



# SouthEastern Montana Development Corporation

*Growing Montana ~ One Job at a Time*

6200 Main Street  
P.O. Box 1935  
Colstrip, MT 59323  
Phone/Fax (406) 748-2990  
E-mail: jatchison@semdc.org  
Website: www.semdc.org

May 16, 2022

Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
US Secretary of Transportation  
1200Nw Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**RE: Support for FY2022 RURAL Grant Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As the Executive Director for Southeastern Montana Development (SEMDC), I am strongly endorsing the Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of numerous old timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

SEMDC is a regional non-profit economic development group that was formed in 1997 to encourage economic activity in the four (4) Counties of Custer, Powder River, Rosebud, and Treasure. Our track record has documented over 1,100 jobs created or retained and over \$65 million dollars in project assistance since 1997. Since 2005, we have been designated by the State of Montana as a Certified Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) and the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) as an Economic Development District.

Important key issues are as follows:

- 1) **Bundling Saves \$** - thus funding this project would be Mutually Beneficial to all parties,
- 2) **Safety** – Old Age and Wildfires can compromise the structure and thus Save Lives,
- 3) **Small, Isolated and Rural Communities** – Many are economically challenged due to these factors including the elderly and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation and
- 4) **Value-Added Ag and Energy Economy** – These bridges are traffic routes to three (3) Wind Farms being built or operated in eastern MT.

Thus, **SEMDC strongly supports the funding of this proposed project.** If awarded, I feel it would certainly be mutually beneficial to all parties. Please feel free to contact me on any further comments or questions concerning this most urgent matter for public safety.

Sincerely,

Jim Atchison  
Executive Director



April, 26 2022

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

Subject: MPDG RURAL Grant Letter of Support—E. MT Timber Bridges

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Billings Chamber of Commerce would like to lend our support to the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) RURAL funding application for the Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle, assisting with replacement of numerous aging bridge structures in rural Montana.

The Billings Chamber has a long history of voicing support for our eastern Montana rural communities. We know that when eastern Montana does well, Billings does well. Rural infrastructure is no exception. Before the creation of the Montana Infrastructure Coalition, the Billings Chamber convened eastern Montana partner organizations to discuss infrastructure issues and then lobbied those issues at the Montana Legislature. Recently, we supported a much-needed state ARPA grant for broadband deployment in underserved rural areas.

Whether it's water and sewer needs for growing small towns and cities, roads and bridges to ensure our agricultural business can have adequate transportation access, or broadband upgrades that are less an amenity and more a requirement for business, we support our eastern Montana region.

The timber bridges in the grant application bundle are in disrepair, posing safety and economic challenges to our rural communities. As a business organization we recognize the benefits and efficiencies of bundling these bridges rather than replacing them individually over time.

On behalf of our business community, I thank you for your consideration of this grant application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel J. Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DANIEL J. BROOKS  
Business Advocacy Director  
Billings Chamber of Commerce





---

# Montana Association of Counties

*Serving Montana Counties Since 1909*

---

2715 SKYWAY DRIVE, SUITE A, HELENA, MT 59602  
(406) 449-4360 Fax (406) 442-5238  
[www.mtcounties.org](http://www.mtcounties.org)

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

May 13, 2022

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Montana Association of Counties is a member-service organization representing all of Montana's 56 counties. In partnership with the Montana Department of Transportation, we have been working collaboratively to address the critical infrastructure deficiencies throughout Montana. As such, we encourage your full consideration for the Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana. This application has our full support.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Bryson".

Eric Bryson

MACo Executive Director



May 11, 2022

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

Re: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the City of Billings, this letter will confirm my city's full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacing multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

Billings is Montana's largest city and the trade center for eastern Montana. Thousands of Montana residents and visitors from around the country travel between Billings and eastern Montana every day. The infrastructure of eastern Montana is critical to the safety of Billings residents and our local and regional economies.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation and impact damage from ice, stream debris, and vehicles. They are also difficult to repair.

