

March 18, 2021

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2021 INFRA Discretionary Grant:
Projects 1 & 2 of the Interstate 494 (I-494) Vision Implementation Plan

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing this letter to express support for Minnesota Department of Transportation's (MnDOT) application for funding through the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program. If awarded, the funding would be used to complete the I-494: US 169 to Airport Projects 1 and 2 in the Cities of Bloomington and Richfield in Hennepin County. MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council, the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan planning organization (MPO), are co-applicants, and the application has received regional support from surrounding counties, cities, businesses, and organizations.

The portion of I-494 from the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport to U.S. Highway 169 is an important corridor for statewide users, the commuting public, freight, and those accessing regional destinations. MnDOT, along with partners, have developed a vision for the freeway with an implementation plan to phase construction as funding becomes available. The vision includes managed lanes, access reconfiguration, and reconstruction of the I-494/I-35W interchange. Projects 1 and 2 construct half of the managed lanes, all of the access reconfiguration and most of the I494/I35W interchange. These improvements to the corridor will reduce congestion, as well as improve mobility, multimodal connections, and safety for all travelers.

This project will have significant local and regional impact through improved access to reliable and safe multimodal transportation options. This project will improve bridges in the corridor, provide a smoother road surface, enhance pedestrian and transit accessibility, and improve stormwater drainage. The I-494 vision has been driven by stakeholders to improve transportation equity and sustainability considerations, such as improving connections from racially concentrated areas of poverty to key destinations and transit access, incorporated managed lanes, and make connections to electric vehicle charging stations in the corridor.

I support MnDOT's 2021 INFRA application for the funding of to I494: US 169 to Airport Projects 1 and 2. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at margaret.anderson.kelliher@state.mn.us

Sincerely,



Margaret Anderson Kelliher
Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Transportation