

July 12, 2019

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

## 2019 BUILD GRANT – 3<sup>RD</sup> STREET NE BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION/RAIL RAISE

The North Dakota Department of Transportation supports the joint application of the city of Minot and the Souris River Joint Board for the 2019 BUILD Transportation Grant related to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Northeast Bridge Reconstruction and Rail Raise project in Minot, North Dakota. This project is a critical component of a multi-jurisdictional effort to replace outdated infrastructure while increasing the resiliency of the community and industry to flooding.

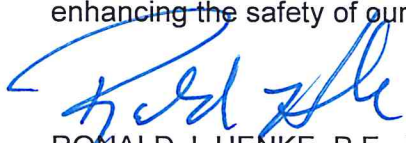
The 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Northeast Bridge is located on a local federal aid route and the existing infrastructure is reaching the end of its useful life. As a Class I railroad operating in North Dakota, the BNSF Railway plays a major role in the region's economic success. As the major east-west freight corridor along the northern tier of the country, the BNSF Railway's Northern Transcon is vitally important to the region, and the project being contemplated by the city of Minot, Souris River Joint Board, and BNSF Railway will enhance the resilience of this national asset.

The project is also located in an Opportunity Zone, meaning that investments in this neighborhood will help alleviate economic stresses caused by decades of inattention and lack of investment in this area of the community.

The North Dakota Department of Transportation is supportive of this project, which will provide local and national benefit by:

- Increasing the resilience of the BNSF Northern Transcon
- Replacing the 80-year old 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Northeast viaduct
- Enhancing rail, vehicle, pedestrian, resident, and business safety
- Assisting Minot's low to moderate income population; and
- Investing and restoring confidence in an Opportunity Zone

We respectfully ask for the full support of the USDOT in achieving the vision of enhanced flood resilience for our community and industry partners, while simultaneously increasing the resilience and enhancing the safety of our nation's transportation system.



RONALD J. HENKE, P.E., INTERIM DIRECTOR

17/rjg/sas