

# **JWK THOMPSON FAMILY LLC**

115 West Main Street | Whiteville, North Carolina 28472

The Honorable Sean Duffy  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, DC 20590

## **Re: Madison Street Bridge Expansion Project - Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grant Application**

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of JWK Thompson Family LLC, I am writing to express our strong support for the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Madison Street Bridge Expansion project in the City of Whiteville, Columbus County, North Carolina.

JWK Thompson Family LLC owns and manages property in downtown Whiteville, including 115 West Main Street, which contains 15 residential apartments as well as ground-floor commercial businesses. We also manage several other commercial properties in the downtown area. Because our properties, residents, tenants, employees, customers, and prospective businesses depend on reliable access to downtown Whiteville, recurring flooding and roadway closures have a direct impact on our operations and the people we serve.

Flooding is not an abstract concern for our company. 115 West Main Street has flooded on multiple occasions, and we have incurred significant expense repairing and restoring downtown buildings after these events. Beyond the direct property damage, flooding slows movement throughout downtown, disrupts access for people traveling to work and patronizing local businesses, and creates additional challenges for attracting businesses and leasing vacant office and commercial space.

The Madison Street Bridge Expansion project would improve the Madison Street (US 701 Business) crossing over Soules Swamp by extending the existing bridge and adding a second bridge. Improving this crossing would help the roadway better accommodate heavy rainfall and flooding events, reduce roadway closures, and allow floodwaters to recede more quickly.

For JWK Thompson Family LLC, the benefits would extend well beyond our individual properties. More reliable transportation corridors would improve access for our residential tenants, commercial tenants, employees, customers, emergency responders, contractors, and visitors. It would also strengthen the ability of downtown Whiteville to retain existing businesses, attract new businesses, fill vacant commercial and office space, and support continued private investment.

The Madison Street Bridge Expansion project represents an important investment in transportation resilience, public safety, economic activity, and the long-term vitality of downtown Whiteville and Columbus County. As a downtown property owner and manager that has experienced repeated flooding and the substantial costs associated with recovery, JWK Thompson Family LLC strongly supports NCDOT's efforts to secure PROTECT Grant funding for this project.

I respectfully urge your full consideration and support for the funding necessary to advance and complete this important project. Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to strengthening our nation's critical transportation infrastructure.

Sincerely,

**John E. Thompson Jr. and Sarah B. Thompson, Owners**  
**JWK Thompson Family LLC**  
115 West Main Street  
Whiteville, NC 28472