NORTH Dakota | Governor Doug Burgum

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February 23, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

Subject: Spirit Lake Tribal Community Repair and Rehabilitation Planning Project Application for RAISE Funding

As Governor of North Dakota, it is a privilege to express support for the Spirit Lake Tribe's (SLT) application for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant application for planning of the Spirit Lake Tribal Community Repair and Rehabilitation Project.

Safe and accessible transportation is essential to the Spirit Lake Nation, a rural tribal community located in northeast North Dakota. The Spirit Lake Tribal Roads Department currently expends 50 percent of its annual Tribal Transportation Program (TTP) Tribal shares funding on preventive maintenance to patch and chip seal coat paved roadways. This extremely limits the availability of TTP funding for vital road rehabilitation projects to address deteriorating roadways. Additionally, The Spirit Lake Roads Department shop facility was destroyed by fire on December 11, 2023, significantly impacting the Spirit Lake Tribe's ability to provide a transportation system that can safely and efficiently move people and goods and provide quality multimodal access to Tribal housing, services, and employment.

The Spirit Lake Tribal Community Repair and Rehabilitation Project will complete all planning and preliminary engineering activities to reconstruct residential roads; address drainage issues; complete shoulder widening to reduce roadway departure accidents; provide ADA accessible sidewalks; improve pedestrian lighting; repair and construct pedestrian trails; and design a replacement shop facility to meet the current and future needs of Spirit Lake Nation. Additionally, the Tribe plans to update 911 and snow removal address maps to improve emergency response and evacuation planning and preparation. The project will significantly improve the safety and accessibility of the transportation system within the community — connecting residents to Tribal facilities, schools, businesses, and essential medical and Tribal services as well as providing opportunity for future economic development and expanded tourism.

With full support of the Spirit Lake Tribal Community, we thank you for your consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

Doug Burgum
Governor