MONTANA
Department of Transportation

Christopher Dorrington, Director

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January 23, 2025

Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590-001

Subject: FY 2025 RAISE Grant: BIA 91 Highway Reconstruction: Reconnecting Rural Communities Project

Dear Secretary,

On behalf of the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT), please consider this letter as written confirmation of our support of the Crow Tribe's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant application for its BIA 91 Highway Reconstruction: Reconnecting Rural Communities project (Project). The main goal of the proposed Project is to address safety issues along approximately 24 miles of BIA 91.

The current condition of the BIA 91 corridor presents safety, accessibility, mobility, and connectivity risks. The proposed Project will enable the Crow Tribe to address roadway damage and identified safety concerns, ensuring that the roadway meets current safety standards and alleviates the need for significant traveler detours to surrounding, less direct routes. Completion of the Project will ensure ongoing access to essential services, as well as rehabilitate and maintain a safe route for transit buses, school buses, agricultural trailers and vehicles, and emergency/first responder vehicles that need BIA 91 to access and connect very rural and remote communities both on and off the Reservation.

The reconstruction of BIA 91 is a high priority of the Crow Tribe. Maintenance of the existing roadway has been increasingly difficult and expensive. Continued extreme weather conditions have added to the deterioration of the transportation infrastructure, increasing safety concerns. BIA 91 has been consistently listed in Tribal Transportation Safety Plans, and over the past two years the Crow Tribe has invested substantial financial resources to complete planning activities, resulting in a "shovel ready" project. In addition, the Crow Tribe is investing matching funds over the next three to five years to ensure completion of the entire 44.8 miles of the Project corridor.

This Project meets the intent and spirit of the RAISE program, specifically in the area of safety. Reconstruction will include installation of guardrails, shoulder rumble strips, pavement markings, horizontal alignment signs, advisory speed plaques, as well as flattening sub-standard side slopes, replacing culverts, improving the roadway surface, and flattening of a horizontal curve in the Project area. While MDT supports this Project, it will not be committing financial assistance towards the Project. In addition, administration of the of the design and construction of the Project will be responsibility of the Crow Tribe.

On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important Project.

Sincerely,

1/23/25

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Director, MDT

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