



CENTRAL OKLAHOMA FEDERAL PRIORITIES

COMPILED BY:

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Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
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ACOG SERVICE AREA MAP



ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

INCREASE EDA PARTNERSHIP PLANNING FUNDING IN FY 2027 APPROPRIATIONS

For the first time in 20 years, Congress has reauthorized the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA). On January 4, 2025, the *Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024* (Senate Bill 4367) was signed into law, following its passage in the House and Senate with overwhelming bipartisan support. Title II of the legislation, the *Economic Development Reauthorization Act of 2024*, reauthorizes the EDA. ACOG greatly appreciates your strong support for this much needed legislation.

Funding Request for EDA Partnership Planning in FY 2027

Congress should increase FY 2027 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations funding for EDA Partnership Planning to at least **\$110 million**. This is the Congressionally authorized funding level for EDA Partnership Planning.

Economic Development Administration	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027 NADO Request
EDA Overall Appropriation	\$333 million	\$346 million	\$373.5 million	\$498 million	\$468 million	\$468 million	\$466 million	—
Total - Economic Development Assistance Programs	\$292.5 million	\$305.5 million	\$330 million	\$430 million	\$400 million	\$400 million	\$400 million	\$645 million , which is the authorized funding level for core programs
Partnership Planning	\$33 million	\$33.5 million	\$34.5 million	\$36 million	\$34.5 million	\$34.5 million	\$34.5 million	\$110 million , which is the authorized funding level for Partnership Planning

Why Are Economic Development Districts (EDDs) Like ACOG Important?

Local communities rely on EDDs, because:

- EDDs station trusted economic development professionals in local communities across the country.
- EDDs implement local projects, leverage private sector funding, broker deals with companies and industry partners, ensure the readiness of industrial sites for businesses, and help create jobs for American workers.
- EDDs support rural America, working-class communities, and economically challenged regions.
- EDDs properly administer and steward EDA funding, and they help other local EDA grantees do the same.
- EDDs help identify which local projects are of greatest importance to local workers, businesses, and families.
- EDDs are required by EDA to develop Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS). EDDs provide local planning expertise, which lays the foundation for successful project implementation.

How Much Funding is Provided to Economic Development Districts Currently?

Partnership Planning funds provide financial support primarily for **Economic Development Districts (EDDs)**. Divided among the more than 400 EDDs across the country, as well as other EDA stakeholders, the current appropriations level for Partnership Planning results in **each individual EDD receiving only \$70,000 annually**. This amount of \$70K per organization is barely enough to cover one full-time staff person. Most EDDs cover numerous counties, cities, and towns, so one staff person covering such a large region is already stretched very thin. Furthermore, in order for each EDD to receive their \$70,000 distribution, the EDD typically must provide local matching funds.

If appropriators were to provide Partnership Planning funding at the level of the authorized amount of **\$110 million for FY 2027**, this would allow each Economic Development District (EDD) to receive closer to **\$250,000 per organization annually**, which would finally allow for sufficient staffing and funding to carry out planning responsibilities that are mandated by EDA. **The current allocation is \$70,000 per EDD annually and has not been increased since 2004.**

Until recently, the appropriated funding level for the **EDA Partnership Planning** appropriations line item had **remained stagnant at \$33 million** for decades. Beginning in FY 2021, appropriators began incrementally increasing this line item, however the Partnership Planning funding level in FY 2024 fell back down to **\$34.5 million** where it has remained. Generally, the appropriation level for Partnership Planning has continued to remain nearly flat for decades, even while EDA's overall appropriation has continued to receive substantial increases over time.

Incremental Increases Too Small for EDA to Provide Funds Directly to EDD Stakeholders

The Congressionally appropriated annual increases for Partnership Planning over the past five years have been so minor that **EDA has made an administrative decision not to provide any additional planning funds** directly to EDDs. No increase in annual funding levels was provided by EDA to its local EDD stakeholders in FY 2021, FY 2022, or FY 2023, **despite the Congressionally appropriated increases** for Partnership Planning during each of those years. Funding levels also remained flat in FY2024 and FY2025 given no increases in Congressional appropriations.

Given the small nature of recent annual appropriations increases for this line item, along with the steadily growing volume of EDDs becoming designated every year and other stakeholders also vying for these resources, EDA has not provided any additional EDA Partnership Planning funding to local EDD stakeholders. For these reasons, **Congressional action is critically needed to increase EDA Partnership Planning funding in FY 2027.**

SUSTAIN OPERATIONS AND INVESTMENT IN TINKER AFB

Continue support of the U.S. Air Force's mission critical growth and expansion objectives at Tinker Air Force Base. The Base is a vital economic engine for Central Oklahoma. **This support includes necessary improvements for increased access along Douglas Blvd. and the expansion of Highway I-40 to six lanes from Douglas Blvd. to Shawnee.**

SUPPORT THE MIKE MONRONEY AERONAUTIC CENTER (FAA)/ASSOCIATED FEDERAL AGENCIES

Maintain the continued viability of the Mike Monroney Aeronautic Center (over 6,300 employees) as a strategically important national asset for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and further support the continuation of its other essential federal government activities in the state. (The facility trains approximately 76,000 students each year.) Please note that **ACOG opposes any**

changes that would diminish the full utilization and viability of this facility, which provides a valuable economic impact for the region.

SUSTAIN THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF OKC WILL ROGERS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

One of our major regional economic assets is OKC Will Rogers International Airport. We appreciate our congressional delegation's ongoing support for Oklahoma City's airport infrastructure projects. **Will Rogers, like most major airports, is experiencing the impact of a nationwide airline pilot and air traffic control shortage.** Your assistance in addressing this important issue both from a travel safety and efficiency perspective would be greatly appreciated.

