

Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity



HIGHWAY MM
CORRIDOR OF OPPORTUNITY

US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
MULTIMODAL PROJECT DISCRETIONARY GRANT
OPPORTUNITY (MPDG) RURAL 2024



Freight Connections



Pedestrian Safety

May 6, 2024
Letters of Support



REPUBLIC
MISSOURI

STATE CAPITOL
201 W. CAPITOL AVENUE, ROOM 216
JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI 65101



(573) 751-3222
WWW.GOVERNOR.MO.GOV

Michael L. Parson

GOVERNOR
STATE OF MISSOURI

February 27, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing to express my support of the Ozarks Transportation Organization's (OTO) RAISE grant application for the Highway MM: *Corridor of Opportunity*.

This project expands a rural two-lane route to a five-lane facility. The Highway MM project will allow increased freight mobility, improve safety, and give better access to first responders in the area. It improves freight movement and user safety by closing two at-grade railroad crossings and building an overpass over a busy BNSF line. The area along Highway MM in Republic, Missouri is growing rapidly with new job creation and housing options. There have been 3,300 jobs created along the corridor within the past 7 years. There are an estimated 2,000 more jobs to be created with pending development along the corridor.

Highway MM connects two major corridors Interstate 44 to US 60, a 2,655-mile (in total) east/west route which runs the entire length of Missouri connecting Oklahoma to Kentucky. Highway MM serves as a primary route to the Springfield-Branson National Airport as well as the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield. It is a major north/south connection for the region connecting Christian County and the west side of the City of Springfield to I-44.

The Highway MM project will improve safety, mobility, and connectivity for all road users. Safety enhancements will protect drivers while expanded capacity will meet current and future traffic demands. Pedestrian improvements like new connections will make walking easier and safer. Eliminating at-grade rail crossings will benefit freight, enhance traffic flow, and significantly improve rail and road safety. By addressing the community's diverse transportation needs, the Highway MM project will deliver comprehensive upgrades that benefit all users.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michael L. Parson".

Michael L. Parson
Governor

ERIC BURLISON
7TH DISTRICT, MISSOURI

Oversight and Accountability Committee
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Education and the Workforce Committee

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2507

1108 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-6536

3232 E. Ridgeview St.
Springfield, MO 65804
(417) 889-1800

2727 E. 32nd St., Ste. 2
Joplin, MO 64804
(417) 781-1041

<http://burlison.house.gov>

February 23, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg

It has come to my attention that the Ozarks Transportation Organization (OTO) is submitting an application for funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Program for Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity. I believe that the Highway MM project in Republic, Missouri to be an excellent candidate to receive this grant.

The Highway MM project is a comprehensive project that will fix a multitude of problems on a rural route in Republic, Missouri. In addition to expanding a rural two-lane route to a divided four lane with raised medians, this project will also allow increased freight mobility, improving safety and giving better access to first responders in the area. It closes three railroad crossings and builds an overpass over a busy BNSF line. It will also create a more cohesive community, improving pedestrian connectivity by adding sidewalks and a shared use path to remove pedestrians from the roadway shoulder. This project protects pedestrians by adding an underpass to safely move children under the highway to the new intermediate school. This rapidly developing area is creating concentrated new job centers and mixed-use housing including affordable multi-family housing.

I request your full and fair consideration for this application. In addition, I would ask that you keep my office informed of the progress of the proposal and notify me when a decision regarding the recipients has been made.

If you have any questions feel free to contact 1) Kyle McKay at my Washington, D.C. office at 202-225-6536 or by email at kyle.mckay@mail.house.gov or Jered Taylor at my Springfield, Missouri office at 417-889-1800 or by e-mail at jered.taylor@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



Eric Burlison



January 16, 2024

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

Subject: BNSF Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

This letter is to express strong support for the Springfield-Branson National Airport (SGF) for the Highway MM *Corridor of Opportunity* project application being considered through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program.

SGF is a fast-growing FAA designated small-hub airport serving 1.3 million annual passengers through four airlines and 13 direct destinations. The airport handled over 31 million pounds of air cargo in 2023 by carriers UPS and FedEx and operates a 23 county SW Missouri Foreign Trade Zone (#225). We are also home to a Missouri Air National Guard Base, college flight training program, and an active general aviation community.