All bridges in the bundle require that load and weight restrictions be posted. Several proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors that provide the only point of access for small communities that rely on these routes as a lifeline for health services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection or alternative to the interstate system. Due to the importance, age and composition of these structures, failure of even a single bridge might be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available at all, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency and severely disrupting the supply chain.



MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits necessary for traffic safety. However, financial limitations delay necessary infrastructure replacement. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle to secure cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time is more expensive, necessitates continued weight load restrictions, hurts commercial traffic and area industry, and increases the risk of catastrophic failure.

On behalf of my community and the traveling public of Montana, I encourage you to approve this grant application and thank you for your consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Cole". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William A. Cole, Mayor

# United States Senate

May 11, 2022

Honorable Secretary Pete Buttigieg  
United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)  
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write to you in support of the Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT's) application for the FY2022 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grants (MPDGs), RSTGP-22-RURAL-22, for the Bridge Replacement Project.

Currently, 19 bridges located within the state of Montana, as identified within the grant application, have exceeded their useful service life. Many of these structures were built in the 1920's and 1930's and have been determined to be unsafe or unable to accommodate heavy freight trucks that rely on these bridges to ensure farm and livestock transport. Without replacement, these bridge structures will further deteriorate and possibly close. This would greatly limit access for residents and travelers, as well as commercial and emergency vehicles utilizing these routes.

If successful, the funding will be used to replace all 19 bridge structures resulting in safer, long lasting bridge-structures that will improve transportation network efficiency, mobility of goods, and accessibly.

I trust you will give this application fair and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines  
United States Senator

# Yellowstone County



COMMISSIONERS  
(406) 256-2701  
(406) 256-2777 (FAX)

P.O. Box 35000  
Billings, MT 59107-5000  
bocc@yellowstonecountymt.gov

May 10, 2022

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

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Yellowstone County Board of County Commissioners, please consider this letter as written confirmation of our full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair.


All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits to notify the public of potential constraints that impact traffic safety. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, we thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.


Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA



---

Donald W. Jones, Chair



---

John Ostlund, Member



---

Denis Pitman, Member



**Montana League of Cities and Towns (MLCT)**  
700 W Custer Ave (59602)  
PO Box 7388  
Helena MT 59604-7388



Phone: (406) 442-8768  
FAX: (406) 442-9231  
Email: [info@mtleague.net](mailto:info@mtleague.net)  
[mtleague.org](http://mtleague.org)

April 26, 2022

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

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of Montana League of Cities and Towns, please consider this letter as written confirmation of our full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits to notify the public of potential constraints that impact traffic safety. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.

Sincerely,

, Executive Director  
Montana League of Cities and Towns

P.O. BOX 47  
FORSYTH, MT 59327  
406-346-2251  
FAX 406-346-7551

# ROSEBUD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Robert E. Lee, Member  
Douglas D. Martens, Member  
Ed Joiner, Member

April 27, 2022

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

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of Rosebud County, please consider this letter as written confirmation of our full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana, particularly in Rosebud County.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of our counties most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair. Some bridges in our area have already had weight limit changes due to the deteriorating stages of the bridges.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain. Many of our ranchers and farmers are dependent on these bridges for their livelihood.


MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits to notify the public of potential constraints that impact traffic safety. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the Rosebud County and our residents, we thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion. As already mentioned, these bridges are necessary for our local producers and their transportation needs.