CLOSE ONLINE SALES TAX LOOPHOLE

- Many studies and projections demonstrate that e-commerce Internet sales and other types of remote purchases (e.g., booking online travel services which impact transient occupancy taxes, rental car taxes, and business gross receipt taxes) are accelerating at a rapid pace. Thus, **uncollected, or under-collected taxes could comprise a major share of all tax collections, rendering sales and use taxes ineffective.**
- **ACOG supports passage of e-fairness legislation like the Marketplace Fairness Act (MFA, previously introduced as Senate Bill 976) and/or the Remote Transactions Parity Act (previously introduced as House of Representatives Bill 2193) that will bring our sales tax system into the 21st Century and prevent continued tax revenue losses and remove the competitive advantage now enjoyed by remote sellers.** This is a high priority issue for cities in Oklahoma as they do not receive ad valorem tax revenue, unlike municipalities in all other states, and are primarily dependent on sales tax revenue for funding operational services.

PROTECT MUNICIPAL BONDS

- **ACOG opposes any attempt to eliminate or limit the traditional tax exemption for municipal bonds, whether as a part of a deficit reduction plan, a push for comprehensive tax reform, or as an offset for new spending.**
- Tax-exempt bonds are the primary financing mechanism for state and local infrastructure projects – they have been used for more than 100 years and provide essential funding for states, counties, and localities. **Three quarters of all public infrastructure projects in the U.S. are built by states and localities, and tax-exempt bonds are the primary financing tool utilized to satisfy these infrastructure needs.** If tax exemption is eliminated or reduced, states and localities will pay more to finance projects, leading to fewer projects and fewer jobs.

SUSTAIN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDING

- **The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program is critical to state and local networks in providing funding for public improvements, public services, economic development, and affordable housing.** The CDBG Program provides state and local governments and their partners with the flexibility needed to develop essential programs and projects to assist low- and moderate-income families and improve their quality of life.
- **There are several specific statutory items that affect the CDBG Program that need to be addressed in addition to increased funding.**
 - Designate fair housing as a stand-alone program activity. Currently, fair housing activities can only be funded through CDBG admin or public services.

- Support increased funding for the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program (currently funded at \$300 million).
- Raise the Davis-Bacon threshold for non-residential construction from \$2,000 to at least \$100,000 and increase the CDBG threshold to 12 CDBG assisted units to coincide with the HOME Program.
- Raise the recipient threshold for Section 3 from \$200,000 to \$750,000 and increase the Section 3 requirements to cover contracts over \$500,000.

Now is the time to continue to restore program funding. Given the continued underfunding of the program and the ongoing need at the local level, we urge Congress to appropriate at least \$3.8 billion for CDBG in FYE 2027.

- The HOME Investment Partnerships Program is a vital federal initiative that provides funding to state and local governments to support the development of affordable housing for low-income families. This block grant program helps communities create and preserve safe, decent, affordable housing by building, buying, and rehabilitating housing, as well as offering rental assistance and down payment assistance. **Preserving and increasing funding for HOME is critical because it helps ensure that vulnerable populations, including low-income renters and homeowners, have access to safe and stable housing.** Given the rising housing costs and shortages, maintaining support for this program is essential to combating homelessness, fostering economic mobility, and promoting community stability. Increased funding would also enable localities to expand housing options and respond more effectively to the housing challenges faced by many underserved communities.

It is vital that funding for this Program is preserved and increased to \$1.5 billion. In addition to increasing the budget, the priorities are:

1. Increase the allowable program administration from 10 percent to 15 percent
2. Eliminate the 24-month commitment requirement
3. Eliminate or make optional the 15 percent CHDO requirement

In addition, support increased funding for HUD's Homeless Assistance Grants: Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) and the Continuum of Care (CoC).

HOUSING IN THE 21ST CENTURY ACT

- On February 9, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed the *Housing in the 21st Century Act* by a vote of 390-9. The package impacts nearly every federal housing tool used by local governments, regional development organizations, and rural communities, and for the first time, creates a new regional housing planning grant program (see below).
- Back in the fall, the Senate passed similar legislation, the *Road to Housing Act*, which was supported by the White House. With both chambers passing different proposals, they must now reconcile those differences through a conference committee or informal negotiations before voting on the negotiated proposal.
- A key provision that needs to be maintained in the reconciled bill is the new regional housing planning grants, which represents a major win for regional development organizations. If enacted, the bill establishes a new federal grant program specifically for regional housing planning.
 - Eligible Applicants: state, local, and tribal governments, and regional planning agencies
 - Eligible Activities for Regional Planning Agencies: Regional housing needs assessments, coordinating housing development with transportation planning, and the development of local or regional plans for community development.

AIR QUALITY

MAINTAIN CURRENT EPA OZONE AND PM STANDARDS

- The OKC Metro area is on the edge of going into ozone nonattainment. We request that the EPA not make the current standard more stringent (i.e., going from 70 ppb to 65 ppb for ozone and from 12 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ to 9 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) while supporting voluntary state and local efforts to reduce emissions.
- The recently completed ACOG Cost of Nonattainment Study shows that if our region is designated as nonattainment under the current ozone standard, the potential economic impact would be \$9.6-\$15.2 billion over a 20-30-year period.
- Along with ozone, the OKC Metro area is experiencing an increasing problem with particulate matter 2.5 (PM 2.5). **A more stringent PM 2.5 Standard would be very difficult to meet through voluntary improvement measures.**

CONTINUE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT (IIJA) AND THE INFLATION REDUCTION ACT (IRA) FOR AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLANNING & IMPLEMENTATION

- **Maintain support and funding of cost-effective planning and management programs** including the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG), DOE Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program, DOE Methane Emissions Reduction Program (MERP), and EPA Advance, and the FHWA Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) to meet federal goals in air quality and greenhouse gas reduction. Encourage and give credit for voluntary reductions in air pollution. With federal funding support for planning, **ACOG has adopted Central Oklahoma's first Regional Air Quality Plan which establishes implementation strategies to reduce emissions including volatile organic compounds (VOCs), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), and particulate matter. In 2024, ACOG became the OKC-MSA lead organization for EPA CPRG and adopted the region's first Climate Action Plan which establishes implementation strategies to reduce greenhouse gas and methane emissions.**

ACOG recommends the following federal policy approaches for improving regional air quality:

- Allow states, local governments, and regions to set reasonable standards and establish flexible mechanisms to achieve federal standards for air quality improvement and greenhouse gas reduction.
- Encourage the use of reasonable, market-based solutions to reduce emissions.
- Direct a portion of proceeds from any market-based program to units of local government and multijurisdictional regional organizations to support emissions reduction efforts.
- Support state, regional, and local efforts to remain in attainment and encourage EPA to recognize the role of international emissions transport, especially as it affects ozone nonattainment areas.
- Support the development and application of technologies that will reduce, capture and/or store greenhouse gases and criteria air pollutants. Continue research on the effects of greenhouse gases criteria pollutant issues.

