

**Letters of Support Index**  
**Competitive Highway Bridge Grant**  
**Oklahoma Department of Transportation & Grant County Oklahoma**

**Project Parties**

- Grant County Board of Commissioner Resolution
- Cindy R. Bobbitt, (District 2) Grant County Commissioner
- Max L. Hess, (District 1) Grant County Commissioner
- Patrick J. Ronck, (District 3) Grant County Commissioner

**GRANT COUNTY, OKLAHOMA  
RESOLUTION #2018-147A**

**In Support of Grant County and Oklahoma Department of Transportation  
Application for Funding Opportunity for Rural States  
Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP) AND County Improvement for Roads & Bridges (CIRB)**

**WHEREAS**, The Federal Highway Administration published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) in the Federal Register for rural states to compete for \$225 million in Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP) grants; and

**WHEREAS**, Bridges are an integral part of Americas infrastructure; and

**WHEREAS**, These CHBP funds will help rural states and counties ensure that their bridges remain safe and well-maintained; and

**WHEREAS**, These funds must be used for bridge replacement or rehabilitation projects on public roads that leverage the efficiencies associated with bundling at least two bridge projects into a single contract; and

**WHEREAS**, Grant County will dedicate \$476,000.00 of Federal Funds in Fiscal Year 2021 (*included in the amount shown immediately below*) through the County Improvement for Roads & Bridges 5 Year Plan (CIRB) funds; and

**WHEREAS**, Grant County will move the following CIRB projects to out years (JP # 31836, JP #29862, JP #29861) for the 5 Year Plan, totaling \$2,751,000.00 for the CHBP application (*\$476,000.00 federal funds and \$2,275,000.00 county funds*); and

**WHEREAS**, Grant County will dedicate \$30,000.00 per month for FY 2020 and FY 2021 from their County Bridge and Road Improvement #1103 Fund; and

**WHEREAS**, Grant County faces a great challenge to ensure that the county can build and maintain a safe, efficient infrastructure system that allows Oklahoma and Grant County to remain competitive in an increasingly global marketplace; and

**WHEREAS**, ODOT will be submitting a CHBP grant application to showcase a new innovation in Oklahoma to bundle thirty-four (34) like-kind bridges in Grant County; and

**WHEREAS**, The plan proposal for the bridges will include three (3) to five (5) new bridge designs that will become standardized for all 77 counties use in the future; and

**WHEREAS**, the new bridge design will include new innovations of pre-fabrications and time-savings; and

**WHEREAS**, Grant County is a member of the Circuit Engineering District (CED) 8, which includes ODOT Divisions 4 and 6, that prepares and maintains 5-year Construction Work Plans; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Grant County Board of Commissioners in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation support the application to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP) grant that will include the bundling of thirty-four (34) Grant County bridges into a single contract for an approximate total cost of \$10.3 million.

Approved this 26<sup>th</sup> day of November 2018

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
GRANT COUNTY, OKLAHOMA**

  
Cindy R. Bobbitt, Chairman

  
Patrick J. Ronck, Vice Chairman

  
Max L. Hess, Member



ATTEST:  
  
Cindy Pratt, County Clerk

# GRANT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

112 E. Guthrie – Room 104 – Courthouse  
Medford, Oklahoma 73759  
Courthouse Phone 580-395-2214 – Courthouse FAX 580-395-2603  
Dessie Scott, Executive Assistant

## **Max L. Hess**

### **Member**

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## **Cindy R. Bobbitt**

### **Chair**

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## **Patrick Ronck**

### **Vice-Chair**

District 3 Commissioner  
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November 5, 2018

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Competitive Highway Bridge Program Grant Application:  
Oklahoma Department of Transportation and Grant County, Oklahoma

Dear Secretary Chao,

This letter is in full support of the Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP) grant application being submitted by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (DOT) in partnership with Grant County to bundle Grant County owned bridges.

Innovation! Now that is what the bundling of thirty-four (34) county owned bridges of like-kind is all about. A very small handful of other state departments of transportation (DOTs), local agencies, and tribal governments have used this new innovation. However, it has been proven with just a few completed projects; they have reduced costs and streamlined design and construction. Bundling allowed them to take advantage of funding opportunities and quickly address critical bridge projects in a very short turn-around adding time savings as well. Grant County and the Oklahoma Department of Transportation want to mirror this success.

According to the latest U.S. Census, Grant County has grown their economy at a robust rate with real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at \$235.5 million in 2016, up from \$110 million in 2010. Job growth rate grew over 10 percent during that same period of time while unemployment as of August 2018 stood at 1.6 percent, the lowest in Oklahoma. Unbelievable, but this was all accomplished by a small rural county with a population of only 4,500 people!

Grant County is well known for our agricultural innovations, including our three wind farms and our new 120-unit car train loading facility, just opened in 2016, to transport grain across the country for export, adding not only to the U.S. economy but to the global economy as well. Another major economic impact not to be ignored is the impact agriculture has on food and fiber markets. Improvements in Grant County agriculture have led to consistent increases in food and fiber availability. Americans have gone from spending over half of their income on food, to a small percentage today.

Grant County is responsible for a substantial amount of infrastructure. There are 1,920 public road miles that run through Grant County, 92 percent of which are owned and maintained by the county with the

balance maintained by the state. Grant County alone has over 3,000 bridge or bridge-like structures, including 535 bridges captured by the National Bridge Inventory with 174 county-owned bridges rated as structurally deficient! Bridges are an integral part of not only Grant County's infrastructure, but more importantly in America's infrastructure.

