

February 6, 2024

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

RE: Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant opportunity for Bridging the Gap: New Multimodal Connections over the Oklahoma River

Honorable Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I am writing to voice our organization's strong support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for the RAISE Grant for Bridging the Gap: New Multimodal Connections over the Oklahoma River. This project is a marquis project in the downtown core of Oklahoma City. This RAISE Grant application is to construct a separate bicycle and pedestrian bridge adjacent to I-35 as a component of the I-35 bridge replacement project.

Perhaps the most unique aspect of this I-35 bridge replacement project is the tremendous community impact that the bridge will offer the Oklahoma City community. Since the I-35 bridges were built over three decades ago, the Oklahoma River has been dammed and is now host to elite national rowing races. In addition, near the edge of the river is the new Riversport Complex which is home to US Olympic Team training.

Along the edge of downtown Oklahoma City runs the scenic Oklahoma River, a 7-mile-long waterway with 13 miles of paved trails that have reinvented outdoor recreation in the capital city. The new bridge would provide a safer independent facility for bicycle and pedestrian access to the amenities on both sides of the river. This will link to 10 interconnected trails that cover over 80 miles and can take you to almost every point in Oklahoma City. This project includes connections to the new Horizons District, including the First Americans Museum, with the historically disadvantaged Capitol Hill District.

ACOG strongly supports the New Multimodal Connections over the Oklahoma River Project in Oklahoma County for its vital contribution, and we urge your support of full funding for the project. We appreciate your consideration of ODOT's proposal. If we can provide any additional information for this effort, please feel free to contact me at (405) 234-2264 or [msweeney@acogok.org](mailto:msweeney@acogok.org).

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP  
Executive Director