



THE CITY OF  
OKLAHOMA CITY

**Mayor David Holt**

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February 28, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
United States Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)  
Grant opportunity for **Bridging the Gap: New Multimodal Connections on I-35  
over the Oklahoma River**

Dear Honorable Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the City of Oklahoma City, I am writing to voice our city's strong support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for the RAISE Grant for Bridging the Gap: New Multimodal Connections on I-35 over the Oklahoma River. The Interstate 35 bridges are near the downtown core of Oklahoma City, and are perilously close to becoming structurally deficient at future bridge inspection. They are vital to the nation's transportation system as well as our city's.

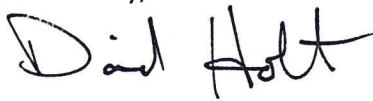
In addition to their highly important vehicular purposes, these bridges also impact our community in other unique ways. Since these current bridges were built over three decades ago, the Oklahoma River has evolved into one of the world's most important rowing destinations. Public and private investment in this area of the Oklahoma River has led to Oklahoma City hosting numerous high-profile international rowing and canoe/kayak competitions and being named an official U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Training site. The new bridges would be engineered to respect this new use. The new bridges would also present an opportunity for a stronger architectural statement than is made by the current bridges. It is worth noting that is an aspect of the initiative to which the City of Oklahoma City is potentially willing to contribute.

The new bridges can also assist our connectivity to other modes and attractions that have developed since the construction of the current bridges. Along the edge of downtown Oklahoma City runs the scenic Oklahoma River, a 7-mile-long waterway lined by 13 miles of paved trails that have reinvented outdoor recreation in our capital city. The new I-35 bridges would accommodate bicycle and pedestrians, separated from traffic with a concrete barrier. Access to the paved trails on both the sides of the river will be provided off the new I-35 bridges. This will improve the access to ten interconnected trails that cover over 80 miles and can take users to almost every point in Oklahoma City. This project will also include connections to the recently opened \$200 million First Americans Museum – honoring our Native and Indigenous people - and the largely Hispanic Capitol Hill district and Historically Disadvantaged Community located on the south side of the Oklahoma River.

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The City of Oklahoma City strongly supports the New Multimodal Connections on I-35 over the Oklahoma River Project in Oklahoma County for its vital contribution to the region, state and nation. We strongly urge your support of full funding for the project. Thank you for your consideration and please feel free to call on us should you have questions or if you require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Holt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end of the "t".

David Holt  
Mayor