Highway MM serves as a primary route for the airport and our region. The project will increase safety and connectivity by expanding the current two lanes arterial road into a five-lane corridor and closing two at-grade railroad crossings. There are also associated trail improvements for bicycle and pedestrians. If approved, it would significantly improve the economic vitality of SW Missouri.

We appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter and look forward to an improved multi-modal transportation network that will allow the region to continue to grow in a safe, planned manner to bring connectivity and opportunity to all residents.

Sincerely,

Brian C. Weiler, A.A.E.
Director of Aviation



French Thompson
General Director
Public Infrastructure & Investments

BNSF Railway Company
P. O. Box 961502
Fort Worth, TX 76161-0052

2600 Lou Menk Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2830
(817) 352-6316

French.Thompson@BNSF.com

February 28, 2024

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

Subject: BNSF Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

BNSF Railway supports efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2024 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity project. If awarded, the project will realign and expand Missouri State Highway MM from two-lanes to five-lanes.

This project will improve community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, including accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and turning a two-lane planned arterial into a five-lane facility. The improvements will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

BNSF values our working relationship with the Ozarks Transportation Organization and is prepared to work with all involved public agencies on further development of this project, subject to satisfactory review of final engineering and entering into definitive agreements as may be required by BNSF or other project stakeholders.

BNSF appreciates your thorough review of this application and looks forward to continuing its relationship with the Ozarks Transportation Organization through this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "French Thompson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

French Thompson
General Director – Public Infrastructure & Investments



Phone: 417-451-5250 · Fax: 417-451-2851 · www.branco.com

Neosho Office: 12033 E Highway 86
Neosho, MO 64850

Springfield Office: 1864 S State HWY MM
Springfield, MO 65802

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 459
Neosho, MO 64850

February 2, 2024

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

Subject: Branco Enterprises, Inc. , Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Branco Enterprises, Inc is a 90 year strong General Contracting firm with our office and shop on Highway MM. Our employees, clients, and business partners are to and from our office all day every day and it has become incredibly dangerous, especially at peak hours, to navigate this corridor. Branco Enterprises, Inc. supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization and MODOT to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant for the Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project. If awarded, the Project will realign and expand State Highway MM from I-44 to US Highway 60. This corridor has far outgrown its original traffic count design and is a crucial artery for this prime development area.

This Project will improve Community Connectivity and safety by closing two dangerous At-Grade Railroad Crossings, constructing a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, and includes accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains. The collisions and near misses are becoming entirely too frequent at these crossings.

The Project will further bolster Regional Economic Development by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial and manufacturing development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and US Highway 60. Development potential will lead to additional above the average Living Wage Jobs along the Corridor, providing employment opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02, and improving the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D’Arc, Willard and those visiting or traveling throughout area. The highways are a means of access for some traveling to Wilsons Creek National Battlefield and seasonal increases for those going to and from the many pristine lakes and parks in our area of the state.

The continued development of multi-family housing in the area will ensure quality affordable and accessible housing for the growing workforce and their families in our region. Funding of the RAISE Grant for the MM Corridor will also improve an area of regional importance, where a new Intermediate School and City Park/Regional Sports Complex is under construction, which will lead to additional sports tourism opportunities for Southwest Missouri.

We appreciate your support and consideration for full funding of the RAISE Grant for the Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project.

Sincerely,



Sean Thouvenot
Vice President/Principal
Branco Enterprises, Inc.



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
of the OZARKS

Connecting passion to purpose

Mailing: P.O. Box 8960
Springfield, MO 65801-8960

Physical: 425 E. Trafficway
Springfield, MO 65806

Phone: (417) 864-6199

Fax: (417) 864-8344

cfozarks.org · @cfozarks

Affiliate Foundations:

Alton

Ash Grove Area

Aurora Area

Barton County

Benton County

Bolivar Area

Bourbon

Cabool

Cape Area

Carthage

Cassville

Crawford County

DACO

Dallas County

Dent County

Douglas County

El Dorado Springs

Eldon

Fair Grove Area

Finley River

Hermann Area

Hickory County

Houston

Jacks Fork

Joplin Regional

Lake of the Ozarks

Lockwood

Marshfield Area

Meramec Regional

Monett Area

Mount Vernon Area

Mountain Grove Area

Neosho Area

Nevada/Vernon County

Nixa

Owensville Area

Ozark County

Ozark Foothills Regional

Perry County

Republic

Ripley County

Rogersville

Ste. Genevieve County

St. James Area

Sarcoixie

Seymour Area

Stockton

Table Rock Lake

Taney County

Truman Lake

West Plains

Willard

Willow Springs

January 11, 2024

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

Subject: Community Foundation of the Ozarks (CFO) Letter of Support – Highway MM:
Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

CFO supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity project. If awarded, the project will realign and expand Missouri Highway MM from two-lanes to five lanes.

