



State of Oklahoma
Department of Agriculture, Food, and Forestry

J Kevin Stitt
Governor

Blayne Arthur
Secretary of Agriculture

May 4, 2020

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

RE: City of Altus, Oklahoma FY 2020 BUILD Grant Application

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing to express my support of the City of Altus, Oklahoma's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant Application. As Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture, I understand the rich agricultural economy of the Altus area and the tremendous impact the proposed Altus Economic Loop Project could have on the local community and, ultimately, the region and state.

The City of Altus plays a tremendous part in the production, marketing, and transportation of many of Oklahoma's key agricultural products, particularly with the growth of the cotton industry in that region. Our state has greatly benefitted from an increased production of cotton in recent years, and Altus has truly been the epicenter of that development. This growth has spurred the need for increased and improved infrastructure in and around the city. As the cotton industry has accelerated in that area, production and distribution facilities have been developed and expanded, but transportation infrastructure has struggled to keep up. Though the city and state have invested in Altus to meet the needs and support the flourishing economy, partnership from the U.S. Department of Transportation through the award of a BUILD grant would allow the City of Altus to really capitalize on the area's growing momentum and encourage future growth.

In addition to benefits specific to the agricultural industry, this project will improve the condition and reliability of roadways for both passenger and freight traffic and provide improved access for all citizens and businesses. This will greatly serve the largely rural area in and around the City of Altus, Jackson County, and the surrounding region and provide opportunities to continue enriching southwest Oklahoma's economic vitality.

I appreciate your consideration of the Altus Economic Loop for BUILD grant funding and the opportunity to convey my support. Please reach out if I can answer any questions or assist in any way.

Sincerely,

Blayne Arthur

Blayne Arthur
Oklahoma Secretary of Agriculture