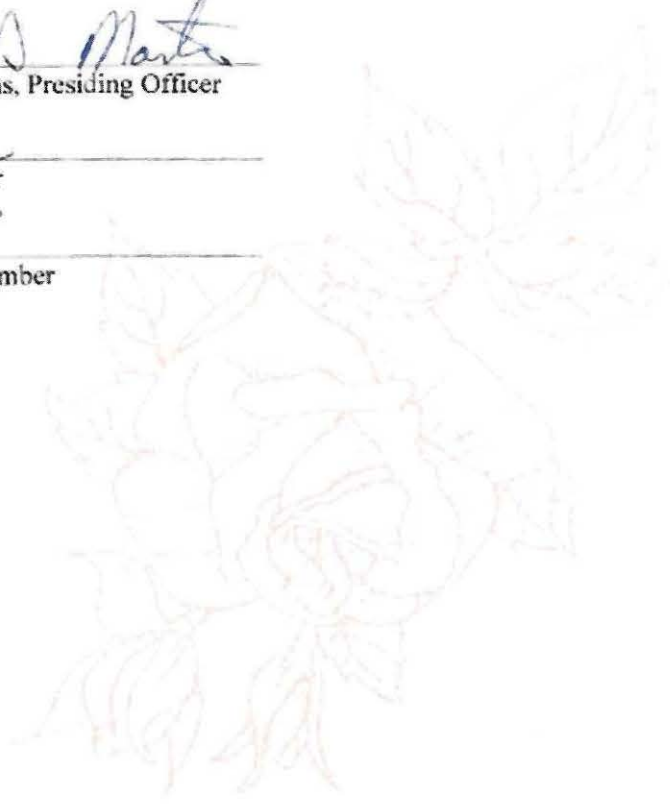
Thank you for your consideration.

ROSEBUD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Douglas D. Martens, Presiding Officer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ed Joiner, Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert E. Lee, Member







April 26, 2022

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

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Montana Chamber of Commerce, please consider this letter as written confirmation of our full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits to notify the public of potential constraints that impact traffic safety. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd O'Hair". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'O' and 'H'.

Todd O'Hair  
President/CEO  
Montana Chamber of Commerce

May 3, 2022

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

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of The City of Harlowton, please consider this letter as written confirmation of our full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits to notify the public of potential constraints that impact traffic safety. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.

Sincerely,



Paul Otten, Mayor  
City of Harlowton



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-2600

May 12, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing to you today to please consider this letter as written confirmation of my full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

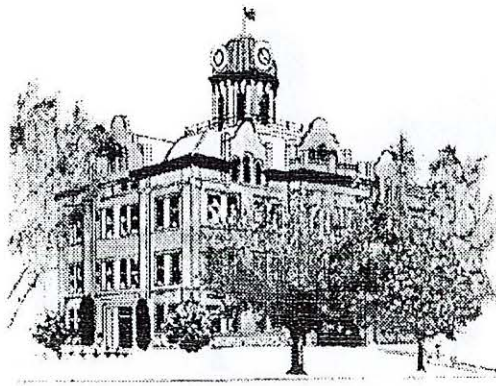
MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits to notify the public of potential constraints that impact traffic safety. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt M. Rosendale, Sr.", written over a light gray grid background.

Matthew Rosendale, Sr.  
Member of Congress



## FERGUS COUNTY

May 16, 2022

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

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of **Fergus County**, please consider this letter as written confirmation of our full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

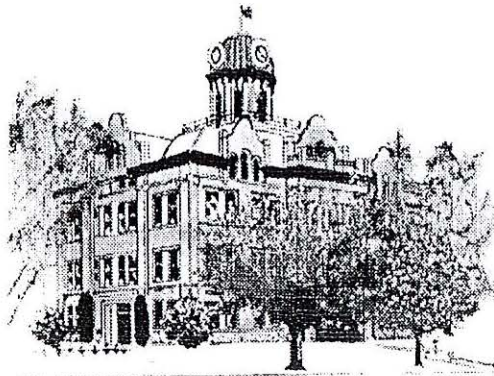
On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.

Fergus County Commissioners  
712 W. Main St., Suite 210  
Lewistown, MT 59457

Ross Butcher, District 1  
Sandy Youngbauer, District 2  
Carl Seilstad, District 3

[commissioners@co.fergus.mt.us](mailto:commissioners@co.fergus.mt.us)





## FERGUS COUNTY

Sincerely,

---

Carl Seilstad

---

Ross Butcher

---

Sandy Youngbauer

Fergus County Commissioners  
712 W. Main St., Suite 210  
Lewistown, MT 59457

[commissioners@co.fergus.mt.us](mailto:commissioners@co.fergus.mt.us)

Ross Butcher, District 1  
Sandy Youngbauer, District 2  
Carl Seilstad, District 3

JON TESTER  
MONTANA

COMMITTEES:  
APPROPRIATIONS  
BANKING  
COMMERCE  
INDIAN AFFAIRS  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SENATE HART BUILDING  
SUITE 311  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510  
202-224-2644

INTERNET:  
tester.senate.gov/contact

# United States Senate

May 13, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary  
US Department of Transportation Office of the Secretary  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write in support of the application by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) for a Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding for the Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project.

