



Victoria F. Sheehan
Commissioner

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



William Cass, P.E.
Assistant Commissioner

February 25, 2020

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

Dear Secretary Chao,

Please find enclosed an application for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Discretionary Grant program. It is being submitted by the State of New Hampshire for the "*Bow-Concord Interstate 93 Improvements Project*" and requests \$61 million of Federal funds under the FY 2020 INFRA discretionary grant program. This project improves a 5-mile segment of Interstate 93 (I-93) from south of Interstate 89 (I-89) in Bow to north of Interstate 393 (I-393) in Concord.

Nearly 80,000 vehicles a day travel this portion of I-93. The INFRA grant application targets the southern half of the project from I-89 in Bow to Exit 13, which also is the connection to US Route 3 in Concord and has the highest traffic volumes. The project includes adding a lane in each direction on I-93, upgrading four interchanges, adding auxiliary lanes between interchanges, replacing a red-list bridge, and addressing safety issues along the corridor.

This section of I-93, in central New Hampshire, was built in the late 1950's and early 1960's, as an early part of the Interstate Highway System with two lanes in each direction. The Interstate is a critical transportation link creating a principal north-south arterial within New Hampshire and is part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. This particular segment also includes interchanges with I-89 and US Route 3 providing an east-west connection. The roadways are used daily by commuters and tourist traveling into and out of state. The roadways also provide critical links for the movement of goods locally and regionally throughout the state. The original roadway capacity of this four lane corridor has been surpassed by the population growth and increased tourist and freight traffic that moves through the area on a regular basis. As a result, there is congestion that causes travel delay and safety deficiencies. During peak recreational periods, delays on I-93 can reach 30 minutes. The proposed project would eliminate this delay and make it much easier to reach tourist destinations and allow business traffic to reach their offices and make deliveries without delay. Within this segment there are also red-list bridges that are critical to the continued use of the corridor.

Today the Interstate in Bow reduces from 3 lanes in each direction to 2 lanes in each direction. The proposed project will add a lane in each direction to increase capacity, to reduce congestion, improve travel time and improve safety. This will extend the 6 lane typical section through Concord so traffic is able to more easily reach the connecting roadways. The red-list bridge will be rebuilt as part of the capacity improvements thus ensuring the long term ability of traffic to move through the region. Businesses in the area rely on these connections daily to facilitate delivery of goods and services.

The project is consistent with state of good repair plans for NHDOT and appears in New Hampshire's approved Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan. You can find letters of support for the project, grant attachments, and additional information on the webpage at <http://www.i93bowconcord.com>

It is important to note that New Hampshire receives the lowest total annual federal formula apportionment of all the states for transportation, therefore investing in larger projects such as this one limits the Department's ability to address smaller much needed projects elsewhere in the State. The proposed application represents a significant investment for the regional transportation needs that will help maintain and enhance the quality of life for the area residents and promote economic development, and ensure the continued economic vitality of the region and state. The Department is committing a sizeable portion of state funds to the project to leverage the requested INFRA grant for this rural project. The INFRA grant would be a significant boost towards accomplishing this much needed project, and it would reduce the need for bonding and allow construction to begin sooner consequently lowering the overall project cost.

New Hampshire is grateful for the opportunity to submit this application and appreciates the consideration of the U.S. Department of Transportation to help our state. We look forward to hearing from you upon completion of the review process and hope for a positive decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Victoria F. Sheehan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "V".

Victoria F. Sheehan
Commissioner