CLEAN CITIES/ALTERNATIVE FUELS

ENSURE ADEQUATE FY 2027 FEDERAL FUNDING FOR KEY CLEAN TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS

- For 30 years, the ACOG Clean Cities Program, designated by the Department of Energy (DOE), has contributed to the State of Oklahoma's status as an alternative fuel leader. **ACOG supports maintaining DOE Clean Cities funding at their current levels to help meet regional air quality and transportation goals.**
 - \$65 million for the DOE Clean Cities and Communities Program, including:
 - > \$20 million for local Clean Cities and Communities coalition efforts to advance alternative fuel deployment
 - > \$40 million in competitive grants to expand clean vehicle technologies
 - > \$5 million for DOE and national laboratory support
- \$100 million for the EPA Clean Diesel (DERA) Grants Program in FY 2027, to accelerate replacement of aging diesel engines in school buses, transit fleets, and freight corridors.

CONTINUE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IIJA AND IRA LEGISLATION FOR ALTERNATIVE FUELS

- **Congress must ensure that programs authorized by these laws remain on track and fully funded to maximize their impact on Oklahoma's economy.** ACOG has been a committed partner with federal and state agencies to advance the alternative fuel opportunities included in the IIJA and IRA. Local governments, Oklahoma higher ed, Oklahoma CareerTech, **Oklahoma businesses, Tribal Nations, and many other stakeholders have invested substantial resources (including financial matching dollars) for alternative fuel infrastructure projects and domestic production of advanced vehicle technologies. Some examples include:**
 - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) funding
 - FHWA Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)
 - FHWA National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program
 - FHWA Charging & Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Program
 - DOE Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants (EECBG)
 - EPA Clean School Bus
- Oppose FHWA increasing the Build America, Buy America (BABA) domestic content requirement to 100 percent for EV charging equipment. No EV charging manufacturer can meet a 100 percent threshold, and this change would effectively end ACOG's ability to fund ongoing ACOG member fleet electrification efforts through CMAQ/CRP as well as state and local implementation of the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program

TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

ENDORSE FEDERAL PROGRAM FUNDING WITH STRATEGIC CHANGES

- **The apportionment of funds dedicated in the Federal Transportation Bill for surface transportation improvements in the Central Oklahoma area is not keeping up with the higher costs and the number of projects being pursued by local communities.** The demand for Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funding each year exceeds \$120 million. An increase in STBG and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding for urbanized areas is greatly needed. **The Oklahoma City region receives approximately \$40 million per year. Millions of dollars' worth of critical projects go unfunded each year due to limited funding.**
- **Currently, most of the Federal STBG and TAP funding is 80/20 federal/local match.** This works for the larger communities, but smaller communities have a difficult time funding the 20 percent match. **A 90/10 federal/local match would be more helpful, especially for smaller communities.** Likewise, federal law allows certain safety projects to be constructed with 100 percent federal funds, however, regulation limits this increased federal share to 10 percent of apportioned STBG funds. **An increase in the percentage of STBG funds with this provision would allow for a greater focus on safety-oriented projects, potentially helping to mitigate the increase in injury and fatality crashes in the region.**
- **ACOG supports passage of the bipartisan Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act, introduced by Representatives Rob Bresnahan (R-Penn.-08) and Kristen McDonald Rivet (D-Mich.-08), with additional funding in the new transportation bill.** The proposed bill would:
 - increase funding for the Metropolitan Planning program to better support integrated regional planning that coordinates local efforts and spends federal funds effectively
 - strengthen flexible formula programs like the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program for local and regional project delivery
 - clarify project selection requirements to ensure that locally provided dollars are used as intended for locally identified projects, especially in rural areas
 - support rural regions by providing dedicated federal funding for Regional Transportation Planning Organizations for the first time
 - ensure regional funding for the Bridge Formula Program and Highway Safety Improvement Program to better address the needs of local communities

See Attachment I to view the five letters to our Oklahoma Senators and Representatives regarding the BASICS Act.

PROMOTE ODOT FEDERAL PRIORITIES

- Consistent and reliable federal funding – about 50 percent of Oklahoma’s transportation funding is federal. Federal authorizations and reimbursements are essential to meet Oklahoma’s transportation needs.
- Prioritize and increase formula-based funding.
- Inflationary pressures in highway construction have decreased Oklahoma’s purchasing power by more than 60 percent since 2021, resulting in fewer projects being delivered than expected. More investment is needed to meet existing demand.
- Modernize the taxes and fees for transportation to ensure fair contributions from all users of the system and ensure needed funding into the future.

- Reduce barriers and improve coordination on access to railroad rights-of-way and assets to reduce project costs and delays.
- Streamline Federal Transit Administration bureaucracy in rural transit grant administration and approval process.
- Increase the eligible federal share of transit funding to 100 percent.
- Require flexibility and assistance from USDOT on the implementation of Build America/Buy America requirements.
- Require the owner of the facility that is the subject of the grant request, to approve applications before they are submitted, including local governments' applications for projects on state-owned facilities.
- Add the existing Heartland Flyer Route from Fort Worth, Texas to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and future northern extension to Newton, Kansas as part of the National Railroad Passenger Transportation System, to provide rural Americans access to the intercity passenger rail transportation alternatives needed to maintain national connectivity.

SECURE FUNDING FOR LA28 OLYMPIC EVENTS IN OKLAHOMA CITY

- The City of Oklahoma City has a once in a lifetime opportunity to internationally showcase the community and the State of Oklahoma by hosting two events – canoe slalom and women's softball for the LA28 Olympics. The city needs additional funding for transportation, security, and venue preparation.

