

November 21, 2023

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

RE: Bridging the Gap: Multimodal Connections on I-35 over the Oklahoma River

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This letter is to express the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) support on behalf of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) for their application for the Bridge Investment Program (BIP). This project would improve the connection of I-35 over the Oklahoma River, ensuring that this critical corridor will continue to serve the state and nation's interstate system.

Interstate 35 in Oklahoma City intersects two other major east-west freight corridors, I-40 and I-44, making the I-35 bridges in Oklahoma City critically located at the crossroads of intercontinental movement, linking the west and east coasts to major urban areas throughout the country. The existing northbound and southbound I-35 bridges that cross the Oklahoma River do not meet the current and future demands of a highly travelled interstate corridor. The two bridges in Oklahoma City provide access for nearly 18,000 trucks per day. ODOT has identified the corridor as a freight bottleneck. Additionally, neighborhoods south of the river lack connections to Central Oklahoma City for access to healthcare, education, and employment.

The project proposes to replace the two existing I-35 bridges over the Oklahoma River, including a ramp bridge connection, and the addition of a pedestrian bridge to provide multimodal access across the river. ODOT has secured commitments from the City of Oklahoma City to contribute to the pedestrian, bike, and scooter bridge. Completion of this project would provide safety for freight and pedestrians, increase capacity for future generations, and allow for continued contributions to the national economy.

Thank you in advance for your strong consideration of ODOT's application for the Bridge Investment Program.

Sincerely,



John M. Sharp
Deputy Director

Attachment