



# NEW HANOVER COUNTY

## COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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January 2, 2025

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

New Hanover County is pleased to support the application for the LINK NC Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant to fund the W-5703C Monkey Junction Pedestrian Improvement Project. This important project is located at a key juncture in New Hanover County, serving local and regional needs by connecting Wilmington to southern beach communities. The US 421 corridor is a vital route for beach tourism, employment hubs, the Port of Wilmington, residential neighborhoods, and major shopping and service centers.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) identified this project through pedestrian safety studies and community input to create a safer roadway environment along Carolina Beach Road (US 421). RAISE grant funding will improve safety in a corridor with a history of pedestrian and bicyclist crashes by installing sidewalks, a shared-use path, pedestrian crossings, visibility enhancements, transit connections, and other safety improvements. Furthermore, the high volume of pedestrian traffic from surrounding residential communities, driven by nearby commercial services, highlights the importance of addressing safety concerns to prevent an ongoing trend of incidents.

The County supported a previous attempt to include bike and pedestrian improvements in this project by committing the required 20% matching funds for an application for the Federal Surface Block Grant Program Direct Attributable (STBGP-DA). Although the request for the STBGP-DA was granted, escalations in the project cost resulted in the removal of the bicycle and pedestrian components of the project.

New Hanover County provides a wide range of services for its residents, similar to those in mid-sized metropolitan areas. The LINK NC improvements align with our 2024-2028 Strategic Plan goal to connect residents to essential needs through various housing and transportation options. New Hanover County supports the LINK NC application and NCDOT's ongoing efforts to enhance significant infrastructure and improve quality of life and health outcomes. This multimodal project also aligns with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law by enhancing pedestrian connections, improving safety with proven measures, and linking residential communities to commercial amenities. It also enhances access to transit, jobs, and opportunities for low-income communities.

I fully support New Hanover County's application for the LINK NC RAISE grant to fund the W-5703C Monkey Junction Pedestrian Improvement Project, a critical initiative that will enhance pedestrian safety and connectivity along the US 421 corridor, providing our citizens with improved access to essential needs and enhancing quality of life and health outcomes for our community.

Sincerely,

Chris Coudriet  
New Hanover County Manager