

AMY KLOBUCHAR  
MINNESOTA

COMMITTEES:  
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION,  
AND FORESTRY  
COMMERCE, SCIENCE,  
AND TRANSPORTATION  
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE  
JUDICIARY  
RULES AND ADMINISTRATION

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 22, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
United States Secretary of Transportation  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue Southeast  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Kandiyohi County, Railroad Crossing Elimination Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

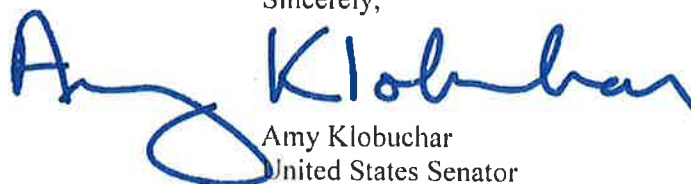
I write in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the Federal Railroad Authority's Railroad Crossing Elimination Program. If awarded, funding would support the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project, which would address critical safety concerns, enhance connectivity, boost mobility, and improve the quality of life for residents and commuters in the region.

Located in central Minnesota, the city of Willmar is one of the fastest growing communities in rural Minnesota. In order to accommodate the significant growth and rapid development in the region, Kandiyohi County is actively addressing the growing transportation and infrastructure needs in the area by upgrading key components of the regional transportation network. This includes improving multimodal access to employment, housing, and commercial and retail centers in the region, which is why upgrades need to be made to County Road 55 (CR 55) in Willmar.

County Road 55 near Minnesota Highway 23 is an undivided, two-lane rural highway. Commuters and residents who use CR 55 currently have to cross an at-grade highway and rail crossing at the BNSF Railroad. This stretch of roadway has created significant safety concerns, and accessibility and mobility issues for all users. Funding from the Federal Railroad Authority would help replace the existing at-grade crossing of the BNSF Railroad at CR 55 and convert it into a bridge over the existing railroad tracks. In addition, this project would support efforts to reconstruct a one mile stretch of CR 55. This project would not only enhance safety and connectivity, but it would also improve mobility, reduce congestion, and minimize the impacts of freight movement *on local* communities. Completing this project would support the needs of rural Minnesotans by improving and modernizing the regional transportation network.

Again, I support Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program. If you have any questions, please contact Rommel Lee in my Minnesota office at (612) 727-5220 or by email at [Rommel\\_Lee@Klobuchar.senate.gov](mailto:Rommel_Lee@Klobuchar.senate.gov).

Sincerely,



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator

## United States Senate

September 27, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, MN Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project in Willmar, Minnesota

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing to urge your consideration for the Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program submitted by Kandiyohi County Public Works. This project has broad support from local, regional, and state stakeholders across a variety of sectors.

In addition to sustainability and equity advancements, the project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns on the urban fringe of the growing city of Willmar, MN. The project will also accelerate economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park, and reduce inequity by improving multimodal access to employment areas, single and multi-family housing, and places of commerce and assembly. This project eliminates an at-grade highway/rail crossing and realigns roadways to more efficiently access highways connecting regional and national shippers. The project significantly improves multi-modal access to both existing and future transit opportunities along the adjacent corridors and enhances mobility for all users.

Infrastructure improvements in Willmar are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes, and abilities may access jobs, healthcare, and housing. The Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project significantly improves interregional corridor connections by reestablishing the local roadway network and access to several suburban, exurban, and rural communities in, or adjacent to, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area.

For the reasons above, I encourage your strong consideration of this proposal. If you any questions, please contact Myles Artis by email at [myles\\_artis@smith.senate.gov](mailto:myles_artis@smith.senate.gov).

Sincerely,



Tina Smith  
U.S. Senator

MICHELLE FISCHBACH  
7TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RULES

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2307**

1237 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-2165

2211 1ST STREET SOUTH, SUITE 190  
WILLMAR, MN 56201  
(320) 403-6100

2513 8TH STREET SOUTH  
MOORHEAD, MN 56560  
(218) 422-2090

October 12, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at-grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

This project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns on the urban fringe of the growing City of Willmar, MN, accelerates economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park, improves multimodal access to employment areas, single and multi-family housing, and places of commerce and assembly. This project eliminates an at-grade highway/rail crossing and realigns roadways to more efficiently access highways connecting regional and national shippers. The project significantly improves multi-modal access to both existing and future transit opportunities along the adjacent corridors and enhances mobility for all users.

