



**DOWNTOWN
LONG BEACH
ALLIANCE**

April 19 , 2024

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

Re: FY 2025-2026 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant – Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

We are writing to express our strong support for the **Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project** in the City of Long Beach, which is seeking FY 2025-2026 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) grant funding. The project will replace several inadequate mid-20th Century bridges with one bridge designed to modern standards, build new multimodal infrastructure for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists; and restore connections between communities severed by the current bridge's construction.

DLBA is a non-profit organization representing more than 1,400 businesses and 3,200 commercial and residential property owners within the two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Downtown Long Beach, an area that encompasses a large portion of the impacted neighborhoods. This important project has the potential to transform the western edge of Downtown by reintegrating needed park space into adjacent neighborhoods and introducing new pedestrian access points to the Los Angeles River. Moreover, the project will help to increase pedestrian safety for residents of the Willmore Historic Neighborhood, by reducing vehicular traffic speeds coming off the 710-Freeway. As the voice for the Downtown community, DLBA recognizes the positive impact this project would have on the Long Beach Community.

The Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project will provide many benefits to the City of Long Beach and surrounding areas, including:

- The improvement of the safety, quality, and reliability of the Shoemaker Bridge by replacing it's fair and poor-rated bridges with one bridge that meets modern design and geometric standards,
- The implementation of several improvements designed to remove unsafe lane geometry, weaving sections, and other dangerous roadway features, promoting the efficient flow of traffic and significantly reducing the risk of collisions,
- Removing barriers to travel and open space for residents by creating several at-grade crosswalks, connecting several new and improved neighborhood parks, and constructing a pedestrian bridge across the Los Angeles River,
- Creating a more resilient and sustainable storm water management system by capturing rainwater that captures excess storm water runoff for reuse,
- Supporting community investment and job creation in the Long Beach neighborhoods of West Village, Westside, and Willmore, two historically disadvantaged communities in Long Beach

The Shoemaker Bridge Replacement Project is a critical component of a larger vision for Downtown Long Beach that involves redesigning and realigning Shoreline Drive and the construction of Intelligent Transportation Systems at traffic lights along 7th Street, both major



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corridors connecting to Shoemaker Bridge. Furthermore, by replacing the Shoemaker Bridge and its connecting bridges, the Project enhances a primary connection to the nationally significant Interstate 710 Corridor, which links the City of Long Beach and the San Pedro Bay Ports Complex to Southern California's supply chain networks and regional destinations. The Project's timely completion is also linked to the future expansion of Cesar Chavez Park in Long Beach and the federally-funded Pier B On Dock Rail Support Facility, as well as being a critical project to support regional transportation during the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles.

We respectfully request USDOT approval of this MPDG grant application and appreciate your consideration and leadership. Questions regarding this letter may be directed to Austin Metoyer at austinm@dlba.org.

Sincerely,

Austin Metoyer

President and CEO