This project will improve community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, including accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and turning a two-lane arterial into a five-lane facility. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The project will further bolster regional economic development by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and Highway 60. The development of living wage jobs along MM will provide opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02. This will increase the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard. As an organization that serves a 62 County region in our state, we know and understand the importance of transportation to economic viability.

The continued development of multi-family housing as well as apartments in the area will ensure affordable and accessible housing for a workforce looking to access Republic School District for their children. Funds for Hwy MM will also improve an area where a new intermediate school, park, and sports complex is planned. Your support will ensure the future prosperity of the next generation of area youth.

Sincerely,


Brian Fogle, President and CEO
Community Foundation of the Ozarks



January 18, 2024

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

Subject: Convoy of Hope Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I'm writing this letter to express Convoy of Hope's strong support of the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2023 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity project. If awarded, the project will realign and expand Missouri Highway MM from two-lanes to five lanes.

This project will improve community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, including accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and turning a two-lane arterial into a five-lane facility. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The project will further bolster regional economic development by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and Highway 60. The development of living wage jobs along MM will provide opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02. This will increase the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing as well as apartments in the area will ensure affordable and accessible housing for a workforce looking to access Republic School District for their children. Funds for Hwy MM will also improve an area where a new intermediate school, park, and sports complex is planned. Your support will ensure the future prosperity of the next generation of area youth.

Sincerely,

Kregg R. Hood, EdD
Senior Vice President and Chief Business Officer

Delivering **HOPE**
since **1994**

MAIL:

1 Convoy Drive
Springfield, MO 65802
P: (417) 823-8998
F: (417) 823-8244

ONLINE:

convoyofhope.org
[/convoyofhope](https://www.facebook.com/convoyofhope)
[@convoyofhope](https://www.instagram.com/convoyofhope)
[@convoyofhope](https://www.linkedin.com/company/convoyofhope)

DONATIONS:

P.O. Box 1125
Springfield, MO 65801

convoyofhope.org/donate

DAD Commercial, LLC

February 4, 2024

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

Subject: DAD Commercial, LLC, Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

DAD Commercial, LLC supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization and MODOT to secure federal discretionary funding under the **2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant** for the **Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project**. If awarded, the Project will realign and expand State Highway MM from I-44 to US Highway 60.

This Project will improve **Community Connectivity** by closing two At-Grade Railroad Crossings, constructing a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, and includes accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The Project will further bolster **Regional Economic Development** by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial and manufacturing development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and US Highway 60. Development potential will lead to additional **Living Wage Jobs** along the Corridor, providing employment opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02, and improving the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing in the area will ensure **affordable and accessible housing** for the growing workforce in our region. Funding of the RAISE Grant for the MM Corridor will also improve an area of regional importance, where a new Intermediate School and City Park/Regional Sports Complex is under construction, which will lead to additional sports tourism opportunities for Southwest Missouri.

We appreciate your support and consideration for full funding of the RAISE Grant for the Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project.

Sincerely,



Dianna Devore
President/Member



CENTER FOR COMMUNITY STUDIES, HAMMONS SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE.

January 10, 2024

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

Subject: Center for Community Studies Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Center for Community Studies supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2023 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity project. If awarded, the project will realign and expand Missouri Highway MM from two-lanes to five lanes.

This project will improve community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, including accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and turning a two-lane arterial into a five-lane facility. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The project will further bolster regional economic development by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and Highway 60. The development of living wage jobs along MM will provide opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02. This will increase the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing and apartments in the area will ensure affordable and accessible housing for a workforce looking to access the Republic School District for their children. Funds for Hwy MM will also improve an area where a new intermediate school, park, and sports complex is planned. Your support will ensure the future prosperity of the next generation of area youth.

