



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

J. ERIC BOYETTE
SECRETARY

July 12, 2021

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

Subject: Certification of Financial Contribution
2021 RAISE Grant Application: I-26 Flying to the Future Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) wishes to express its full support for the *I-26 Flying to the Future* project to be submitted under the United States Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program.

The Project will construct a new interchange on I-26 that will provide a direct connection to a new manufacturing facility (Pratt & Whitney, a division of Raytheon, Inc.) and other upcoming development in Biltmore Park West in Buncombe County. This public infrastructure project is crucial in supporting this investment. By awarding this application, you will be supporting the creation of nearly 800 jobs with an average salary of \$68,000, which is \$39,000 higher than the current median income report from 2019, and will also improve education in the region.

As part of their investment, Pratt & Whitney is partnering with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College to train the technical workforce for today and tomorrow and will construct a new 20,000-square-foot educational facility close to the manufacturing plant, increasing the educational capacity of the region. This education partnership will eliminate barriers to opportunities while continuing to enhance racial equity in the region. This effort will not only benefit hardworking citizens but will be an asset to NCDOT, as well.

I-26 Flying to the Future is an opportunity to improve environmental sustainability through forward-thinking technology, by reducing emissions, by increasing direct connections in the area, and by weaving local and State climate change policies into the project. NCDOT is committed to promoting environmental sustainability through this project partnership.

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We are proud of the local, regional, and state partnerships that have gotten us this far. We are proud to add this investment to the North Carolina aviation legacy and proud to have this project help us “fly to the future.” Finally, we are proud that within one single project we have been able to demonstrate a commitment to do our part in meeting three important goals of President Biden: Jobs, Education, and Infrastructure. I hope you will give all due consideration to this application.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit our RAISE Grant Application to further showcase this project’s positive and profound impact, which 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 I-26 Flying to the Future project in the amount of \$10,000,000.00 (2021\$) towards a successful RAISE Grant from the state funded North Carolina Highway Trust Fund.

Thank you for your consideration of the I-26 Flying to the Future project for the 2021 RAISE 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 sjking@ncdot.gov.

Sincerely,



Stephanie King
Chief Financial Officer
North Carolina Department of Transportation