



**RAPID CITY AREA
METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

*300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, SD 57702
605-394-4120*

June 1, 2021

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Support for USDOT RAISE Planning Grant Request and inclusion of Proposed Project in the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's 2020-2023 Transportation Improvement Plan

Dear United States Department of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, please accept this letter demonstrating support of the FY2021 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Planning grant application being presented by the City of Box Elder and Pennington County, South Dakota.

This project represents multijurisdictional collaboration and includes many impacted stakeholders that the Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization serves, including the City of Box Elder, Pennington County, South Dakota Department of Transportation, the Rapid City Regional Airport, and Ellsworth Airforce Base.

If awarded, the funds requested under USDOT's RAISE Program, paired with a substantial match provided by the City of Box Elder and Pennington County, would complete the engineering design, utility design, right of way, and environmental planning necessary to prepare this project for full construction in the future.

The project will incorporate the necessary planning to address transportation infrastructure needs for urban reconstruction of Pennington County Highway 14/16 from West Gate Road to Liberty Boulevard, approximately 3.0 miles in length, and Radar Hill Road from Highway 14/16 to Old Calvary Road, approximately 1.5 miles in length, and rural reconstruction of Radar Hill Road from Old Calvary Road to Highway 44, approximately 4.5 miles in length.

Highway 14/16 will be converted from three separate roadways to a single 5-lane urban section with additional turning lanes. The northern 1.5-mile segment of Radar Hill Road will be converted from a rural 2-lane to an urban 3-lane and will likely include surface improvements, curb, gutter, and

sidewalk. Improvements to the southern 4.5-mile segment will likely include shoulder widening to enhance connectivity and safety of non-driving users.

This project will substantially improve local and regional multimodal transportation and exhibits all the factors of local and national significance. The project reflects needs that are documented in local and regional plans to support improved safety and mobility. These improvements will improve connectivity through the transportation network, allowing high volumes of automobile traffic, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit vehicles to safely move through the Hwy 14/16 and Radar Hill Road corridors.

The proposed project is not currently within the draft Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Plan. The Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is working on final adoption of the 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Plan. This is anticipated to be approved in August of 2021. An amendment to add the proposed project will be proposed at the September 23, 2021 MPO meeting. Documentation of this meeting and the draft 2022-2025 Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Plan can be found on www.boxelderRAISEgrant.com.

The planning project being presented by the City of Box Elder and Pennington County will reduce the occurrence of traffic related injuries and fatalities and will considerably reduce the costly delays experienced consistently throughout these corridors. The Rapid City Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is pleased to extend our support in these efforts.

Thank you for your commitment to the vast transportation needs across our nation.

Sincerely,

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