



July 10, 2012

City Council President Ravinder Bhalla  
Hoboken City Council  
City Hall  
94 Washington Street  
Hoboken, New Jersey 07030

Dear Council President Ravinder Bhalla:

The Fund for a Better Waterfront (FBW) urges your support for the “Bond ordinance authorizing the redesign and reconstruction of various streets in the City of Hoboken” that will be introduced on first reading this Wednesday evening. To make available funding currently committed and to secure additional funding, these “street” projects for Sinatra Drive, Observer Highway/Newark and Washington Streets must be shovel-ready. This means that the requisite planning, engineering work and construction drawings must be prepared and submitted with funding applications.

All of you are quite familiar with the many problems associated with these transportation corridors. Observer Highway, an unattractive entrance to the City, becomes jammed with traffic during rush hours. Pedestrians and cyclists find it difficult and unsafe to navigate. The dated traffic signals on Washington Street cannot be properly synchronized and there are no pedestrian crossing signals. People have slipped on the decorative stone bounding the crosswalks. This central commercial strip that attracts the greatest pedestrian traffic anywhere in the City is begging for a comprehensive streetscape redesign. And for 20 years, FBW has sought to fix the myriad problems with Sinatra Drive north of Fourth Street up to Eleventh, with its speeding traffic, lack of landscaping and absence of a dedicated bike path.

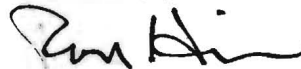
This modest ordinance would provide funding to do the design and engineering work required for each of these “streets.” Observer Highway currently has a \$1.8 million federal grant for construction and \$350,000 from the Hudson County resurfacing fund which is now held up due to failure to complete the drawings that would make the project shovel-ready.

Last week, Congress reauthorized the federal transportation bill that will provide \$54 billion annually, \$504 million of which will come to New Jersey this coming fiscal year. This has been an important source of funding for Hoboken's waterfront projects in the past, and it is critical for the City to get in line ASAP for this substantial source of funding. But first, the plan and engineering work for Sinatra Drive must be completed. The aim, of course, is to make the waterfront pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, and to add more open space and landscaping similar to what exists south of Fourth. This is an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a model waterfront that other communities will seek to emulate and will serve the public for generations to come.

Washington Street, of course, is a major project. Each new traffic signal costs \$250,000. There will be an opportunity for considerable public input and involvement as part of the design process. The design work needs to be respectful of the historic nature of our "main" street. Once the plan, design and construction drawings are completed, the work can be accomplished in phases as the funding becomes available. Again, this work will go a long way to enhancing the quality of life in Hoboken, making the town aesthetically more pleasing, safer and easier to navigate whether by foot, bicycle or car.

I urge the Council to provide its unanimous support for this ordinance. This will help move the City forward in significant ways that will have a long-lasting impact on our community. We are available to meet and discuss this ordinance with you in greater detail. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our request.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Hine", written in a cursive style.

Ron Hine  
Executive Director