INVEST IN THE I-35 CORRIDOR PROJECTS

- **Replace existing and aging I-35 bridges with iconic bridges for the purpose of showcasing Oklahoma City at the confluence of two major interstate highways and the Oklahoma River, which will facilitate increased sporting events and tourist activity.** The current bridge design is a barrier to rowing competitions being extended past the existing bridges. This would help support the success of the Olympic Training Facility on the Oklahoma River.
- ACOG appreciates funding for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant. The project, Bridging the Gap: New Multimodal Connections over the Oklahoma River, will construct a separate bicycle and pedestrian bridge adjacent to I-35 as a component of the I-35 bridge replacement project. **The \$22 million project will link 10 interconnected trails that cover over 80 miles in Oklahoma City. This project includes connections to the new Horizons District, including the First Americans Museum, with the historically disadvantaged Capitol Hill District.**

INCREASE BRIDGE MAINTENANCE FUNDING FOR MUNICIPALITIES

- **Many municipalities and counties are currently faced with aging bridges that will not be functional in the near future.** These bridges are inspected every two years through the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). The inspection reports show the degradation of this infrastructure.
- The Bridge Formula Program Funding part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provides 100 percent funding for bridges. **This more flexible funding provides money for bridges that are not on the federal system but are too expensive for many communities to afford.** ODOT has supplemented this fund to allow more bridges to be upgraded for needed safety improvements.

See Attachment II for ACOG provided Letters of Support for multiple BUILD & Community Project Funding Requests.

MAINTAIN AND EXTEND THE AMTRAK HEARTLAND FLYER

Passenger rail service is a key component of the continued viability of the Oklahoma City intermodal hub and the future development of commuter rail throughout the Central Oklahoma region. **ACOG, along with our partners at the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, opposes efforts to reduce or eliminate state or federal funding received by Oklahoma to operate the Heartland Flyer Amtrak service to Fort Worth, Texas. We support continued dialogue on extending the Heartland Flyer Amtrak service to Newton, Kansas, which would connect Oklahoma City to Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, and other locations on the Amtrak system.** Furthermore, we support the designation of the Oklahoma City- Newton, KS line as a national Amtrak route. We appreciate the work of the Northern Flyer Alliance in supporting this campaign. This would strategically address a significant gap in the national Amtrak rail system map and assist with federal/state burden/cost-sharing to help ensure the viability of passenger rail service.

KDOT, ODOT, and TxDOT are working on the Service Development Plan (SDP) for the Newton extension thanks to a \$500,000 award from Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Corridor Identification and Development Program. The project will include an operational analysis, capital investment needs assessment, financial analysis, and implementation plan. ACOG would like to thank its Congressional Delegation for all its help in supporting this award.

It is recommended that our Congressional Delegation work jointly with the Kansas Delegation, specifically Congressman Ron Estes (represents Newton and Wichita), and the Texas Delegation to support this effort just as ODOT, KDOT, and TxDOT are working in partnership.

IIJA & IRA

- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) contain billions of dollars in new formula and competitive funds for a wide range of transportation and infrastructure projects. **Councils of Government and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) are well positioned to use these funds to rebuild and transform the nation's transit systems, roads, bridges, and active transportation systems (walking or bicycling), and do so while accounting for community values, and the negative externalities our transportation system has created in the past.**
 - Ensure that local governments and regional planning organizations are involved in the process of planning for and distributing the available funds to the maximum extent possible.
 - Enhance the role Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Rural or Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) play to achieve increased mobility, access to opportunities, and economic prosperity, while addressing rapid shifts in innovative technology, data, and population growth.
 - Make active transportation and Complete Streets policies a priority. With the rise of all transportation fatalities and serious injuries nationwide, greater emphasis needs to be placed on addressing the deficit of safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Transportation projects receiving funding through the IIJA and IRA need to include active transportation components and comply with state, regional, and local Complete Streets policies to the greatest extent possible.

SUPPORT REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (RTA) OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

- As highways and streets become more congested, the need for public transit is more evident. The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) of Central Oklahoma was formally created in February 2019 and has recently been rebranded as One Transit. **Studies are currently underway, and options include commuter rail and expanded bus service in the area. Both proposals will require future funding to reach their full potential.** The cost for a commuter rail service is substantial and will be funded by One Transit member communities through local sales tax increases. However, significant federal resources, like the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Capital Investment Grants (CIG) New Starts program, will also be required.
- The existing bus routes in Central Oklahoma are largely subsidized through the member communities. Adding bus services would require additional funding from local communities with limited resources. Any future infrastructure stimulus proposals should consider funding for the expansion of public transit in the Oklahoma City metro area.

WATER/STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Request for funding to offset some of the unfunded federal mandates that impact our municipalities.

WATER LINE REPLACEMENTS

A majority of ACOG communities have a water distribution system with miles of water lines, with most of these lines made of metal. Unfortunately, the clay soils in Central Oklahoma are extremely corrosive to these metal lines. **The average cost to replace a mile of line is \$750,000. Replacement of these deteriorated water lines is a major cost burden on municipalities.**

STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS

Central Oklahoma communities will continue to face rising costs of maintenance, replacement of aging existing infrastructure, as well as the installation. **Most ACOG communities do not have a stormwater utility, therefore, they must search for outside funding sources for stormwater infrastructure. Additional federal funding support is needed.**

DROUGHT MITIGATION

With frequent periods of drought in Oklahoma, it is necessary to educate the public about proactive measures to conserve our water resources. **In addition, funding will be needed to upgrade the existing water infrastructure system and to build new water storage facilities.**

PFAS CONTAMINATION LIABILITY

The Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act preserves the "polluter pays" principle for cleanups of PFAS under CERCLA by shielding drinking water and wastewater systems from cleanup liability when they properly dispose of water treatment byproducts containing PFAS. Without passage of the legislation, the originators of PFAS pollution could attempt to redirect environmental cleanup costs to water systems that played no role in introducing the chemicals into the environment. In other words, it would allow those responsible for producing the chemicals to pass off cleanup liability issues to community water systems that must remove the contaminants from their source waters.

While EPA has publicly said that it intends to use its regulatory discretion to choose who to pursue

or not to pursue, the fact of the matter is that, legally, CERCLA would require EPA to pursue any polluters if land was found to contain the designated hazardous substances. If EPA ignores certain sites, it would likely in turn face lawsuits from environmental groups or even private citizen groups who would allege that the EPA is not carrying out its mandates under CERCLA.

