

April 18, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

NORTH DAKOTA FREIGHT RELIABILITY AND PRESERVATION ON US 52 PROJECT

The North Dakota Department of Transportation (NDDOT) is pleased to submit this application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding for the freight reliability and preservation on US 52 project.

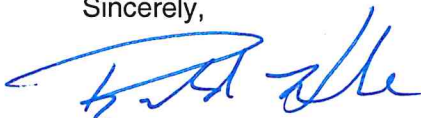
US 52 is a primary north south roadway in central North Dakota and serves as an important transcontinental freight corridor. Rural projects like this benefit the entire nation through improved economic competitiveness and domestic supply of life-sustaining goods, while supporting free trade among the U.S. and Canada. This project supports the Rural Opportunities to Use Transportation for Economic Success (ROUTES) Initiative as it connects North Dakota with the rest of the continent.

During development of the North Dakota State Freight and Rail Plan, adopted in January 2023, numerous stakeholders in both public and private sectors identified this route as a level 1 corridor with a high percentage (>25%) of truck traffic, and is problematic for oversized and overweight vehicles servicing the agriculture, and energy industries. Traffic issues along this corridor cause vehicles to travel many miles without the ability to safely pass slower moving traffic, resulting in wasted time and fuel and increased greenhouse gas emissions.

The NDDOT is fully committed to the Vision Zero strategy working to eliminate motor vehicle crashes fatalities and serious injuries on our highways. Completion of this corridor will ensure the safe and efficient movement of freight vital to the development of the nation's energy and agricultural resources as well as help contribute to national food and energy security. Additionally, long corridors with limited opportunities to pass can encourage risky driver behavior. The NDDOT has already invested passing lane improvements along the project corridor, and the railroad bypass lanes are a continuation of these investments.

In the event of an award, NDDOT is committing the dollar amount from the specified sources for this project as noted in the application. We look forward to working with the USDOT to implement these imperative changes to ensure future north-south connectivity for western North Dakota.

Sincerely,



Ronald J. Henke, PE
Director

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