

Woodbury County Board of Supervisors

Courthouse • Room 104
620 Douglas Street • Sioux City, Iowa 51101
Telephone (712) 279-6525 • Fax (712) 279-6577

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April 30, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
US Department of Transportation (USDOT)
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Woodbury County Board of Supervisors submits this letter of financial support for the I-29 Southbridge Interchange Project and requests full and fair consideration for funding under the Nationally Significant Multimodal Freight & Highway Projects Program (INFRA) and Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (Rural). While Woodbury County is fully committed to funding the project through Tax Increment Financing, the grant, if awarded, allows the county to release the tax increment valuation backing the county bond issue for the project. Releasing the tax increment will assist the county board's effort to reduce countywide property taxes by spreading tax levies against the larger total property valuation inclusive of the increment that is no longer tied up by project bonding. The county further commits to the ongoing maintenance of the project following completion, working in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Transportation.

This Project will construct critical infrastructure for not only Woodbury County, but also the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Siouxland Interstate Metropolitan Planning Council (SIMPCO), the Cities of Sioux City and Sergeant Bluff, the adjacent rural communities, and the greater region. The Project will enhance supply chain movement to the region, Midwest and beyond via major river, rail, and freight industries with its connection to Port Neal and the Southbridge Industrial Area. This project has been a priority for the county, our communities, and our local industries since 2005.

As we continue the design of this project and proceed toward project letting, the county nearing the culmination of a multiyear effort to bring this project to fruition. National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) documentation as a countersigned Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared and signed in January 2020, with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) signed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in May 2020. FHWA signed the Interchange Justification Report (IJR) for the Project in September 2022. The Project is in final design, with a letting scheduled for January 2026. Given


the level of design and strong, sustained support for the Project, upon receipt of grant funding, Woodbury County can expeditiously enter a grant agreement with the USDOT.

The Project will provide needed access along this segment of I-29 and be a catalyst for economic development, relieving bottlenecks to freight movement in the network today and providing improved access to the Port Neal industrial area and the Missouri River to the west and to local and rural communities via Old US 75 to the east. The Project will improve safety, upgrading a passive at-grade railroad intersection to an active, signalized rail crossing and reducing instances of vehicles stopping on a very active rail corridor. We believe the project is also the key to bringing new high-quality jobs to the area. It is the Board's sincere hope that the new jobs that follow development in this area will be available to a broad range of people with or without educational attainment beyond a high-school diploma.

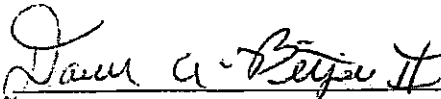
This project is a priority for our community. The Project has strong local, state, and regional support. The Board of Supervisors is fully in support this project and requests that Woodbury County's grant application be given consideration for grant funding.

Sincerely,

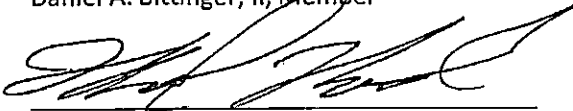
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