



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

JAMES H. TROGDON, III
SECRETARY

February 25, 2020

Secretary Elaine Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC, 20590

Subject: Certification of Financial Contribution INFRA Grant Application:
US 74 Corridor Opportunities for Rural Efficiency and Safety Improvement
Project

Dear Secretary Chao:

The North Carolina Department of Transportation wishes to express its full support for the US 74 Corridor Opportunities for Rural Efficiency and Safety Improvement project under the United States Department of Transportation's Infrastructure For Rebuilding America (INFRA) program and will support regional and national economic vitality through the deployment of innovative technology and creative infrastructure investments to improve freight mobility, rural access, and infrastructure resiliency specifically in regional and rural areas of southern North Carolina.

The US 74 Corridor Opportunities for Rural Efficiency and Safety Improvement Project comprises ten discrete elements along 330 miles of the US Route 74 corridor between Asheville and Wilmington. North Carolina's US 74 corridor passes through largely rural regions of the state and is currently characterized by inconsistencies in travel speeds, recurring bottlenecks at signalized intersections, and a relatively high occurrence of vehicular accidents as the corridor passes directly through regional centers. The primary objectives of the CORESI project are to improve efficiency (travel time), safety, infrastructure resiliency, and the provision of broadband fiber along the entirety of the US 74 corridor between Asheville and Wilmington through a series of intersection-to-interchange upgrades, the completion of the final stages of a major bypass around Shelby, and ITS and signal improvements. Lastly, the Project will include the installation of fiber optic cabling along the entirety of the US 74 project corridor, enabling future ITS technology and bringing high speed telecommunications including broadband to large swathes of rural North Carolina.

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The delivery of the Project will bring about a harmonization and continuity of free flow along this key freight corridor, with outcomes stemming from the implementation the Project to include an increase in vehicle capacity, faster travel times throughout the entire corridor, a decrease in recurring and non-recurring congestion, and improved safety conditions resulting in a reduction in accidents and fatalities. Furthermore, the installation of fiber optics cabling along these sections of the US 74 will enable the foundation for the future deployment of intelligent transportation systems (ITS) providing tremendous potential for many other communications mechanisms, including broadband internet, cameras, and future connected and autonomous vehicle (both passenger and freight) technology. The rural and semi-rural communities along the candidate project corridor currently lack adequate broadband services, isolating these communities from opportunity, hindering economic growth, and generating safety implications through inconsistent access to 911 and emergency services.

The Project is reflected in our mission statement:

Connecting people, products and places safely and efficiently with customer focus, accountability and environmental sensitivity to enhance the economy and vitality of North Carolina.

To that end, the NCDOT will fund the US 74 Corridor Opportunities for Rural Efficiency and Safety Improvement project in the amount of \$237,396,633.00 (YOES) towards a successful INFRA grant from the state funded North Carolina Highway Trust Fund.

Thank you for your consideration of the US 74 Corridor Opportunities for Rural Efficiency and Safety Improvement project for the 2020 INFRA Discretionary Grant Program.

If NCDOT can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me at (919) 707-4320 or via e-mail at erodewald@ncdot.gov.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Evan Rodewald
Chief Financial Officer