PFAs regulations are in flux at present. On January 21, 2025, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) withdrew the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) proposed rule on Clean Water Act Effluent Limitations Guidelines (ELG) and Standards for PFAS manufacturers. This decision was part of a broader regulatory freeze mandated by an Executive Order from President Donald Trump. It is unclear at this time whether the withdrawal of the ELG rule represents a delay in implementation simply to provide the new administration time to review the proposed rule, or whether it represents the death knell for the rule, as the Trump administration seeks to deregulate.

The Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act enjoys the strong support of multiple organizations representing different facets of the water sector, including the American Water Works Association, the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, the National Association of Clean Water Agencies, the National Rural Water Association, and the Water Environment Federation. The five groups have formed an entity known as the Water Coalition Against PFAS.

WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

ACOG supports the May 2023 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Sackett v. EPA* which clarified how the Clean Water Act’s “Waters of the United States” (WOTUS) definition applies to wetlands with no continuous surface connections to navigable waters. While the EPA’s newly proposed WOTUS definition would provide states with more control over certain waters, it would create regulatory confusion and potentially result in legal challenges. Therefore, **we oppose renewed efforts by the EPA to redefine WOTUS without congressional updates to the Clean Water Act. Broad changes to the WOTUS definition without complete legal backing pose economic, regulatory, and environmental risks which could hinder the modernization of our infrastructure, limit uses of water in energy exploration, disrupt agricultural activities, and reduce water quality through weakened protections.**

911 ACOG & OKLAHOMA

PROMOTE 911 SAVES ACT

This legislative proposal is aimed at **reclassifying 911 professionals** under the federal Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system to recognize their work as protective service occupations rather than administrative or clerical roles. The proposed bills (S.725 and H.R. 637):

- **It has no financial cost** but affirms the skilled and emotionally demanding nature of 911 dispatchers’ work.
- **Improves data collection** to better understand the challenges and emotional toll of 911 professionals, supporting efforts to enhance their working conditions.
- **Aligns federal classification** with numerous states and localities that have already reclassified 911 professionals, ensuring consistency nationwide.
- **Includes Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reporting requirements** related to **Kari’s Law** implementation and **outage notifications**, keeping the legislation within the jurisdiction of the Senate Commerce & Transportation Committee.

This reclassification effort acknowledges the **critical role** 911 professionals play in emergency response and public safety.

For more information about ACOG and its member governments, please visit: www.acogok.org.

ATTACHMENT I

BASICS Act Letters of Support

February 23, 2026

The Honorable James Lankford
U.S. Senate
731 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act

Dear Senator Lankford:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I urge you to support and co-sponsor H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act, introduced by Representatives McDonald-Rivet and Bresnahan. In its role as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Central Oklahoma, ACOG helps direct up to \$55 million in annual federal transportation funding across 6 counties and over 40 cities to improve safety, reduce congestion, and support economic growth for 1.3 million residents.

What the BASICS Act does:

- **Strengthens regional planning and uses federal dollars wisely.** Created by Congress, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are responsible for developing fiscally-constrained Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) that identify local priority projects that meet federal performance goals. The BASICS Act increases Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding so MPOs can meet growing federal requirements and deliver stronger plans and better project selection that reflect long-term community's needs.
- **Delivers regional priorities faster.** The BASICS Act accelerates delivery of these regionally supported projects by increasing funding for the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program. As the most flexible federal transportation formula program, STBG allows states and regions to move projects forward efficiently and deliver tangible benefits for local businesses, workers, and communities in every congressional district.
- **Ensures transparency and collaboration.** Federal transportation dollars must be accountable to taxpayers. The BASICS Act improves transparency by reinforcing collaboration across federal, state, regional, and local partners to ensure that local voices are heard and transportation investments reflect what communities need most.
- **Focuses on road safety.** With nearly 100 roadway deaths each day, the BASICS Act increases and protects funding for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). It also ensures that 25 percent of HSIP funds are delivered through MPOs for proven safety projects that build on the success of the Safe Streets and Roads for All program.
- **Invests in repairing locally-owned bridges.** Local governments own 50 percent of U.S. bridges. The BASICS Act ensures that bridge funding reflects this reality by directing resources proportionally to locally owned bridges in each state. This means more support for repairing the worst-conditioned bridges in the communities we serve.



The Honorable James Lankford
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There is nothing more basic than local roads and bridges. By supporting the BASICS Act, you will help ensure that cities, counties, and Metropolitan Planning Organizations, including ACOG, have the resources they need to deliver transportation systems that connect our neighborhoods, support our local economies, and serve our residents every single day.

Senator Lankford, I ask you to reach out to the co-sponsors of this bill, Representatives McDonald-Rivet and Bresnahan, to discuss how you can introduce a bipartisan Senate companion bill.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. Strengthening regional planning and empowering local decision-makers is essential to creating a safer, more connected, and economically prosperous future.

Sincerely,

Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
U.S. Senate
330 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act

Dear Senator Mullin:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I urge you to support and co-sponsor H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act, introduced by Representatives McDonald-Rivet and Bresnahan. In its role as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Central Oklahoma, ACOG helps direct up to \$55 million in annual federal transportation funding across 6 counties and over 40 cities to improve safety, reduce congestion, and support economic growth for 1.3 million residents.

What the BASICS Act does:

- **Strengthens regional planning and uses federal dollars wisely.** Created by Congress, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are responsible for developing fiscally-constrained Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) that identify local priority projects that meet federal performance goals. The BASICS Act increases Metropolitan Planning (PL) funding so MPOs can meet growing federal requirements and deliver stronger plans and better project selection that reflect long-term community's needs.
- **Delivers regional priorities faster.** The BASICS Act accelerates delivery of these regionally supported projects by increasing funding for the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program. As the most flexible federal transportation formula program, STBG allows states and regions to move projects forward efficiently and deliver tangible benefits for local businesses, workers, and communities in every congressional district.
- **Ensures transparency and collaboration.** Federal transportation dollars must be accountable to taxpayers. The BASICS Act improves transparency by reinforcing collaboration across federal, state, regional, and local partners to ensure that local voices are heard and transportation investments reflect what communities need most.
- **Focuses on road safety.** With nearly 100 roadway deaths each day, the BASICS Act increases and protects funding for the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). It also ensures that 25 percent of HSIP funds are delivered through MPOs for proven safety projects that build on the success of the Safe Streets and Roads for All program.
- **Invests in repairing locally-owned bridges.** Local governments own 50 percent of U.S. bridges. The BASICS Act ensures that bridge funding reflects this reality by directing resources proportionally to locally owned bridges in each state. This means more support for repairing the worst-conditioned bridges in the communities we serve.