Infrastructure improvements in the Willmar area are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes, and abilities may access jobs, healthcare, and housing. The Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project significantly improves interregional corridor connections by reestablishing the local roadway network and access to several suburban, exurban, and rural communities in, or adjacent to, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area.

I support Kandiyohi County's application for funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full and fair consideration, consistent with all applicable rules and regulations. If I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff.

Sincerely,



Michelle Fischbach  
Member of Congress

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota  
Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

In addition to sustainability and equity advancements, the project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns on the urban fringe of the growing City of Willmar, MN, accelerates economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park, reduces inequity by improving multimodal access to employment areas, single and multi-family housing, and places of commerce and assembly. This project eliminates an at-grade highway/rail crossing and realigns roadways to more efficiently access highways connecting regional and national shippers. The project significantly improves multi-modal access to both existing and future transit opportunities along the adjacent corridors and enhances mobility for all users.

Infrastructure improvements in the Willmar area are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes, and abilities may access jobs, healthcare, and housing. The Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project significantly improves interregional corridor connections by reestablishing the local roadway network and access to several suburban, exurban, and rural communities in, or adjacent to, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area.

I support Kandiyohi County's application for the funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at (651) 296-4918 or [sen.andrew.lang@senate.mn](mailto:sen.andrew.lang@senate.mn).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Lang', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Lang  
Minnesota State Senator  
Senate District 17

**Dave Baker**  
State Representative

Kandiyohi County – 17B



# Minnesota House of Representatives

September 8, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing in support of the City of Willmar's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of congested rural two-lane undivided highways on County Road 5 (45th Street SW) and County Road 15 (19th Avenue S).

In addition to sustainability and equity advancements, the project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns on the urban fringe of the growing City of Willmar, MN, accelerates economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park, reduces inequity by improving multimodal access to employment areas, single and multi-family housing, and places of commerce and assembly. This project eliminates crash prone intersections and realigns roadways to more efficiently access highways connecting regional and national shippers. The project significantly improves multi-modal access to both existing and future transit opportunities along the adjacent corridors and enhances mobility for all users walking, rolling, bicycling, taking transit, and driving in Willmar and the surrounding areas.

Infrastructure improvements in Willmar are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes, and abilities may access jobs, healthcare, and housing. The Willmar, Minnesota Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project significantly improves interregional corridor connections by reestablishing the local roadway network and access to several suburban, exurban, and rural communities in, or adjacent to, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area.

I support the City of Willmar's application for the funding of the Willmar, Minnesota Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at [rep.dave.baker@house.mn](mailto:rep.dave.baker@house.mn)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Baker".

Dave Baker  
State Representative  
District 17B



**395 John Ireland Boulevard  
Saint Paul, MN 55155**

September 29, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

This letter is in reference to the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program application for the CSAH 55 Highway-Rail Crossing Elimination Project in Kandiyohi County. This project is a locally led project. The project will construct a bridge over two BNSF railroad tracks and approximately one mile of roadway to re-establish the local road network for County Roads 5, 15, and 55. This project will provide a highway-rail grade separation, an effective westerly bypass of the City of Willmar, upgrade access to the Willmar Industrial Park, and an improved route for the traveling public.

Currently the total project cost estimate is \$11.88 million. Kandiyohi County has identified \$6 million for this project. MnDOT currently does not have this project included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or funding identified in MnDOT's 10-year Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP). It is MnDOT's assumption at this time that the local agency will be responsible for delivery costs and funding gaps. This project is planned for construction in 2024.

MnDOT supports this project which will improve Minnesota's transportation system.

