



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

J. ERIC BOYETTE
SECRETARY

08/16/2023

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

Subject: Certification of Financial Contribution 2023 PROTECT Application:
Bridge Longevity Upgrades to Enhance Resiliency, Increase Dependability,
and Grow Equity Project (“BLUE RIDGE Project”)

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) respectfully seeks your favorable consideration and review of the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program Grant application titled BLUE RIDGE (Bridge Longevity Upgrades to Enhance Resiliency, Increase Dependability, and Grow Equity) for the rehabilitation or replacement of five structures in Buncombe and Madison Counties.

The project includes the replacement of four bridges and the rehabilitation of one existing culvert. These structures exhibit significant structural issues and deficiencies due to continued exposure to natural hazards such as flooding. The project will increase the resiliency of the region, restore the natural environment, and ensure necessary accessibility to vital community services.

Each structure serves as a primary access point to essential services for the surrounding communities. They are vital structures to connect rural communities with employment centers, educational facilities, and health services. Should any bridge need to be closed due to its structural deficiencies or impacts from flood events, there are very limited viable detour options to ensure continued access.

NCDOT is seeking \$12,443,000 in PROTECT funding, which represents 80% of the total project cost. NCDOT will fund the remaining balance with state funds. Previous expenditures (over the past five years) include \$743,894 for drift and debris removal, scour repair, abutment repair, and slide repair.

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Secretary Pete Buttigieg - Bridge Longevity Upgrades to Enhance Resiliency, Increase Dependability, and Grow Equity (BLUE RIDGE) Project

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Award of the PROTECT funding will allow NCDOT to advance this important resiliency and accessibility project. The improvements will ensure the safety of the traveling public, allow for efficient access for rural populations, increase regional resiliency, and restore the natural environment. Thank you for your favorable consideration of this major project.

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

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Mark T. Newsome
Chief Financial Officer