Sincerely,

Mr. Jay G. Garrott
Professor Emeritus and
Founding Director
Hammons School of Architecture and
Center for Community Studies
Drury University

Bob Dixon
Presiding Commissioner

Rusty MacLachlan
1st District Commissioner

John C. Russell
2nd District Commissioner



Shane Schoeller
Clerk of the Commission

Christopher J. Coulter, AICP
County Administrator

Megan Applegate
Executive Assistant

COUNTY COMMISSION
Greene County, Missouri
(417) 868-4112

January 18, 2024

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

Subject: Greene County Commission Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Greene County Commission supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity project. If awarded, the project will realign and expand Missouri Highway MM from two-lanes to five lanes.

This project will improve community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, including accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and turning a two-lane arterial into a five-lane facility. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The project will further bolster regional economic development by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and Highway 60. The development of living wage jobs along MM will provide opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02. This will increase the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing as well as apartments in the area will ensure affordable and accessible housing for a workforce looking to access Republic School District for their children. Funds for Hwy MM will also improve an area where a new intermediate school, park, and

sports complex is planned. Your support will ensure the future prosperity of the next generation of area youth.

Sincerely,



Bob Dixon
Presiding Commissioner

Rusty MacLachlan
Commissioner Dist. 1

John C. Russell
Commissioner Dist.2

Republic Historical Society
146 N. Main Street, Republic, MO 65738

February 16, 2024

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

Subject: Republic Historical Society Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

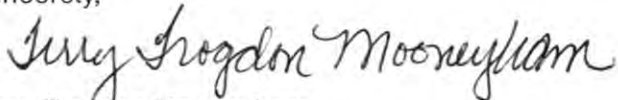
Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Republic Historical Society supports the efforts of the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure RAISE funds to expand MM Highway due to our belief that this will reduce semi-truck traffic on historic Main Street. Historic Main Street connects with Interstate Highway 44 north of Republic, MO. Large truck traffic through Main Street reduces walkability and hinders pedestrian safety.

The expansion of Highway MM to five lanes, with an overpass over the railroad, will create an alternative route for trucks utilizing Main Street to connect to Highway 60 or Highway 174. As MM exists now, the two-lane traffic creates congestion for semi-trucks at the railroad crossing near highway 60. Truckers seeking to avoid the rail line, utilize Highway N, which transitions into Main Street as an alternative route. If Highway MM were five lanes and by-passed the railroad, semi-trucks may use MM as an alternative to Highway N and Main Street.

The Historical Society is currently working with an architect to design a new museum and event center on Main Street. Additionally, we are participating in a study of Main Street with Drury University, focused on improving the street scape and reducing the appeal of the route to large trucks. The improvements to MM will enhance our efforts on Main by creating an alternative route for large trucks, therefore making it easier for us to restore Main Street as a place where citizens gather for commerce, events, and recreation.

Sincerely,



Terry Trogon Mooneyham
President of the Republic Historical Society



January 29, 2024

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

Subject: Morelock Builders Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Morelock Builders & Associates supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization and MODOT to secure federal discretionary funding under the **2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant** for the **Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project**. If awarded, the Project will realign and expand State Highway MM from I-44 to US Highway 60.

This Project will improve **Community Connectivity** by closing two At-Grade Railroad Crossings, constructing a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, and includes accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The Project will further bolster **Regional Economic Development** by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial and manufacturing development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and US Highway 60. Development potential will lead to additional **Living Wage Jobs** along the Corridor, providing employment opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02, and improving the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing in the area will ensure **affordable and accessible housing** for the growing workforce in our region. Funding of the RAISE Grant for the MM Corridor will also improve an area of regional importance, where a new Intermediate School and City Park/Regional Sports Complex is under construction, which will lead to additional sports tourism opportunities for Southwest Missouri.

We appreciate your support and consideration for full funding of the RAISE Grant for the Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Crystal Webster', is written over a white background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'C' and 'W'.

Crystal Webster
Chief Executive Officer



Missouri State
U N I V E R S I T Y

January 11, 2024

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

Subject: Missouri State University Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Missouri State University supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity project.

This improvement project is vital to our region's transportation system by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over the BNSF railroad, including accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and turning a two-lane arterial into a five-lane facility. The connectivity and safety improvements will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The project will further bolster regional economic development by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and Highway 60. The creation of higher wage jobs along MM will provide opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02. This will increase the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing in the area will ensure affordable and accessible housing for a workforce looking to access Republic School District for their children. Funds for Hwy MM will also improve access to an area where a new intermediate school, park, and sports complex is planned for development. Your support will ensure the education and future prosperity of the next generation of area youth.

