

January 10, 2025

United States Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Letter of Support for FY 2025 RAISE Discretionary Program: Planning Grant for the East Grand Forks-Grand Forks Bridge Crossing Project

Dear Secretary of Transportation,

I am writing in support of the City of East Grand Forks, Minnesota's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program. The FY 2025 RAISE funding will facilitate completion of the planning efforts to conduct preliminary engineering design, environmental documentation, and permitting for the long-planned bridge connection(s) across the Red River of the North between the cities of East Grand Forks, Minnesota, and Grand Forks, North Dakota. The multi-State planning project will support a range of multimodal options that address diverse local and regional community needs.

The project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals in that it utilizes a multi-agency partnership to address critical mobility and connectivity, quality of life, equity, and economic challenges in the East Grand Forks-Grand Forks area: two (2) cities, four (4) local jurisdictions, and two (2) states. The communities have identified a need for a new river crossing(s) between the two cities to enhance safety, reduce congestion at the existing crossings, and build active infrastructure to strengthen the current transportation network. The project will address these challenges by providing a safer connection(s) for freight and vehicular traffic across the Red River of the North that includes multimodal access for all users walking, rolling, bicycling, or taking transit between the cities and the surrounding areas.

The population of the East Grand Forks-Grand Forks region is forecasted to increase by approximately 39 percent between 2015 and 2045. Infrastructure improvements are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes, and abilities may access jobs, healthcare, and housing. The completion of proposed activities will strengthen our system of transport and contribute to growth in our region, including the anticipated growth. In addition to the improvements noted above, we anticipate that the project, when completed, will facilitate economic growth with high-paying job opportunities for people from all backgrounds.

American Crystal Sugar Company is a world-class agricultural cooperative specializing in sugar beets and is the largest of its kind in the United States. We are responsible for raising about one-third of our



nation's sugar beet acreage, concentrated in Minnesota and North Dakota's Red River Valley. We operate five sugar factories: two in North Dakota (located in Drayton and Hillsboro); and three in Minnesota (Crookston, East Grand Forks, and Moorhead).

Our grower trucks haul across the Red River from North Dakota into Minnesota to the receiving station in East Grand Forks during our harvest season. This Project would be immensely beneficial to American Crystal Sugar Company's freight operations, as an additional bridge crossing in Greater Grand Forks would shorten and streamline the travel times for trucks travelling between our growers' fields south of Grand Forks and the receiving station in East Grand Forks. These shortened travel times will result in multiple benefits for our cooperative, including cost and labor savings, efficiency, and less drive time for truck drivers as well as reduced emissions. Additionally, there would be on average 8,000 less trips (16,000 total truck movements) by our grower's trucks through the downtown corridor of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks annually.

We support the City of East Grand Forks' application for the funding of the planning activities for East Grand Forks-Grand Forks Bridge Crossing project through the FY 2025 RAISE Discretionary Program and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Please give this grant proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact. I may be reached at 218-236-4451.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Wall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ryan Wall
Vice President - Administration
American Crystal Sugar Company