395 John Ireland Boulevard
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155

February 23, 2026

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

Re: Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Application for the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 100 Railroad Crossing Grade Separation Project in Aurora, Minnesota

Dear Secretary Duffy,

This letter is in reference to the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant application for the County State Aid Highway (CSAH) 100 Railroad Crossing Grade Separation project in Aurora, Minnesota.

This project will construct a bridge overpass at the railroad crossing. This railroad crossing creates a high-impact risk to the regional transportation system as the detour is greater than 18 miles when the railroad crossing is closed. CSAH 100 is the primary highway that connects the Cities of Aurora and Hoyt Lakes, Minnesota. This project will improve traffic operations, increase the movement of freight, support traffic safety, and eliminate the risk of a railroad crossing closure.

There is a high volume of all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles that use the existing railroad crossing and create a significant, positive economic impact on the local economy. The bridge overpass will include dedicated space for pedestrians, bicyclists, ATVs, and snowmobiles. A portion of the Mesabi Trail is planned to be extended across the existing railroad crossing by 2026. This bridge overpass will create a safe crossing of the railroad track and promote more use of the trail.

Currently, the total project cost estimate is $8.6 million, and St. Louis County has identified $2.6 million. The Minnesota Department of Transportation does not have this project included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) or funding identified in MnDOT's 10-year Capital Highway Investment Plan (CHIP); full project funding is not secured. It is MnDOT's assumption at this time that the local agency will be responsible for delivery costs and funding gaps. This project is planned for construction in 2030.

Thank you for your interest and support to improve Minnesota's transportation system.

Sincerely,

Nancy Daubenberger, P.E. (MN)
Commissioner

cc: Victor Lund, Project Manager, St. Louis County
Duane Hill, District Engineer, District 1, Minnesota Department of Transportation