We appreciate your continued efforts to provide quality transportation investments across the United State and encourage your investment in this important project for southwest Missouri.

Sincerely,

Allen D. Kunkel, CECD
Associate Vice President for Economic Development

Ozarks Clean Air ALLIANCE

9 February 2024

The Honorable Peter Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Ozarks Clean Air Alliance, a 15-county member organization formed in 2008 and charged with improving air quality and managing local participation in the Ozone and PM Advance programs, is pleased to support the Highway MM: *Corridor of Opportunity* project. This project works to ease congestion in a rapidly growing area. It provides bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, as well as creates an opportunity for EV charging in an area with little access. These are all initiatives that work towards cleaner air in southwest Missouri.

Since OCAA's formation in 2008, significant improvements have been made in the region's air quality. The natural beauty of the Ozarks further highlights why it is imperative to maintain these improvements. The trails, rivers, and lakes in the region promote community health, quality of life, and serve as an important economic engine in attracting visitors and new businesses.

OCAA supports projects that decrease idling, provide alternative modes of transportation, and reduce tail pipe emissions that lead to the formation of Ozone and produce greenhouse gases. The Highway MM: *Corridor of Opportunity* project accomplishes this while supporting a growing and economically vital portion of the region.

We appreciate your consideration of the Highway MM: *Corridor of Opportunity* project and look forward to the continued efforts to preserve air quality in the Ozarks.

Sincerely,



Barbara J. Lucks
Chair



2023-2024 Board of Directors

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Susan Mattheis
*Office Manager &
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Jeff Owings
Soft Surface Trails Coordinator

National Recreation Trails

Frisco Highline Trail
Fulbright Spring Greenway
Galloway Creek Greenway
South Creek Greenway
Wilson's Creek Greenway

January 24, 2024

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

Subject: Ozark Greenways Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Ozark Greenways supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2023 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity project. If awarded, the project will realign and expand Missouri Highway MM, make safety improvements for all transportation network users, and improve trail connectivity for people who walk and bicycle.

This project will improve community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over the railroad, including accommodations for people who walk and bicycle, and improvements for vehicular capacity. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure and between people and trains.

The project will further bolster regional economic development by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and Highway 60. The development of living wage jobs along MM will provide opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02. This will increase the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing as well as apartments in the area will ensure affordable and accessible housing for a workforce looking to access Republic School District for their children. Funds for Hwy MM will also improve an area where a new intermediate school, park, and sports complex is planned.

Sincerely,

Mary Kromrey

Mary Kromrey
Executive Director

P&E Investments, Inc.

January 29, 2024

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

Subject: P&E Investments, Inc, Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

P&E Investments, Inc. supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization and MODOT to secure federal discretionary funding under the **2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant** for the **Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project**. If awarded, the Project will realign and expand State Highway MM from I-44 to US Highway 60.

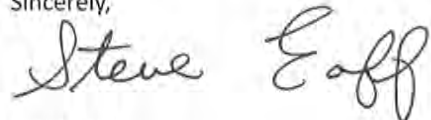
This Project will improve **Community Connectivity** by closing two At-Grade Railroad Crossings, constructing a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, and includes accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The Project will further bolster **Regional Economic Development** by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial and manufacturing development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and US Highway 60. Development potential will lead to additional **Living Wage Jobs** along the Corridor, providing employment opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02, and improving the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing in the area will ensure **affordable and accessible housing** for the growing workforce in our region. Funding of the RAISE Grant for the MM Corridor will also improve an area of regional importance, where a new Intermediate School and City Park/Regional Sports Complex is under construction, which will lead to additional **sports tourism opportunities for Southwest Missouri**.

We appreciate your support and consideration for full funding of the RAISE Grant for the Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project.

Sincerely,



Steve Eoff
President, P&E Investments, Inc.



REPUBLIC AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

January 10, 2024

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

Subject: BNSF Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Republic Area Chamber of Commerce and as a local business owner, I am writing to express our support for Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity grant through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program. The project will increase safety and economic vitality along the corridor with capacity expansion and at-grade railroad crossing closures.

The proposed project will provide for safer community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over the BNSF railroad, establishing a trail for bicycle and pedestrians, and expanding a two-lane arterial into a five-lane corridor. Improvements will allow for the managed growth of truck and commuter traffic along the corridor that connects Interstate 44 to James River Freeway and Highway 60.