Bridges are some of the most critical transportation infrastructure needs in our state, and MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles, and are difficult to repair.

Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

If awarded, this funding will aid in improving safety, resiliency and environmental impacts. Furthermore, it is anticipated to ensure physical-barrier mitigation and includes improved freight access to rural/underserved communities

Thank you for your attention to this application. If I can provide any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would also appreciate you informing my office of the eventual decision on this application.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester  
United States Senator

BOZEMAN  
(406) 586-4450

BUTTE  
(406) 723-3277

GLENDIVE  
(406) 365-2391

GREAT FALLS  
(406) 452-9585

HELENA  
(406) 449-5401

KALISPELL  
(406) 257-3360

BILLINGS  
(406) 252-0550

MISSOULA  
(406) 728-3003





MONTANA TRUCKING ASSOCIATION

501 NORTH SANDERS #201

HELENA MT 59601

406-442-6600

[www.mttrucking.org](http://www.mttrucking.org)

April 26, 2022

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

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of Montana Trucking Association, please consider this letter as written confirmation of our full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits to notify the public of potential constraints that impact traffic safety. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.

Duane Williams, CEO  
Montana Trucking Association



Steven P. Zachmann, Mayor  
Michael Loutzenhiser, Council  
Pat S. Ehret, Council  
Brittany Hoversland, Council  
Tracey Goerndt, Council

Fax - 406-778-2192



Office Phone - 406-778-2692  
Shop Phone - 406-778-2713

Rod Morris,  
Director of Public Works  
Kevin Dukart, Clerk/Treasurer  
Albert R. Batterman, City Attorney

e-mail - dukartk@bakermontana.us

April 26, 2022

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

Subject: FY2022 RURAL Grant: Eastern Montana Timber Bridges Bundle Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the City of Baker Montana, please consider this letter as written confirmation of our full support of Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) application for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) funding to assist in replacement of multiple aging timber bridge structures located in eastern Montana.

This MPDG RURAL grant application addresses deteriorating bridges, one of Montana's most critical transportation infrastructure needs. MDT is proposing a bundled project that will address bridge/culvert structures in varying states of disrepair, most over 70 years old, and at the end of their useful lives. These aging structures are particularly susceptible to environmental degradation, impact damage from ice and stream debris or vehicles and are difficult to repair.

All bridges in the bundle require load and weight restrictions be posted. Several of the proposed structures in the bundle are along national trucking routes/corridors and provide a single point of access for Montana's agricultural and livestock hub and several small communities who rely on these routes as a lifeline for services and industry. Routes are often used by large commercial vehicles as a connection and/or alternative route to the interstate system. Due to the age and composition of these structures, failure of one or more bridges would be catastrophic. Alternative routes, when available, add considerable time and distance for travelers, cutting off efficient access needed in an emergency or disaster and severely disrupting the supply chain.

MDT has committed considerable time and resources posting load and weight limits to notify the public of potential constraints that impact traffic safety. Financial limitations, however, delay necessary replacement needs. MDT is proposing to replace the bridges as a bundle due to cost savings. Replacing the structures individually over time increases costs and impacts to commercial traffic and area industry, increasing the opportunity for catastrophic failure or continued weight load restrictions.

On behalf of the Baker community and the traveling public of Montana, I thank you for your consideration of this important project and look forward to its swift completion.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Steve Zachmann, Mayor of Baker, Montana.

Steve Zachmann, Mayor  
City of Baker, Montana  
P.O. BOX 1512

**City of Baker**  
EEO

BAKER, MONTANA 59313