



September 27, 2024

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

Secretary Buttigieg,

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation fully supports the Circuit Engineering District 8 (CED 8) application for Bridge Investment Program (BIP) grant funding to replace four bridges in three rural counties in northwest Oklahoma, all located in the panhandle. This grant will improve four bridges in poor or fair condition, which have insufficient widths for rural major collectors and the roads' agricultural and energy sector uses and elements that do not meet current design standards.

These bridges are all between 51 and 64 years old and are approaching the end of their useful lives. This package of bridges requires significant investment to reduce the number of bridges in poor or fair condition, which do not meet current geometric design standards for safety, efficiency, and reliability of travel.

CED 8 is responsible for 14 counties in one of the most rural parts of Oklahoma. With limited funding, the CED cannot meet all the infrastructure needs within its boundaries. BIP funding would allow CED 8 to let a single contract for all four bridges included in this request and take advantage of the cost and time savings of bundling.

This project will support the critical state of good repair, safety, and mobility goals for Oklahoma's county bridge system and the residents and economy of the northwest region. The Oklahoma Department of Transportation strongly supports this application and requests your favorable review.

Sincerely,

Tim J. Gatz,
Executive Director