The City of Republic continues to be one of the fastest growing regions in the state. Industrial expansion along MM provides quality jobs for families living in Republic and surrounding communities. Improvements to MM will allow for more job creation in a premier location for trucking, rail, commercial shopping, and rest stops.

As the Director of the Republic Area Chamber of Commerce, owner of two local small businesses, and a father of three, I can accurately tell you on behalf of the local community at large, these additions in infrastructure will be instrumental to the positive growth of our region. We appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter. Look forward to an improved transportation network that will allow the region to grow in a safe, planned manner.

Sincerely,

Macy Mitchell
Director of the Republic Chamber/Local Business Owner

Tyler Overstreet, Ed.D
Assistant Superintendent

Christy Coursey
Director of Elementary Learning

Allison Dishman, Ed.D
Director of Secondary Learning



REPUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Matt Pearce, Ed.D Superintendent of Schools

Jason Perkins
Executive Director of Operations

Josey McPhail
Director of Engagement and
Community Relations

Nikki Faith
Communications Specialist

January 19, 2024

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

Subject: Republic School District, Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Republic School District supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization and MODOT to secure federal discretionary funding under the **2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant** for the Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project. If awarded, the Project will realign and expand State Highway MM from I-44 to US Highway 60.

This Project will improve **Community Connectivity** by closing two At-Grade Railroad Crossings, constructing a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, and includes accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The Project will further bolster **Regional Economic Development** by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial and manufacturing development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and US Highway 60. Development potential will lead to additional **Living Wage Jobs** along the Corridor, providing employment opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02, and improving the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing in the area will ensure **affordable and accessible housing** for the growing workforce in our region. Funding of the RAISE Grant for the MM Corridor will also improve an area of regional importance, where a new Intermediate School and City Park/Regional Sports Complex is under construction, which will lead to additional sports tourism opportunities for Southwest Missouri.

We appreciate your support and consideration for full funding of the RAISE Grant for the Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project.

Sincerely,

Dr. Matt Pearce
Superintendent



February 10, 2024

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

Subject: SVN/Rankin Company, Letter of Support – Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

SVN/Rankin Company supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization and MODOT to secure federal discretionary funding under the **2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant** for the **Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project**. If awarded, the Project will realign and expand State Highway MM from I-44 to US Highway 60.


This Project will improve **Community Connectivity** by closing two At-Grade Railroad Crossings, constructing a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, and includes accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The Project will further bolster **Regional Economic Development** by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial and manufacturing development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and US Highway 60. Development potential will lead to additional **Living Wage Jobs** along the Corridor, providing employment opportunities for citizens living in **Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02**, and improving the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard.

The continued development of multi-family housing in the area will ensure **affordable and accessible housing** for the growing workforce in our region. Funding of the RAISE Grant for the MM Corridor will also improve an area of regional importance, where a new Intermediate School and City Park/Regional Sports Complex is under construction, which will lead to additional **sports tourism opportunities for Southwest Missouri**.

We appreciate your support and consideration for full funding of the RAISE Grant for the Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project.

Sincerely,



Thomas Rankin, CCIM
Owner/Broker

Rankin Company, LLC
2808 S. Ingram Mill Road, Ste. A100
Springfield, MO 65804
P. 417.887.8826 | F. 417.875.9233
www.svnrainco.com



February 16, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary, Buttigieg:

On behalf of Heart America Beverage, I am writing to express our support for Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity grant through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program. The project will increase safety and economic vitality along the corridor with capacity expansion and at-grade railroad crossing closures.

The proposed project will provide for safer community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over the BNSF railroad, providing a trail for bicycle and pedestrians, and turning a two-lane planned arterial into a five-lane corridor. The improvement will deliver the ability to manage the growing truck and commuter traffic along the corridor that connects Interstate 44 to multiple other major highways including US Highway 60.

The City of Republic is one of the fastest growing regions in the state. Highway MM serves as primary route to the Springfield-Branson National Airport as well as the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

We appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter and look forward to an improved transportation network that will allow the region to continue to grow in a safe, planned manner to bring connectivity and opportunity to all residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mindy Ferguson Hoff".

Mindy Ferguson Hoff
President
Heart of America Beverage Company
1700 S Empire
Springfield, Missouri 65802
Office 417-883-4333
Fax 417-883-9545

February 10, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary, Buttigieg:

On behalf of Magers Management Co, I, LP, I am writing to express our support for Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity grant through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program. The project will increase safety and economic vitality along the corridor with capacity expansion and at-grade railroad crossing closures.

