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April 15th, 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 am writing to extend the support of Regional Planning Affiliation 15 to the City of Oskaloosa's application for the BUILD discretionary grant for the **Oskaloosa Bypass Planning Study**. The study is consistent with the goals of the RPA's Long-Range Transportation Plan, Forward 2040. This study is essential to improve the transportation connectivity and economy of the City of Oskaloosa and the region.

This study, a study of a system of bypasses around Oskaloosa, will ensure a safe and dependable movement of people and goods for many decades. It will also serve as primary blueprint for economic development and quality of life improvements for the City of Oskaloosa, specifically, and Mahaska County in general.

The goals of the Oskaloosa Bypass Planning Study include:

- Maintain access to jobs in the community.
- Improve freight connectivity which currently traverses through the urban area.
- Incorporate the planned growth of employers.
- Enhance multimodal transportation and promote non-motorized transportation within the planning area.
- Provide safe routes for William Penn University students from Campus to Downtown.
- Revitalize the downtown residential community, including low income housing.
- Improve access to areas available for economic expansion as certified sites, residential subdivisions and associated economic development.

I am pleased to offer Regional Planning Affiliation 15's support to the City of Oskaloosa's BUILD Grant application for the Oskaloosa Bypass Planning Study as it is consistent with the goals of the RPA's Long-Range Transportation Plan. This project is important to the economic well being of not only the city and county, but also the region. The plan will allow the City of Oskaloosa and Mahaska County to develop a blueprint for growth and improve the quality of life of their residents and provide economic development of the region.

Sincerely,

Chris Kukla, Transportation Director