the city of Beech Grove
Office of the Mayor

February 27, 2009

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar
United States Senator
306 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: City of Beech Grove, Indiana – FY'10 Appropriation Requests

Dear Senator Lugar:

On behalf of the City of Beech Grove, Indiana, please accept this letter as a formal request to be considered for federal funding in the **FY'10 appropriations process**. Contained within this letter you will find specific descriptions of projects for which we are seeking federal assistance. Each of these projects is being planned and implemented with an integrated vision, focused on enhancing the quality of life of all Beech Grove residents.

In this past year, the City of Beech Grove has continued to implement strategic plans for redevelopment and encouragement of economic development within our community. A major focus of this effort has been our City-wide broadband project. Our ultimate goal is to provide wireless internet access to the entire City in order to enhance the attractiveness of our community to a younger demographic, while simultaneously making Beech Grove appealing to potential corporate citizens and increasing the quality of life of all of our residents. An important driving force behind the wireless broadband project is public safety. The City-wide wireless internet access will facilitate the early detection of problems and provide a more rapid, integrated response to situations, thereby improving the efficiency of our public safety personnel and further improving the overall public safety of our citizens.

In addition, we have our Multi-modal Transportation Plan which emphasizes the integration of all modes of transportation, with a special focus on non-vehicular traffic. In accordance with this Plan, we have completed planning for our 4.2 mile Greenway Project and are well into the design phase of the project. As the first of its kind on the south side of Marion County, this Greenway will be a critically important factor in encouraging healthier lifestyles and economic development. To help promote physical activity, the City of Beech Grove, through our Community Center Fitness Programs, participates in Governor Daniel's INShape Indiana Program. Our Community Center Fitness Program membership boasts 485 individuals, seventy-five percent of which belong to INShape Indiana. Finally, the City's first-ever Comprehensive Redevelopment Plan is complete.

All of the initiatives outlined above are important parts of the improved community we are working to create for our existing residents, as well as for new homeowners and businesses we hope to attract. By enhancing our public safety and technology, promoting healthier lifestyles and ensuring our

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endeavors are carefully planned and integrated with our over-arching vision for the community, we will achieve our community goals of enhancing quality of life, increasing personal wealth and promoting community pride and ownership for all Beech Grove residents.

We appreciate your willingness to consider our projects as valuable tools for revitalizing our community that will directly impact the quality of life for our residents. Set forth below is a concise description of each project for which we are seeking your help in obtaining federal assistance:

- ***Public Safety Communications Equipment***— As previously mentioned, the City has completed construction of the infrastructure necessary for our broadband wireless network. However, in order to fully integrate the wireless system with our public safety personnel, the City needs to install 25 cameras in police squad cars and at various locations throughout the City and to equip 22 squad cars with laptop computers. By doing so, our Command and Control Center will have a first look at scenes to expedite responses with appropriate apparatus and officers specifically needed at a situation. In addition, we will be mounting cameras at intersections to capture video to help fight and deter crime. The deployment and integration of public safety equipment with our wireless broadband network will improve public safety for both our citizens and officers. The cost of the 25 cameras is approximately $200,000, which includes support equipment and server needs. The cost for the 22 laptops is projected to be $200,000. ***Accordingly, we respectfully request $400,000 in FY'10 federal appropriations for public safety communications and surveillance equipment.***

- ***Park Grove Street Rehabilitation Project*** — Park Grove is a neighborhood in the City in need of significant revitalization. One major problem affecting the area is dilapidated roads and their corresponding impact upon the neighborhood's stormwater drainage. Overlapping layers of asphalt, from years of re-paving, have resulted in curbs and storm drains being completely submerged under asphalt. Consequently, the City is undertaking the Park Grove Street Revitalization Project which will include: (i) the removal of all existing asphalt overlay; (ii) the removal and replacement of all curbs, sidewalks, sidewalk curb ramps, and driveway approaches; and (iii) necessary repairs to the existing concrete pavement, which will be overlaid with a new asphalt surface.

Two years ago, the City used approximately $400,000 of entirely local funds to complete approximately 20 percent of the overall Park Grove Revitalization Project, which included both street and stormwater drainage improvements. Ultimately, the completion of the Park Grove Project will benefit more than 240 residential parcels and 1.2 miles of City roads. Taking this all-important first step to improving the roads in this part of the City is paramount to revitalizing the Park Grove neighborhood and spurring owner-occupied residences. To continue this critically important revitalization of the Park Grove neightborhood, ***we respectfully request $2.75 million in FY'10 federal appropriations for the engineering and construction of streets in the Park Grove neighborhood.***

- ***Park Grove Stormwater Rehabilitation Project*** — As noted above, the City is undertaking an infrastructure revitalization effort in the Park Grove neighborhood of the City. As part of this project, we are addressing the non-functioning stormwater drainage system which plagues this area of our City. Overlapping layers of asphalt, from years of re-paving, have resulted in curbs and stormwater drains being completely submerged under asphalt and destroyed through years of neglect. Without any

drainage, stormwater collects, along the streets, in front yards and in driveways of this neighborhood. Consequently, the City is undertaking the Park Grove Stormwater Rehabilitation Project which will include the removal and replacement of the existing stormwater drainage and the castings on all storm sewer curb inlets. To continue this critically important revitalization of the Park Grove neightborhood, ***we respectfully request $750,000 in FY'10 federal appropriations for the engineering and construction of the stormwater drainage system in the Park Grove neighborhood.***

