

NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

Roy Cooper
GOVERNOR

Walter E. Gaskin
SECRETARY

July 14, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The program of investments outlined in the Fayetteville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's (FAMPO) *Improving Bragg Roads and Access for Greater Growth* Project ("iBRAGG") application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's RAISE Program offers an opportunity for the State of North Carolina to Build Back Better and improve the road system within the Fort Bragg and Fayetteville area. This road system serves military, civilian personnel, and commuters within the broader regional community.

Improving Bragg Roads and Access for Greater Growth Project ("the Project" hereafter) proposes to repair and rehabilitate approximately 47 miles of publicly accessible roadways within the United States Army Garrison Fort Bragg, but outside of the cantonment and other secure areas. The Fort Bragg road system was originally designed and constructed to support the Army's training activities only. However, as time evolved, the road system transitioned to a Fort Bragg and Fayetteville roadway which supports military activities and serves as a civilian commuter route. As a result of this road system evolution, the Fort Bragg road system began to carry a higher volume of traffic than envisioned when they were initially constructed. Consequently, the road system is assessed by the North Carolina Department of Transportation as unsafe and inefficient travel due to deteriorating pavement conditions, pavement edge drop-offs, substandard guardrails, inadequate signage, vegetation encroaching on clear zones, and erosion as depicted in the Project proposal and the State of Good Repair Section.

The proposed Project will bring the roads into a state of good repair to enhance rural-urban connectivity, address erosion and stormwater management concerns, improve resilience, increase road safety, and improve emergency services response. Aside from commuter travel,

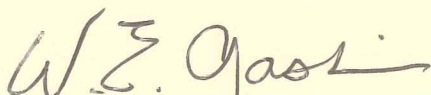
the Project will enhance military training routes that support the movement of military equipment and training exercises in support of mission readiness and Global Response Force requirements. Fort Bragg is the core of our nation's current Global Response Force, composed of strategic units such as U.S. Army Forces Command, XVIII Airborne Corps, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, U.S. Army Reserve Command, 82nd Airborne Division, and other tenant units, thus classifying this military installation as a critical military facility within the Department of Defense (DoD). Fort Bragg supports a population of 325,636 active-duty soldiers, reservists, students, DoD civilians and contract employees, retirees, and family members.

Additionally, the Project is an important step forward to connecting rural and urban central North Carolina by rebuilding and rehabilitating what has become a vital portion of the region's road, bicycle, and pedestrian network to benefit the region's commuters. The collaboration between the State of North Carolina, North Carolina Department of Transportation, City of Fayetteville, and Fort Bragg will foster a unified approach in funding, performing repairs, and maintenance activities. The Project will bring the road system into a state of good repair and add it to the state maintenance system by the Board of Transportation.

On the behalf of North Carolina's active-duty military service members, veterans, and their families, and as the Secretary for the North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, I enthusiastically support Fort Bragg's application for the Department of Transportation RAISE Grant. As one of the largest military installations in the world, Fort Bragg is essential to our Armed Forces' mission to secure our nation and the values and principles they strive to protect. This grant will serve to further support that role.

Thank you in advance for your favorable consideration of Fort Bragg for the U.S. Department of Transportation RAISE Grant. If I or my staff may be of any further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



Walter E. Gaskin
Secretary, North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
LtGen, USMC (Ret)