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Sincerely,

Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Stephanie Bice
U.S. House of Representatives
2402 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act

Dear Congresswoman Bice:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I urge you to support and co-sponsor H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act, introduced by Representatives McDonald-Rivet and Bresnahan. In its role as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Central Oklahoma, ACOG helps direct up to \$55 million in annual federal transportation funding across 6 counties and over 40 cities to improve safety, reduce congestion, and support economic growth for 1.3 million residents.

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Congresswoman Bice, I ask you to reach out to the co-sponsors of this bill, Representatives McDonald-Rivet and Bresnahan to discuss how you can help support the BASICS Act in the next federal surface transportation reauthorization.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. Strengthening regional planning and empowering local decision-makers is essential to creating a safer, more connected, and economically prosperous future.

Sincerely,

Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Tom Cole
U.S. House of Representatives
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act

Dear Congressman Cole:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I urge you to support and co-sponsor H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act, introduced by Representatives McDonald-Rivet and Bresnahan. In its role as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving Central Oklahoma, ACOG helps direct up to \$55 million in annual federal transportation funding across 6 counties and over 40 cities to improve safety, reduce congestion, and support economic growth for 1.3 million residents.

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Congressman Cole, I ask you to reach out to the co-sponsors of this bill, Representatives McDonald-Rivet and Bresnahan to discuss how you can help support the BASICS Act in the next federal surface transportation reauthorization.

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Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Frank Lucas
U.S. House of Representatives
2405 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R.7437, the Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act

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Congressman Lucas, I ask you to reach out to the co-sponsors of this bill, Representatives McDonald-Rivet and Bresnahan to discuss how you can help support the BASICS Act in the next federal surface transportation reauthorization.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. Strengthening regional planning and empowering local decision-makers is essential to creating a safer, more connected, and economically prosperous future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark W. Sweeney". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

ATTACHMENT II

BUILD & Community Project Funding Request
Letters of Support

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: BUILD Grant Program Application for EMBARK's Phase 1: Fleet Modernization and Olympic Readiness Project

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I am pleased to offer full support for EMBARK's application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's BUILD program for the Phase 1: Fleet Modernization and Olympic Readiness Project. Phase 1 will improve fleet state of good repair (SOGR) by replacing aging buses so EMBARK can maintain reliable service for residents and provide added capacity during the 2028 Summer Olympics. This request builds on EMBARK's RAPID Northwest BRT service and track record delivering frequent, high-quality transit through federally funded investments.

While Oklahoma City continues planning for future MAPS 4 BRT corridor delivery (Phase 2), Phase 1 focuses on immediate, systemwide benefits: replacing aging fixed-route buses to improve fleet state of good repair (SOGR) while supporting national priorities to provide high quality transit service during the 2028 Olympics. These investments will help EMBARK meet Olympics-related demand without reducing existing service or burdening Oklahoma City riders, while improving reliability for everyday trips.

This project is consistent with the recently adopted Central Oklahoma Long-Range Transit Plan (COLRTP), which was developed through a partnership between ACOG, EMBARK, Oklahoma City's MAPS 4 Office, transit service providers, and other stakeholders. The vision of the COLRTP is to provide a cohesive network of transit services that supports growth, promotes economic mobility, enhances quality of life, and facilitates opportunity across Central Oklahoma. The Phase 1: Fleet Modernization and Olympic Readiness Project directly advances this goal by maintaining existing assets while improving future capacity.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for USDOT's continued investment in projects that improve reliability and strengthen mobility for the communities we serve.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 10, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: BUILD Grant Program Application for the I-35 Edmond Safety Enhancement & Mobility Project in the City of Edmond

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I am pleased to provide strong support for the *I-35 Edmond Safety Enhancement & Mobility Project* submitted by the City of Edmond, in partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). This project will significantly improve safety, mobility, and economic competitiveness along a critical freight and commuter corridor in Edmond, Oklahoma.

The project converts two-way frontage roads to one-way operation, eliminating hazardous buttonhook ramps that currently contribute to crashes and congestion backing up onto I-35. New slip ramps and protected turnarounds will improve traffic flow, reduce travel times, and support efficient freight movement. Importantly, the design accommodates future growth without requiring additional right-of-way, minimizing environmental and community impacts.

By improving connectivity and reliability, this project strengthens regional access to jobs and services, fostering long-term economic development and resilience in a rapidly growing area. These improvements align strongly with federal priorities by enhancing safety, improving mobility, and supporting economic competitiveness.

Thank you for your consideration of the City of Edmond's application for this critical infrastructure investment. Please contact our offices if you need any further assistance as you review this important proposal.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 10, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: BUILD Grant Program Application for the I-35 Safety & Capacity Improvement Project in McClain County

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I am pleased to provide strong support for the BUILD Grant application *I-35 Safety & Capacity Improvement Project in McClain County* submitted by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). This project will enhance safety, reduce congestion, and improve freight mobility along a critical segment of I-35, a Primary Highway Freight Corridor and Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) route on the National Highway System.

Interstate 35 is one of the most important north-south freight routes in the nation, carrying significant volumes of goods essential to interstate commerce and economic growth. Increasing traffic and freight demand have created congestion and safety challenges that threaten supply chain reliability. Widening I-35 from four to six lanes will improve efficiency for freight movement, reduce crash risk, and strengthen connectivity between rural and urban areas. By adding lanes within the existing right-of-way, the project minimizes environmental and utility impacts while ensuring long-term resiliency through durable pavement and upgraded drainage.

These improvements will support regional and national economic competitiveness by facilitating the efficient movement of goods and people. The project aligns strongly with BUILD merit criteria by improving safety, enhancing mobility, and promoting economic growth.

