

April 9, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
Secretary, United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

SUBJECT: Support for the City of Oskaloosa's **Oskaloosa Bypass Planning Study** BUILD Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

I would like to extend my support to the City of Oskaloosa's application for the BUILD Discretionary Grant (BUILD Grant). The City's proposed planning study, known as the **Oskaloosa Bypass Planning Study**, is vital to the transportation connectivity and economy of not only the city but of the entire region.

Completing the planning study – a study of a system of bypasses encircling the City of Oskaloosa – will ensure the safe, efficient movement of people and goods for decades to come. It will also serve as the primary blueprint for efficient and planned economic development of the City of Oskaloosa, in particular, and Mahaska County in general.

The goals of the Planning Study include:

- Maintain community access to jobs
- Improve connectivity for freight which currently must traverse through urban areas
- Incorporate the planned growth of companies currently located in the planning area
- Enhance multimodal transportation and promote walkability and safe bicycling routes throughout the planning area
- Provide safe routes for students of the William Penn University from Campus to Downtown areas
- Revitalize the downtown residential community, including low income housing
- Improve connectivity to neighborhoods and communities throughout the metro area and beyond
- Improve access to areas that would be available for economic expansion as certified sites, residential subdivisions and associated economic development.
- Provide a planned approach to a potential Transfer of Jurisdiction of US HWY 63, Iowa HWY 92 and Iowa HWY 23 from the Iowa DOT to the local City and County jurisdictions, in accordance with Section 306.8 of the Iowa Code.

I am pleased to support the City of Oskaloosa's BUILD Grant application for the **Oskaloosa Bypass Planning Study**. This project is important to the economic vitality of the region. The plan will allow the City and Mahaska County to develop a plan for growth and improve the quality of life of their residents and economic development of the region.

Sincerely,



Scott C. Marler, Director