Many of Grant County bridges have already or are rapidly approaching their intended lifespan. Grant County bridges average age is 60 plus years, well over the nation's average age of 43. As a result, structure performance is reduced, leading to potentially adverse impacts to quality of life, mobility, travel time, freight movements, and emergency response times. Often the most pressing needs are on the county system, as evidenced by bridges that are being posted for reduced loads and/or closed completely.

My greatest challenge as a County Commissioner is ensuring that we can build and maintain a safe, efficient infrastructure system that allows Grant County and Oklahoma to remain competitive in an increasingly global marketplace. In reality we need to be investing well above the current insufficient levels. A state or county just trying to stay afloat isn't going to be in a position to compete in the global economy against other entities or other countries that are rapidly increasing their infrastructure investment.

Lastly, this project will help achieve critical national objectives that the President has consistently emphasized that the Nation's infrastructure needs to be rebuilt and modernized to create jobs, maintain America's economic competitiveness, and connect communities and people to more opportunities. One Key Principle is to "**Make Targeted Federal Investments**. When federal funds are provided, they should be awarded to projects that address problems that are a high priority from the perspective of a region or the Nation, or projects that lead to long-term changes in how infrastructure is designed, built and maintained."

This project meets the President's objective and principle by bundling bridges within the Grant County region that leads to long-term changes in streamlining design, single source contracting, and reduced construction procurement time. Replacing these 34 bridges in Grant County will reduce the county's structurally deficient bridges by 20 percent, connect communities and people while creating more job opportunities, and improve our economic competitiveness by increasing the movement of freight through the unit train facility.

As a Grant County Commissioner that is responsible for these bridges, I respectfully request your careful consideration to award a CHBP Grant to assist Oklahoma DOT and Grant County with this important economic development initiative.

Respectfully,



Cindy R. Bobbitt

# GRANT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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## **Max L. Hess**

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November 6, 2018

### **The Honorable**

Secretary Elaine L. Chao  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590  
United States

Dear Secretary Chao:

My name is Max Hess and I am a Grant County Commissioner. I became a commissioner in 2003. My goal as commissioner for district # 1 was to improve the bridges. It quickly became apparent the ages of the bridges and their deterioration was requiring more work and the cost was escalating at a faster pace than funds available. In turn, we had to close bridges. This can become a liability for the county. Sometimes temporary low water crossings have been used to allow people access across the creek. This is only a temporary solution and is used until funds are available to replace the bridge. Grant County is in North Central Oklahoma, having 174 structurally deficient bridges more than any other county in Oklahoma

I would appreciate your support for the State of Oklahoma's application to secure funding to replace 34 bridges on rural roads in our county. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation is seeking financial assistance thru the CHBP Grant to help them in providing safe and efficient roads and highway system that will support the economy of small towns, counties, and farms in Grant Oklahoma. This effort will assist in revitalizing the agricultural, farm, and oil production businesses in this part of the state.

The idea of bundling bridges has been used by Grant County when they bundled 14 bridges together and found it to be very effective and cost saving. Grant County saved approximately 140,000 by using this process.

To explain a bit about Grant County, the population is 4523 which includes about

10% Native Americans, the largest minority in the county. The county seat is Medford, Oklahoma and just about everyone in the county's towns and cities will be positively impacted by the improved bridges. School buses, mail carriers, farmers, grain producers and others will be able to avoid detours that take valuable time from their day if these bridges are improved.

Grant County faces a great challenge to ensure that the county can build and maintain a safe, efficient infrastructure system that allows Oklahoma and Grant County to remain competitive in the marketplace.

We see this as an opportunity to promote economic growth in our area and to bring hope for the future of our County at a time when economic problems control our ability to bring infrastructure improvements and therefore inhibit growth.

Grant County, Oklahoma, located immediately south of the Kansas border, looks forward to your support of this worthy project that we feel confident will help our County to thrive and grow by retaining current jobs and providing new opportunities for our rural area of Oklahoma.

Sincerely,



Max L Hess,  
Grant County Commissioner

CC: J. Michael Patterson, Oklahoma Secretary of Transportation

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November 6, 2018

The Honorable  
Elaine L. Chao, Secretary of Transportation  
US Department of Transportation  
100 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Madam Chao:

We are excited to partner with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation in applying for the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP) grant. It is exciting to work with our State Transportation Department to be able to accomplish something as substantial as this bridge project will be. The boost to our local infrastructure will be significant.

Grant County's income is mainly derived from farming. Oklahoma farmers are the fifth largest contributors of agricultural products in the United States. To help our farmers compete in the national market we must be able to get our products (wheat, hay, cotton, soybeans, cattle, and hogs) to distribution centers. Our rural county bridges barely keep up with normal vehicle usage let alone the newer, larger tractors and combines. The larger machinery is overwhelming our current bridges. We also need to be able to provide transportation to wind farms, solar farms, and oil fields daily. We work diligently to provide good school and mail routes. However, we still have roads that are needed for our economy vitality. These roads support hunters, windfarm and oil field workers, and emergency services to our rural constituents.

As the District 3 Commissioner I see the importance of keeping our infrastructure as updated as possible. Our application gives us the opportunity to work with ODOT to showcase a new innovative way by bundling thirty-four (34) like-kind bridges in Grant County. This includes three (3) to five (5) new bridge designs that will become the new standard. The new innovations of pre-fabrication and the time savings items are unique to bridge building. By leveraging the monies between ODOT and CED we will be able to provide a much-needed boost to our rural infrastructure.

Thank you for reviewing our grant. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Patrick J. Ronck  
Grant County District 3 Commissioner