



Tuesday, 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 **Multimodal Improvements to Safely Connect Tulsa at US-75 and 81st Street Interchange**

Honorable Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the River Parks Authority, 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.

In an effort to provide safe access to economic opportunities along US-75 in West Tulsa, ODOT proposes to reconstruct the interchange with expansion of the US-75 bridge, allowing additional transportation choices. ODOT will tie a multi-use trail along the interchange into the current trail system plans that Tulsa has created. This project promotes a safe network for equitable use to economic opportunities by providing these trail connections. 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 vehicles.

The River Parks Authority strongly supports the Multimodal Improvements to Safely Connect Tulsa at US-75 and 81st Street Interchange 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,

Jeff Edwards, CPRP
Executive Director & CEO
River Parks Authority