



**RAPID CITY AREA
METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

*300 Sixth Street
Rapid City, SD 57702
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February 20, 2025

U.S. Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Letter of Support for FY 2025 RAISE Opportunity: New Underwood Road
Reconstruction, Meade County, SD

To the U.S. Secretary of Transportation,

We are writing in support of South Dakota Department of Transportation's (SDDOT) application for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant (RAISE). The SDDOT will use this funding for planning efforts in support of the reconstruction of New Underwood Road in Meade County, South Dakota which will improve the condition of this key roadway through the county.

This planning grant will fund the preliminary engineering and environmental study for the future reconstruction of New Underwood Road from SD 34 south to Interstate 90 which is 32 miles long. The future project will include reconstruction of 17.4 miles, the replacement of pipe culverts, and the replacement of three bridges. The total cost of the planning project is estimated at \$3 million and is scheduled to begin upon the award of the grant. SDDOT is seeking a RAISE grant for 80 percent of the cost of the project (\$2.4 million) and the remaining 20 percent (\$600,000) will be split between SDDOT (\$300,000) and Meade County (\$300,000). SDDOT will be utilizing State Highway Trust Fund dollars while Meade County will be utilizing funding from the County General Fund to accommodate the local share. This rural section of New Underwood Road provides a vital link for residents of eastern Meade County to Interstate 90 and nearby Rapid City. The estimated date of completion for the project is Fall of 2029.

The project aligns with USDOT's priorities of safety, equity, climate and sustainability, and workforce development, job quality, and wealth creation by improving a vital corridor relied on by residents of Meade County for access to daily necessities including schools, places of employment, medical clinics / hospitals, and grocery stores located in nearby Rapid City. This corridor is also utilized by truck traffic in the movement of goods across the county and state.

This grant will provide needed funding to ensure the roadway does not become a barrier to community access and mobility. Because of this project, the quality of life for residents of nearby small towns, as well as rural residents in Meade County will be improved.

We support SDDOT's application for the reconstruction of New Underwood Road in Meade County and urge you to give full and careful consideration to SDDOT's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity Grant application.

Sincerely,

Mayor Larry Larson, Chairperson
Executive Policy Committee