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Sincerely,

Nancy Daubenberger, P.E.  
Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Transportation

CC Jon Huseby, MnDOT District Engineer



**French Thompson**  
General Director  
Public Infrastructure & Investments

**BNSF Railway Company**  
P. O. Box 961502  
Fort Worth, TX 76161-0052

2600 Lou Menk Drive  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2830  
(817) 352-6316

French.Thompson@BNSF.com

October 11, 2022

Amit Bose, Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: BNSF Letter of Support – CSAH 55 Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project

Dear Administrator Bose,

BNSF Railway supports efforts by the Kandiyohi County to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) grant for the CSAH 55 Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project. If awarded, this project would allow the Kandiyohi County to design and plan for the elimination of an at-grade crossing and greatly improve multimodal freight movements through an industrial park.

BNSF values our working relationship with the Kandiyohi County and is prepared to work with all involved public agencies on further development of this project, subject to satisfactory review of final engineering and entering into definitive agreements as may be required by BNSF or other project stakeholders.

BNSF appreciates your thorough review of this application and looks forward to continuing its relationship with the Kandiyohi County through this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "French Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a horizontal line extending to the right.

French Thompson  
General Director – Public Infrastructure & Investments



**WILLMAR**

**CITY ADMINISTRATOR**

September 16, 2022

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

City Office Building  
333 SW 6th Street  
Box 755  
Willmar, Minnesota 56201  
320-235-4913  
FAX: 320-235-4917  
[www.willmarmn.gov](http://www.willmarmn.gov)

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

In addition to sustainability and equity advancements, the project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns on the urban fringe of the growing City of Willmar, MN, accelerates economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park, reduces inequity by improving multimodal access to employment areas, single and multi-family housing, and places of commerce and assembly. This project eliminates an at-grade highway/rail crossing and realigns roadways to more efficiently access highways connecting regional and national shippers. The project significantly improves multi-modal access to both existing and future transit opportunities along the adjacent corridors and enhances mobility for all users.

Infrastructure improvements in the Willmar area are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes, and abilities may access jobs, healthcare, and housing. The Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project significantly improves interregional corridor connections by reestablishing the local roadway network and access to several suburban, exurban, and rural communities in, or adjacent to, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area.

I support Kandiyohi County's application for the funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at City of Willmar, [lvaliant@willmarmn.gov](mailto:lvaliant@willmarmn.gov) or 320-214-5160

Sincerely,

Leslie M. Valiant  
Willmar City Administration  
320.214.5160 (office)  
320.979.0818 (cell)





 **WILLMAR**

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
DIRECTOR**

**333 SW 6TH ST  
WILLMAR, MN 56201  
320-235-4202  
FAX 320-235-4917**

October 10, 2022

Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
1200 New Jersey Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Buttigieg,

I am writing today to acknowledge my support of the Kandiyohi County funding request to rebuild CSAH 55 and complete the westerly bypass around the City of Willmar.

The Willmar Municipal Airport is due west of the proposed CSAH 55 rebuild project on State Highway 40. The bridge over the RR tracks from the south would make a connection from State Highway 23 and 12 to State Highway 40. This would allow for more efficient and safe access for airport users and transport businesses. The connection can be used as a marketing and business attraction/retention tool to grow the Airport as the asset it is to the City of Willmar and the region.

Transportation from West U.S. Highway 12 currently travels through the downtown area which is slow due to several stop lights. Some truck drivers take an alternative route exiting U.S. Highway 12 at County Road 5 on the west side of the City and then turn east on County Road 15 which passes residential areas and two schools. This route requires travel through an overly congested intersection at U.S. Highway 71.

The proposed project creates a safe and accessible route to the south using CSAH 55 as a means to avoid travel through Willmar. Re-entering U.S. Highway 12 East would also be easier for drivers as the amount of traffic coming from the west at the entry point will be decreased as a result of the completed bypass.

I believe this project will also increase safety for drivers and for those residing, working or visiting the City of Willmar. It will also allow for another connection to the west to the Airport to increase access and visibility to the Willmar Municipal Airport.

Please consider the request for railroad crossing elimination grant funds submitted by Kandiyohi County in order to complete the bypass around the City of Willmar.

Sincerely,

**CITY OF WILLMAR**

Gary Manzer  
Public Works Director



www.haugimp.com

September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

Haug Implement of Willmar, Minnesota has been serving area agriculture producers for over 100 years. I have heard and observed the negative impacts of traveling the current U.S. Highway 12 route through Willmar for those hauling agriculture products and the businesses serving agriculture producers.

