



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

The Sioux Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has established a continuous, comprehensive, and cooperative framework for conducting area transportation planning and programming activities for the Cities of Brandon, Crooks, Harrisburg, Hartford, Sioux Falls, and Tea, and portions of Lincoln and Minnehaha Counties in southeastern South Dakota. The Sioux Falls Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) includes the junction of Interstate 29 and Interstate 90 and is a regional hub for transportation, health care, employment, retail, and services. The Sioux Falls MPA has grown in population from just over 100,000 in 1990 to more than 200,000 currently. Along with this significant growth, has come continuously increasing demand on the transportation system. To improve the transportation system for the increasing demand, the MPO has spent several years planning a much needed high-speed, limited access arterial connection in the western and southwestern perimeter of the MPA.

On behalf of the Sioux Falls MPO, I am writing in support of the City of Tea's 271st Street Improvements Project, Phase II. The City's Fiscal Year 2018 BUILD Grant Application will fund the reconstruction of a portion of 271st Street in the City of Tea's projected growth area between Interstate 29 and 469th Avenue from a two-lane rural section to a four-lane divided urban section. This project is currently in the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

This segment of 271st Street is experiencing traffic volumes in excess of 11,000 vehicles per day and functions as an arterial facility carrying a significant amount of commuter traffic. The congestion causes unsafe driving conditions and will likely lead to high accident rates and drivers having to use other local roadways to reach their destination. The arterial expansion

project will provide a much needed high-speed, limited access connection in the western and southwestern perimeter of the metropolitan area to improve the regional connections and access to employment and services for people traveling in or around the City of Sioux Falls, City of Tea, Lincoln County and Minnehaha County. Once complete, the improvements to 271st Street would provide significant benefits to the local and regional transportation system.

On behalf of the Sioux Falls MPO, I would like to thank the U.S. Department of Transportation for its continued efforts to generate economic development and improve access to reliable, safe and affordable transportation.

Sincerely,

Carol Twedt, Chair
Sioux Falls MPO UDC

Project Area Map

