



Mahaska County Board of Supervisors

106 S. 1st St · Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577 · PH: 641-673-3469

supervisors@mahaskacounty.org

July 12, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Support for the City of Oskaloosa's **Oskaloosa Bypass Planning Study** RAISE Grant Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The proposed **Mahaska Oskaloosa Driving Success (MODES) Planning Study** is an exciting opportunity for Mahaska County. The MODES Planning Study touches upon many priorities for our community such as enhancing access to retail, manufacturing, multiple healthcare providers, and providing a safer route for all community members that walk, run, or ride on our numerous sidewalks, roads and trails. The MODES Planning Study will also help our community achieve safer, more efficient, and faster routes for trucks delivering vital goods manufactured in Mahaska County. These goods are delivered and used not just in Iowa but are delivered to more than 140 countries across the globe.

The MODES Planning Study is an important component to the City, County, and private industry partners as we look to effectively connect our community by rerouting traffic around the current US HWY 63, Iowa HWY 92 and Iowa HWY 23 routes that run through the heart of the community. The current routes require trucks and other heavy vehicles to travel through the center of our county seat's historic downtown. The routes cause them to increase trip times (increased costs) and encounter additional safety hazards as they work through an urban setting that includes traffic signals, increased vehicle traffic, and pedestrians/pedestrian crossings. The crash rate for the current routes within the City is 20% higher than Statewide average for Urban Areas; a statistic the City, County, and Iowa DOT are working to reduce in this partnership.

The MODES Planning Study not only helps to improve transportation infrastructure, but it will also provide a planning blueprint to improve the quality of life for residents and businesses along the corridor. This is accomplished by providing the City and County a guide for updating current and future land use and zoning plans that are outdated and past their shelf-life. Updated plans are important to our current industries as well as future/potential industries that contemplate making investments in their facilities and expand workforce that live in and around Mahaska County.

The MODES Planning Study is a necessary and worthwhile investment that will carry long lasting and meaningful impact on the economic viability of our community.

The Mahaska County Board of Supervisors enthusiastically support this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Wanders", written in a cursive style.

Steve Wanders

Mahaska County Board of Supervisors.