Transportation from each and west U.S. Highway 12 currently travels through the downtown area which is slow due to city speed limits and several stop lights. Some truck drivers take an alternative route exiting U.S. Highway 12 at County Road 5 on the west side of the city and then turning east on County Road 15 which passes schools, churches, businesses, and residential areas. This route requires travel through an overly congested intersection at U.S. Highway 71. This route is also reversed when traffic moves from east to west.

Quoting a study done in 1972 by the Minnesota Department of Highways proposing changes in Highway 12, 23, and 71, *"the purpose of the project is to relieve the present traffic congestion on the existing T.H. routes that traverse through the business and residential streets of Willmar. The diversion of the through traffic to by-pass the city will reduce the problems of safety, congestion, noise and odors now present in the retail business and residential areas. The through traveler whose destination is not the City of Willmar will also drive positive benefits in reduced travel time, reduced frustration of city traffic driving and greater safety."*

This by-pass has only partially completed over the last 50 plus years. We are now in the position and have the opportunity to re-establish the proposal by utilizing CSAH 55 to access the Highway 23/71 by-pass around the City. This plan would give both truck and consumer traffic a safe passage as they travel from the east or the west on U.S. Highway 12.

Agriculture producers, farm equipment haulers, and agriculture service providers would save valuable work time with a by-pass around the City of Willmar. I believe this project will also increase safety for drivers and for those residing, working or visiting the City of Willmar.

I support Kandiyohi County's application for the funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at [mail@haugimp.com](mailto:mail@haugimp.com), cell phone 320-905-8100 (or) 320-235-8115

Sincerely,

Donald Haug Jr., Owner  
Haug Implement Co.

3593 E Hwy 12 - PO Box 1055  
Willmar, MN 56201  
320-235-8115



JOHN DEERE

62105 MN Hwy 24 - PO Box 127  
Litchfield, MN 55355  
320-693-2438



September 19, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota  
Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

In addition to sustainability and equity advancements, the project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns on the urban fringe of the growing City of Willmar, MN, accelerates economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park, reduces inequity by improving multimodal access to employment areas, single and multi-family housing, and places of commerce and assembly. This project eliminates an at-grade highway/rail crossing and realigns roadways to more efficiently access highways connecting regional and national shippers. The project significantly improves multi-modal access to both existing and future transit opportunities along the adjacent corridors and enhances mobility for all users.

Infrastructure improvements in the Willmar area are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes, and abilities may access jobs, healthcare, and housing. The Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project significantly improves interregional corridor connections by reestablishing the local roadway network and access to several suburban, exurban, and rural communities in, or adjacent to, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area.

Dooley's Petroleum Inc. employs 300 individuals, hauls and distributes over 400,000,000 gallons of petroleum products locally each year. The project stated above would improve access, efficiency and eliminate safety issues on County Road 55.

I support Kandiyohi County's application for the funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at 320-235-5200

Sincerely,

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

Randy Dooley

President

Dooley's Petroleum, Inc.

September 1, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

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Infrastructure improvements in the Willmar area are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes, and abilities may access jobs, healthcare, and housing. The Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project significantly improves interregional corridor connections by reestablishing the local roadway network and access to several suburban, exurban, and rural communities in, or adjacent to, the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Metropolitan Area.

This project helps safely move truck traffic in and out of the western corridor of Willmar, which houses significant distribution and production facilities.

I support Kandiyohi County's application for the funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at 320-212-8896

Sincerely,



Larry Brown  
Senior Director of Supply Chain  
Jennie-O Turkey Store

September 30, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

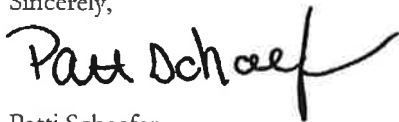
Here at First District Association, we have around 20 trucks of milk that transport 1 million pounds of milk, every day through the city of Willmar to our milk processing plant in Litchfield. This infrastructure improvement would be greatly beneficial to not only our milk haulers, but also our farmers that live in the area. This would allow them to pass around Willmar in a much safer way. It would also be safer for the citizens of Willmar to have these trucks avoid going through the heart of Willmar on roads that are very narrow and curvy.

