

October 29, 2024

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

Re: Bridge Investment Program for I-35 at Waterloo Road

Dear 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 (ODOT) application for the Bridge Investment Program (BIP). This project would improve the connection of I-35, ensuring that this critical corridor will continue to serve the state and nation's interstate system.

The area around I-35 at Waterloo Road has experienced significant growth recently in both residential and commercial development, making the current interchange design deficient. This increase in freight and vehicular traffic causes congestion along I-35 between Waterloo Road and Oklahoma City, just to the south. These two bridges are at risk of becoming structurally deficient in the next three years and experience frequent bridge strike by oversized loads due to sub-standard vertical clearance of 13 feet 1 inch.

This project will replace the two existing I-35 bridges over Waterloo with two 60-foot-wide bridges on existing right of way, as a component of a larger diverging diamond interchange reconfiguration. The vertical clearance of the bridge will be increased to provide 16 feet 11 inches of clearance, helping prevent further bridge strikes from oversized loads. The longer bridge span will increase the width of the underpass, providing additional space for potential pedestrian access. This project will promote a safer, more resilient network, increasing the quality of life for all users.

Thank you in advance for your strong consideration of ODOT's application for the Bridge Investment Program. Please contact our offices if you need any further assistance as you consider this important proposal.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director