Thank you for your consideration of ODOT's application for this vital infrastructure investment. Please contact our offices if you need any further assistance as you review this important proposal.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 10, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: BUILD Grant Program Application for Planning of Sunnyslane Road Corridor and Bridge Replacement on Sunnyslane Road in the City of Moore

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the City of Moore's application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's BUILD Grant Program for the planning of Sunnyslane Road Corridor and Bridge Replacement located on Sunnyslane Road, south of SE 34th Street.

The existing bridge has a low sufficiency rating, reflecting structural and functional deficiencies that affect safety, reliability, and long-term performance. As part of the regional transportation network within central Oklahoma, this facility supports local and regional travel, emergency response access, and connectivity between residential, commercial, and employment centers. Its condition presents increasing concerns for both the City of Moore and the broader region it serves.

The proposed road corridor and bridge replacement project is consistent with ACOG's regional transportation planning goals and directly supports the BUILD Grant Program's focus on preserving critical infrastructure, improving safety, and maintaining system performance. Replacing this bridge will improve structural integrity and load capacity, reduce maintenance demands, and enhance resilience to severe weather events, thereby supporting uninterrupted mobility across the region.

This project also aligns with ACOG's Long Range Transportation Plan, Encompass 2045, by prioritizing investments that address deficient infrastructure and strengthen regional connectivity. By proactively replacing an aging bridge with a low sufficiency rating, the City of Moore is advancing a cost-effective solution that will provide long-term benefits for residents, commuters, freight movement, and emergency services throughout central Oklahoma.

ACOG commends the City of Moore for its coordinated and forward-looking approach to infrastructure investment and strongly supports this BUILD Grant application. We respectfully request favorable consideration of this project and appreciate the DOT's continued partnership with local governments and regional planning organizations.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 10, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: BUILD Grant Program Application for the Waterloo Road Planning Study in Oklahoma County, City of Edmond, and Logan County

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I am pleased to express strong support for the Oklahoma County, City of Edmond, and Logan County application to the FY 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Program for the Waterloo Road Planning Study.

Waterloo Road is a vital east-west corridor that supports regional mobility, access to employment and services, and local business activity in north Edmond. As the area continues to grow, existing roadway conditions present increasing challenges related to safety, access, and multimodal connectivity. The proposed planning study represents a strategic federal investment to prepare this corridor for future improvements that enhance economic competitiveness, safety, and quality of life—key objectives of the BUILD program.

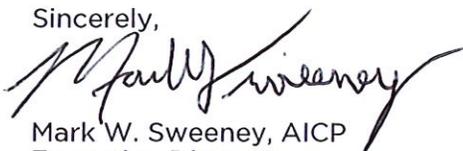
The Waterloo Road Planning Study will evaluate multimodal access, safety enhancements, streetscape improvements, and corridor design strategies that support adjacent land uses and economic activity. By improving reliability and access for motorists, freight, pedestrians, and cyclists, the study will help reduce barriers that limit workforce mobility and commercial operations. A safer, more efficient corridor will strengthen existing businesses, support new private investment, and improve access to jobs and services throughout the area.

In addition to economic benefits, the planning study places a strong emphasis on community livability. Improved roadway design and enhanced streetscapes will contribute to a more attractive and functional corridor that better serves residents, employees, and visitors. These improvements will support walkable environments, safer crossings, and improved connections to nearby neighborhoods and destinations, helping to create a corridor that reflects the community's long-term vision.

The Oklahoma DOT and USDOT are making a significant investment in the Waterloo Road/I-35 interchange in 2027 and extending these improvements the length of the corridor is a community goal. The BUILD program's focus on leveraging federal investment to advance project readiness and maximize public benefit makes it an ideal fit for this effort. The Waterloo Road Planning Study will position project stakeholders to make informed, cost-effective infrastructure decisions and pursue future capital investments with defined economic and community outcomes.

ACOG respectfully urges favorable consideration of this BUILD grant application.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 24, 2026

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Letter of Support for the City of Piedmont's BUILD Grant application for Waterloo Road Improvements

Dear Secretary Duffy:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Piedmont's application for the FY 2026 Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT).

The City of Piedmont seeks critical funding to reconstruct and enhance safety along 13 miles of Waterloo Road. This initiative aligns with the needs of our rapidly growing community, whose population is expanding at the fastest rate in Oklahoma and within Canadian County—the fastest-growing county in the state. Improvements along this corridor will greatly improve the safety for those traveling, provide time savings advantage for many rural citizens, enhance connectivity with many rural communities to the metropolitan area, increase commerce for each city, as well as support a thriving energy field which will only grow as the communities grow.

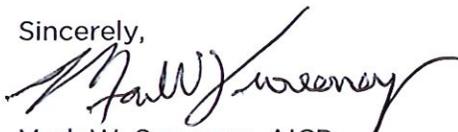
Strategically located adjacent to Oklahoma City, the nation's 20th most populous city as of the 2020 Census, Piedmont's infrastructure must keep pace with the demands of an increasingly urbanized and dynamic region. Oklahoma City serves a significant role nationally for energy, aerospace, tourism, and Native American enterprises. As such, it is crucial to ensure equitable access to quality jobs, healthcare, and economic opportunities for residents in Piedmont and the surrounding area.

The proposed improvements to Waterloo Road will not only increase safety for all users but will also bolster regional connectivity, supporting sustainable growth and fostering economic resilience. This investment will enable residents, businesses, and visitors to access critical resources while advancing the USDOT's goals of equity, accessibility, and sustainability.

I strongly urge the approval of Piedmont's grant application, which represents a vital step in addressing the needs of a flourishing region while ensuring safety and opportunity for all.

Thank you for your consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Sean P. Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: BUILD Grant Program Application for Boulevard Intersection Improvements Project in the City of Edmond

Dear Secretary Duffy:

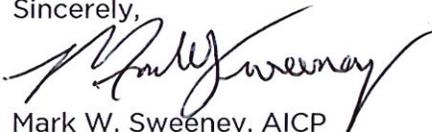
On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), I am pleased to offer our strong support for the City of Edmond's BUILD grant application for the Boulevard Intersection Improvements project in Downtown Edmond. ACOG serves as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, including the City of Edmond.

