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Friday, February 16, 2024

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

RE: Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant opportunity for **Multimodal Improvements to Safely Connect Tulsa at US-75 and 81st Street Interchange**

Honorable Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of Bike Oklahoma, I am writing to voice our organization's strong support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for the RAISE Grant for Multimodal Improvements to Safely Connect Tulsa at US-75 and 81st Street Interchange.

Current conditions make crossing US-75 on 81st Street challenging for bicyclist and pedestrians. At this time 81st Street under US-75 has a one-foot shoulder against a retaining wall giving bicycle and pedestrian users very little room to use the facility. There is inadequate room to expand roadway width under the bridge which does not allow for the addition of multimodal infrastructure. A lengthy detour, along with other non-ideal crossing conditions at other locations, discourages alternative modes of transportation and generates a barrier for people without vehicles. This creates isolation for non-motorist users on each side of the highway.

This connection is near the Turkey Mountain Recreation Area, as well as additional bicycle transportation infrastructure. 61st, 71st, and 91st Street have shown success with the amount of space for bicyclists and pedestrians those overpasses and underpasses provide. This project looks to provide the same safe opportunities for 81st Street, providing consistency and enhanced safe connectivity for active transportation.

In an effort to provide safe connectivity within West Tulsa, ODOT proposes to reconstruct the interchange with expansion of the US-75 bridge, and tie a multi-use trail along the interchange into the current trail system that Tulsa has created, continuing the progress Tulsa has made regarding Vision Zero and Complete Streets. A RAISE Grant award will help ODOT invest in resilient infrastructure that encourages multimodal transportation choices by adding multi-use trails under a new bridge. This network improvement eases the obstacle of crossing US-75 for bicyclist, pedestrians, and other users without motor vehicles.

Bike Oklahoma strongly supports the Multimodal Improvements to Safely Connect Tulsa at US-75 and 81st Street Interchange and urge your support of full funding for the project. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Carfang".

Tony Carfang
President, Bike Oklahoma