

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 27, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We are pleased to write this letter in support of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's (ODOT) application for funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program. The *Hochatown Community Access and Pedestrian Safety Project* will upgrade a six-mile section of US-259 in the newly formed City of Hochatown in rural, southeast Oklahoma which has seen substantial growth over the past decade.

Hochatown has become a popular attraction for many across Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas. Adjacent to Broken Bow Lake and Beavers Bend State Park, along with numerous other attractions and businesses, this area of Southeast Oklahoma has become a hub for tourism and economic development. Unfortunately, increased growth and development has led to increased traffic congestion and safety challenges. The current, two-lane roadway lacks shoulders or turn lanes, making vehicle movements challenging across the corridor. Particularly with increased recreational vehicles and freight movement along the corridor, delays and collisions have become frequent. Pedestrians and bicyclists have struggled to safely cross US-259 or travel along the corridor.

The *Hochatown Community Access and Pedestrian Safety Project* seeks to alleviate these challenges by expanding the roadway capacity, providing safety and operational improvements, and improved access management. The proposed project improvements include intersection safety improvements, new curbs and gutters, new shoulders, and speed reduction signage. ODOT also looks to address alternative, multimodal transportation options and ADA access by providing accessibility through sidewalks and a potential multiuse pathway. The improved US-259 will help sustain the growth that Hochatown has seen in recent years and incentivize further economic development. Completion of the project will create a modernized, safer expanded highway with multimodal improvements to support connectivity along the corridor and improve overall conditions for the community and visitors alike.

Thank you in advance for your strong consideration of ODOT's application for funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program. Please contact our offices should you need any further assistance as you consider this important proposal.

Sincerely,



James Lankford  
United States Senator



Markwayne Mullin  
United States Senator



Josh Brecheen  
Member of Congress