- ***Hornet Park Community Center: Youth Center Expansion*** – In an effort to focus on at-risk youth in the Beech Grove community, City officials are planning an expansion of the Hornet Park Community Center to house a dedicated youth center. The City owns property along Hornet Avenue west of the existing Hornet Park Community Center that will be used for this new facility. Currently, the Community Center is used as a fitness, banquet and meeting room facility. Beech Grove has a significant at-risk youth population from both an education and law enforcement perspective. With respect to law enforcement, the following risk-factors can put youth in jeopardy of running afoul of the law: (i) single parent homes; (ii) homes with two working parents where children often are left alone; (iii) children who are failing or having continual trouble in school; (iv) youth who have already had multiple encounters with law enforcement; (v) youth who demonstrate risky behavior; and (vi) children who go for long periods of time without adult supervision. According to Beech Grove Police Department officials, in 2008, they encountered over 200 at-risk youth at various levels, ranging from smaller issues such as truancy to more serious incidents involving battery and firearms violations. The Department's Diversion Program grew out of a need for accountability and stability for first-time offenders with minor infractions.

From an education viewpoint, at-risk youth are defined, in part, as those who do not have enough credits to progress to the next grade level and have not passed their core classes. Approximately eighty students in the Beech Grove City Schools fall into this category. Moreover, failure to pass either the language arts or math components of the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress-Plus ("ISTEP+") test (which is administered to children in grades 3-10) is another indication of whether youth are considered to be at-risk. Approximately 40% of children in the Beech Grove City Schools failed the language arts component of the ISTEP+ test, while almost 40% of children in the Beech Grove City Schools failed the math component of the ISTEP+ test. The creation of a youth center with positive programming, activities and adult supervision will serve as a community-based resource to reduce the percentage of at-risk youth in Beech Grove. ***Therefore, we respectfully request $2,250,000 in FY'10 appropriations for the construction of a 30,000 square foot expansion of the Hornet Park Community Center to serve as a youth center.***

- ***Subway Road Extension Project***— The City of Beech Grove is seeking to build an extension to Subway Road in order to provide public access to the site of a former landfill site that is in the process of being redeveloped. In cooperation with the City of Indianapolis, the City of Beech Grove successfully annexed 36 acres from the City of Indianapolis, a portion of which contained an old landfill site, abandoned more than 30 years ago. As part of this process, the City of Beech Grove has agreed to redevelop this area and devote the former landfill site to a public use. At no cost to Beech Grove, the

City of Indianapolis will deliver approximately 15,000 truckloads of dirt to complete the closure of the landfill, as well as provide labor and equipment to grade the entire 36-acre site.

However, in order to fully redevelop this site, the City needs to construct an extension to Subway Road. This road will benefit neighboring businesses and provide access to greenspace in the area. The costs to design, engineer and construct this road extension are projected to be $1,210,000. In addition to the benefits of creating more recreational facilities for our residents, the development of this site complements other economic redevelopment projects already underway in the City. ***Accordingly, we respectfully request $1,210,000 in FY'10 federal appropriations to plan, design and construct the Subway Road Extension Project.***

- ***Greenway Project***— The Beech Grove Pedestrian Trail (the "Greenway Project") will serve a valuable role in defining transportation options in the community as well as completing a key piece of the Indianapolis metropolitan area's transportation network. Upon completion, it will connect Beech Grove with three townships and, ultimately, two cities. This project will reach a population that needs and is demanding alternative transportation choices. Moreover, by connecting the City to parks, schools, and business districts, it has the ability to affect decisions to use the trail for transportation and, thereby, reduce automobile congestion while providing a safe and efficient route to these destinations.

The plans for the Greenway Project currently include construction of 4.2 miles of off-street trails, tracing an existing waterway through the City. Along the planned alignment of the trail, there are three parks, four school buildings, the City's Community Center and the City's downtown Main Street area. In addition, the proposed trail connects to the Indy Parks' Greenways Pleasant Run trail, thereby linking it to the Indy Parks' Greenway System and the Central Indiana Regional Greenways system. Phase I is expected to begin in the summer of 2009 and continue for 18 months. In 2007, Beech Grove received $1 million in Transportation Enhancement funds from INDOT that will be matched with an additional $1.2 million in local funds. However, the City needs additional funding to design, engineer and construct the balance of the project in order to ensure its successful and timely completion. ***We respectfully request $2.1 million in FY'10 appropriations to provide the funding necessary to design, engineer and build all three sections of this project.***

We look forward to working with you and your staff through this appropriations process. In the next few weeks, we will be providing your office with details for each of the projects so you can appreciate fully the importance of each project to the continued redevelopment of our City and the quality of life of Beech Grove citizens. In the meantime, if you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at (317) 791-6060. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mayor Joe Wright

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