The proposed project will provide for safer community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over the BNSF railroad, providing a trail for bicycle and pedestrians, and turning a two-lane planned arterial into a five-lane corridor. The improvement will deliver the ability to manage the growing truck and commuter traffic along the corridor that connects Interstate 44 to multiple other major highways including US Highway 60.

The City of Republic is one of the fastest growing regions in the state. Highway MM serves as primary route to the Springfield-Branson National Airport as well as the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

Randy Magers' commercial development company, Magers Management, announced plans for the "Iron Grain District," a unique mixed-use destination in Republic, Mo. The community-centered development, to be located at Republic's logistical epicenter near the Amazon warehouse and Convoy of Hope, will offer contemporary multi-family housing and townhomes within walking distance to new local dining, shopping, and entertainment.

The Iron Grain District will be the largest mixed-use development in the city of Republic. The nearly \$65 million community project's residential piece is anticipated to offer 200+ units, a pool, clubhouse, dog park, and walking trails.

A 24,000 square foot shopping center is planned for the first phase of development, with additional lots available for lease. Community-centered special events throughout the year will also be part of the holistic experience offered at the Iron Grain District.

We appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter and look forward to an improved transportation network that will allow the region to continue to grow in a safe, planned manner to bring connectivity and opportunity to all residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Shannon Handwerker".

Shannon Handwerker
Vice President of Operations
Magers Management Co. I, LP

February 1, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary, Buttigieg:

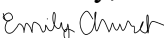
On behalf of Everything Kitchens, LLC, I am writing to express our support for Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity grant through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program. The project will increase safety and economic vitality along the corridor with capacity expansion and at-grade railroad crossing closures.

The proposed project will provide for safer community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over the BNSF railroad, providing a trail for bicycle and pedestrians, and turning a two-lane planned arterial into a five-lane corridor. The improvement will deliver the ability to manage the growing truck and commuter traffic along the corridor that connects Interstate 44 to multiple other major highways including US Highway 60.

The City of Republic is one of the fastest growing regions in the state. Highway MM serves as primary route to the Springfield-Branson National Airport as well as the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield.

We have approximately 125 employees in two locations, most of which use this corridor at least some of the time to travel to and from work, particularly the employees who work at our 6820 W. Kings location. With Amazon coming to the area, traffic is a bit more congested than usual.

We appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter and look forward to an improved transportation network that will allow the region to continue to grow in a safe, planned manner to bring connectivity and opportunity to all residents.

Sincerely,

Emily Church Carlton



February 27, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce and our nearly 1500 member businesses, I am writing to express support for Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity for consideration under the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program.

The Springfield region is on a trajectory of growth, and the City of Republic is one of the fastest growing communities in our state. The Highway MM Corridor of Opportunity Project aims to enhance safety, provide for alternative modes of transportation, and add capacity to a rural route that is rapidly becoming a regional economic hub. The improvements will deliver the ability to manage the growing truck and commuter traffic along the corridor that connects Interstate 44 to multiple other major highways including US Highway 60.

The project will address safety considerations by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over the BNSF railroad, providing a trail for bicycle and pedestrians, and turning a two-lane planned arterial into a five-lane corridor.

Transportation infrastructure is always a top priority of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce and the regional business community. We believe it is a pillar of economic growth and prosperity.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to an improved transportation network. This investment will allow the region to continue to grow in a safe, strategic manner to bring connectivity and opportunity to residents and businesses and to serve as a catalyst for continued growth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Morrow", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Matt Morrow
President
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce
PO Box 1687
Springfield, MO 65801

April 6, 2022



The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary, Buttigieg:

On behalf of Amazon, I am writing to express our support for Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity grant through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) discretionary grant program. The project will increase safety and economic vitality along the corridor with capacity expansion and at-grade railroad crossing closures.

Highway MM is critical for us to provide our 1400+ workforce safe passage to and from our site. The maintenance and integrity of this road is very important in our ability to provide our team members the ability to leave and arrive without potential congestion.

We appreciate your consideration and attention to this matter and look forward to an improved transportation network that will allow the region to continue to grow in a safe, planned manner to bring connectivity and opportunity to all residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T R Baltes", written over a horizontal line.

Tim R. Baltes
Human Resources Manager
STL3 – TNS Fulfillment Center
Amazon