In addition to sustainability and equity advancements, the project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns on the urban fringe of the growing City of Willmar, MN, accelerates economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park, reduces inequity by improving multimodal access to employment areas, single and multi-family housing, and places of commerce and assembly. This project eliminates an at-grade highway/rail crossing and realigns roadways to more efficiently access highways connecting regional and national shippers. The project significantly improves multi-modal access to both existing and future transit opportunities along the adjacent corridors and enhances mobility for all users.

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I support Kandiyohi County's application for the funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at 320-221-0381 or [pschaefer@firstdistrict.com](mailto:pschaefer@firstdistrict.com)

Sincerely,



Patti Schaefer  
Director of Milk Marketing  
First District Association

August 31, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

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I support Kandiyohi County's application for the funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at [bpattison@wcsteel.com](mailto:bpattison@wcsteel.com) or 320-214-5282.

Sincerely,



William Pattison  
Director of Business Development  
West Central Steel, Inc.



# City of Granite Falls

641 Prentice Street  
Granite Falls, MN 56241-1598  
Phone (320) 564-3011 FAX (320) 564-3013  
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The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
United States Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

September 26, 2022

RE: Kandiyohi County Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:


I am writing in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. If awarded, The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 55.

This project serves a wide area of Southwestern and West Central Minnesota, and directly impacts travelers from my city, which is 38 miles away on state highway 23, as well as residents from other cities in our area that travel to Willmar, which is our region's business center. Improving safety and mobility at this busy railroad and highway corridor is of utmost importance to our region and aligns with USDOT's strategic goals as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns at the edge of the growing city of Willmar.

This project will help accelerate economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park by eliminating an at-grade highway-rail crossing and realigning roadways that more efficiently access highways connecting area, regional and national shippers.

Again, I wholeheartedly support Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at [smiglewski@mchsi.com](mailto:smiglewski@mchsi.com).

Sincerely,

  
Dave Smiglewski  
Mayor, City of Granite Falls





September 7, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for the 2022 Railroad Crossing Elimination Program: Willmar, Minnesota  
Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project (Willmar, MN)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing this letter in support of Kandiyohi County's application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The RCE funding would construct an overpass to eliminate two at-grade BNSF highway-rail crossings and reconstruct approximately one mile of rural two-lane undivided highway on County Road 55.

In addition to sustainability and equity advancements, the project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals, as it addresses critical at-grade rail crossing safety concerns on the urban fringe of the growing City of Willmar, MN, accelerates economic development of the region through improved connections to the expanding Willmar Industrial Park, reduces inequity by improving multimodal access to employment areas, single and multi-family housing, and places of commerce and assembly. This project eliminates an at-grade highway/rail crossing and realigns roadways to more efficiently access highways connecting regional and national shippers. The project significantly improves multi-modal access to both existing and future transit opportunities along the adjacent corridors and enhances mobility for all users.

Infrastructure improvements in the Willmar area are critically needed so residents and visitors of all backgrounds, incomes and abilities may access jobs, healthcare and housing. The Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project significantly improves interregional corridor connections by reestablishing the local roadway network and access to several suburban, exurban and rural communities in, or adjacent to, the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area.

The Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission (EDC) has long championed the need for transportation infrastructure improvements in Willmar and throughout the county to enhance our efforts for economic growth and quality jobs. This project improves access, mobility and safety to Willmar Industrial Park businesses, such as the new FedEx Distribution Center and the planned Realm 5 Logistics Park.

[www.kandiyohi.com](http://www.kandiyohi.com) | 320.235.7370 | 866.665.4556 | 222 20th Street SE | P.O. Box 1783 | Willmar, MN 56201

ATWATER | BLOMKEST | KANDIYOHI | LAKE LILLIAN | NEW LONDON | PENNOCK | PRINSBURG | RAYMOND | SPICER | SUNBURG | WILLMAR

Pete Buttigieg  
September 7, 2022  
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I support Kandiyohi County's application for the funding of the Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region. Please give this proposal your full consideration and if I can answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I may be reached at 320-235-7370, and my email address is [aaron@kandiyohi.com](mailto:aaron@kandiyohi.com).

Sincerely,



Aaron A. Backman  
Executive Director  
Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar  
Economic Development Commission