SD DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Division of Secretariat
Office of the Secretary
700 E. Broadway Avenue
Pierre, South Dakota 57501
605.773.5105
dot.sd.gov | sd511.org

January 13, 2025

U.S. Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Subject: Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Department of Transportation Facility Project

Dear Secretary,

On behalf of South Dakota Department of Transportation, I am writing this letter in support of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate's (SWO) application for FY 2025 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant funding for construction of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Department of Transportation Facility Project.

Transportation is critical to the members of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate. Their homeland is located in rural South Dakota/North Dakota and encompassing 1450 square miles, reliable transportation access plays a critical role for residents to commute to jobs, attend school, receive health care, and have access to essential services.

Currently, the Tribe does not have an efficient facility to house all their Department of Transportation (DOT) programs. SWO will design and construct a transportation facility to efficiently and cost effectively house all their DOT maintenance, transit, and administrative services. The existing maintenance facility which is currently in use is deteriorating and does not meet the administrative, storage, or vehicle maintenance needs.

Integrating these programs and offices to one site will enhance productivity, improve efficiency, and provide additional transportation solutions for the SWO DOT. The project will provide more efficient coordination and additional space for SWO to grow their staff capacity and maintain their own community transit service to meet the current needs and increasing demand for transit service. Additionally, the project will provide space for vehicles to be stored inside, in-house maintenance on vehicles and equipment, also a covered salt/sand storage area that will result in significant cost savings to an area that suffers from persistent poverty and a lack of economic resources.

SWO seeks to provide a more livable community and enhance the quality of life for their residents. This project will not only enhance transportation in the area, but it will catalyze critical conditions for economic growth and access to opportunity.

I support SWO's application for a new transportation facility and urge you to give full and careful consideration to SWO's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant application. I thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this important project and look forward to its completion.

Sincerely,

Joel Jundt, PE
Cabinet Secretary