

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:

This letter is to express the strong support of Mr. Postman Print Shop, LLC, a business located in downtown Whiteville, for the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Madison Street Bridge Expansion project in the City of Whiteville, Columbus County, North Carolina. The project will improve the Madison Street (US 701 Business) crossing over Soules Swamp by extending the existing bridge and adding a second bridge. These improvements will help the roadway to better handle heavy rainfall and flooding events, keeping this important connection open for residents, businesses, emergency responders and travelers.

Flooding is a recurring issue along Madison Street and throughout downtown Whiteville during heavy rainfall events. Improving the bridge crossing would reduce flooding in the area and allow rainwater to recede more quickly after heavy rainfall events. As a result, the project would help reduce road closures, improve access to downtown Whiteville, and provide more reliable travel for all roadway users during and after heavy rainfall events.

Specifically, for Mr. Postman Print Shop, LLC, the importance of the Madison Street Bridge Expansion project can be summarized by the following:

- Improving access to our business. US 701 Bypass is the lifeblood of downtown Whiteville. It is important that we have access to our business to mitigate damages, but also for us to be able to run our business operations.
- Recurring flooding in our downtown has been a major disruption to our local economy. It affects our community immediately during times of crisis, but it also has a lasting impact when entrepreneurs choose not to invest in downtown because of this flooding.
- This project would improve emergency access, regional mobility, downtown connectivity, economic activity, freight movement, and community resilience by providing our community with vital infrastructure.
- Our print shop serves our community with signage, decals, apparel and paper printing which often serve as a way for local government, schools, non-profits, and businesses to provide printed communication in times of crisis. It is important that we remain available to serve our community in that capacity.

The Madison Street Bridge Expansion project represents a strategic investment in transportation resilience, mobility, public safety, and long-term vitality of downtown Whiteville and Columbus County as a region. I respectfully urge your full consideration and support for funding that will allow North Carolina DOT to advance and complete this important project, providing lasting benefits to the City of Whiteville, Columbus County, and southeastern North Carolina.

Thank you for your consideration of this meritorious grant and your commitment to our nation's critical transportation system.

Sincerely,
Jonathan Medford, Owner
Mr. Postman Print Shop, LLC