

May 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 MPDG Program: I-80 Capacity, Safety, and Reliability Enhancements

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write in support of the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) application for funding through the United States Department of Transportation's Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Opportunity. The MPDG funding is necessary to facilitate completion of the long-planned interstate (I-80) facility upgrades in the region through:

- the reconstruction of 15 critically important miles (7.6 miles in each direction) of I-80
- expanding capacity by adding one travel lane in each direction (four to six lanes)
- reconstruction of original bridge structures on/over I-80, originally constructed in 1962

The project aligns with USDOT's strategic goals by improving roadway safety by installing a paved median with concrete barrier, adding rumble strips, and modifying ramps to allow freight acceleration and deceleration improving roadway safety; reducing congestion and travel delay; supporting the movement of freight; providing greater public safety access; addressing state of good repair by installing new infrastructure; and correcting deficient vertical clearance.

I-80 serves as an essential pathway for the movement of people and freight across the U.S. This portion, located just outside of the City of Lincoln (our state capitol and Nebraska's second most-populous city), carries nearly 40,000 daily trips, 25 percent of which are heavy trucks supporting America's supply chains. A safe, reliable I-80 with sufficient capacity conducive to the efficient flow of people and goods is critical to our community, the state of Nebraska, and the region.

The State of Nebraska continues to prioritize modernizing our state's transportation network through smart and innovative investment. The completion of capacity expansion, bridge improvement, and safety enhancements along the project corridor will strengthen our system of transport and contribute to the City's mission to create a more successful, secure, and shared future, as well as our state's mission to Grow Nebraska.

I strongly support NDOT's application for the funding of the I-80 Capacity, Safety, and Reliability Enhancements project and look forward to the infrastructure investment in our region through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Please give this 2022 MPDG funding proposal your full consideration and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Leirion Gaylor Baird". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'L' and a decorative flourish at the end.

Leirion Gaylor Baird
Mayor, City of Lincoln