



Mid-Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

Mid-Region Council of Governments

809 Copper Avenue NW
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102
(505) 247-1750-tel. (505) 247-1753-fax
www.mrcog-nm.gov

July 5, 2018

The Honorable Secretary Elaine Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

It is my pleasure to submit this letter supporting the grant application to construct the new Los Lunas I-25 Interchange and East-West Corridor in Valencia County in the southern portion of the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area. This project is listed in, and is consistent with, *Futures 2040 the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)*, the long-range plan for the metropolitan area adopted in April 2015. (Link: <https://www.mrcog-nm.gov/transportation/metro-planning/long-range-mtp>)

The MTP lists this project as a "Project of Special Interest" (ref. Appendix B) and states the importance of this project to improve cross-river connectivity in Valencia County where existing bridges are 10½ miles apart. This project would create a key river crossing connection with a direct connection to I-25. The project's alignment has been studied and identified, and acquisition of the required rights-of-way is funded and programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and is well underway.

In summary, among the benefits of this proposed project, it will reduce travel time, provide improved east-west river crossing connectivity in a growing area, improve safety, and improve first-responder response time. This project will benefit both the urbanized and rural areas of the southern portion of the metropolitan area.

Your consideration of providing funds for this project is greatly appreciated. Any additional funding for this project will be amended into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Sincerely,

David R. Pennella
M.P.O. Administrator