The proposed Boulevard Intersection Improvements project will enhance traffic operations and improve pedestrian safety in the Downtown Edmond area. By adding turn lanes, improving signalization, and strengthening pedestrian connectivity, the project addresses documented congestion and safety challenges while creating a more accessible and walkable downtown environment. These improvements are especially important in a growing community like Edmond, where multimodal access and safe circulation are critical to sustaining economic development and community vitality.

Importantly, this project is consistent with ACOG's adopted Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Encompass 2045. Encompass 2045 prioritizes investments that improve safety for all users, reduce congestion, support multimodal transportation options, and enhance connectivity within established activity centers. The Boulevard Intersection Improvements project directly advances these goals by improving critical intersections within a key regional destination and activity center.

ACOG supports projects that align local needs with regional transportation strategies, and the City of Edmond has demonstrated strong coordination and planning in advancing this effort. We believe this project represents a sound investment in the long-term mobility and safety of the region. We respectfully urge the U.S. Department of Transportation to consider the City of Edmond's BUILD grant application.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Member of Congress
U.S. Senate
330 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

RE: City of Oklahoma City FFY27 Congressionally Directed Spending Request

Dear Senator Mullin:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Oklahoma City region, I am writing to express strong support for the City of Oklahoma City's request for Congressionally Directed Spending to construct a new roadway extending American Indian Boulevard to improve access from Interstate 35.

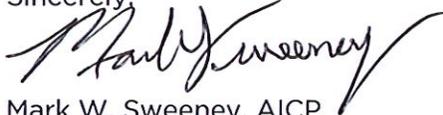
American Indian Boulevard serves as the primary circulator for the First Americans Museum and the adjacent OKANA Resort & Indoor Waterpark, two transformative destinations anchoring cultural tourism and economic activity along the Oklahoma River corridor. As visitation continues to increase, existing access routes constrain mobility, create congestion at key intersections, and limit the corridor's full economic potential. Extending American Indian Boulevard will establish a more direct, legible connection to Interstate 35, improving regional accessibility, dispersing traffic, and enhancing safety for residents, employees, and visitors.

The First Americans Museum is a nationally significant cultural institution that preserves and celebrates the history and living cultures of the 39 Tribal Nations in Oklahoma. Improved access will strengthen its role as a premier destination, expanding educational opportunities, supporting heritage tourism, and catalyzing continued private investment in the surrounding district. This infrastructure investment will reinforce both the cultural mission of the museum and the long-term economic vitality of the area.

As the MPO responsible for regional transportation planning, ACOG recognizes this project as a strategic capacity and connectivity improvement that aligns with adopted regional plans and supports sustained economic growth. Federal funding is critical to advancing this high-impact investment.

We appreciate your consideration and respectfully urge support for this request. If we can provide any additional information for this effort, please feel free to contact me at (405) 234-2264 or msweeney@acogok.org.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Stephanie Bice
Member of Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
2402 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: City of Oklahoma City FFY27 Community Project Funding Request

Dear Representative Bice:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Oklahoma City region, I strongly support the City of Oklahoma City's Community Project Funding request for the Northwest Expressway Bridge Replacements under I-44.

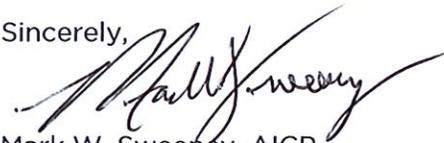
The two bridges carrying Northwest Expressway beneath I-44 and over Deep Fork are functionally obsolete and carry more than 42,000 vehicles daily across eight lanes, as well as two EMBARK transit routes - including the RAPID NW Bus Rapid Transit line. This corridor is a critical east-west regional connector intersecting a major interstate facility. Replacement will modernize aging infrastructure, improve structural integrity and design standards, enhance multimodal safety, and protect transit reliability.

ACOG prioritizes investments that advance safety, preserve assets in a state of good repair, and strengthen regional connectivity. Replacing these bridges directly supports those goals while safeguarding a high-volume corridor serving commuters, freight, and transit riders across the metropolitan area.

Community Project Funding would leverage \$5.72 million in voter-approved 2025 bond investments for resurfacing and sidewalk improvements along Northwest Expressway, providing match and enabling a coordinated corridor upgrade. This project represents a strategically aligned, regionally significant investment in system performance and long-term resilience. We respectfully urge your support.

If we can provide any additional information for this effort, please feel free to contact me at (405) 234-2264 or msweeney@acogok.org.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Member of Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
2405 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: City of Oklahoma City FFY27 Community Project Funding Request

Dear Representative Lucas:

On behalf of the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG), the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Central Oklahoma region, I strongly support the City of Oklahoma City's Community Project Funding request for the Meridian Corridor Street Enhancement project.

The Meridian Corridor is a critical regional connector linking Downtown Oklahoma City with OKC Will Rogers International Airport and supports 179 businesses with approximately 3,700 employees. As the MPO, ACOG prioritizes investments that enhance safety, improve system performance, strengthen multimodal connectivity, and reinforce key economic corridors. The Meridian project directly advances these objectives.

Proposed improvements—including upgraded street lighting, installation and extension of raised medians, consolidation of excess curb cuts, enhancements to the I-44 underpass, and improved integration with the EMBARK transit line—will reduce crash risk, improve access management, support transit operations, and enhance the overall functionality of this high-visibility gateway. These upgrades are consistent with ACOG's long-range transportation plan and our commitment to coordinated, data-driven investments that deliver measurable mobility and safety outcomes.

Community Project Funding will leverage \$5.8 million in voter-approved bond funding and provide necessary match to accelerate implementation. The formation of a Business Improvement District further demonstrates local capacity for long-term maintenance and stewardship, ensuring durability of the federal investment.

ACOG views the Meridian Corridor Street Enhancement project as a strategically aligned improvement that advances regional mobility, economic vitality, and system resilience. We respectfully urge your support.

If we can provide any additional information for this effort, please feel free to contact me at (405) 234-2264 or msweeney@acogok.org.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Sweeney, AICP
Executive Director