



COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
of the OZARKS

Connecting passion to purpose

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Affiliate Foundations:

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Truman Lake
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Willow Springs

January 11, 2024

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

Subject: Community Foundation of the Ozarks (CFO) Letter of Support – Highway MM:
Corridor of Opportunity

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

CFO supports the efforts by the Ozarks Transportation Organization to secure federal discretionary funding under the 2024 Rebuilding Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant for the Highway MM: Corridor of Opportunity project. If awarded, the project will realign and expand Missouri Highway MM from two-lanes to five lanes.

This project will improve community connectivity by closing two at-grade railroad crossings, building a new road alignment with an overpass over BNSF, including accommodations for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and turning a two-lane arterial into a five-lane facility. The improvement will help manage the truck and commuter traffic along this corridor and help reduce exposure between vehicles and trains.

The project will further bolster regional economic development by improving transportation efficiency and reducing barriers to industrial development on land located near Interstate 44, James River Freeway, and Highway 60. The development of living wage jobs along MM will provide opportunities for citizens living in Historically Disadvantaged Census Tracts 48.02, 201.02 and 43.02. This will increase the quality of life of those living in Republic, Clever, Battlefield, western Springfield, Bois D'Arc, and Willard. As an organization that serves a 62 County region in our state, we know and understand the importance of transportation to economic viability.

The continued development of multi-family housing as well as apartments in the area will ensure affordable and accessible housing for a workforce looking to access Republic School District for their children. Funds for Hwy MM will also improve an area where a new intermediate school, park, and sports complex is planned. Your support will ensure the future prosperity of the next generation of area youth.

Sincerely,


Brian Fogle, President and CEO
Community Foundation of the Ozarks