L.Bean, such as the environment and our community. The application therefore has L.L.Bean's full support, and we hope it will have your support as well.

Sincerely,



Steve Smith
President and CEO
L.L.Bean, Inc.