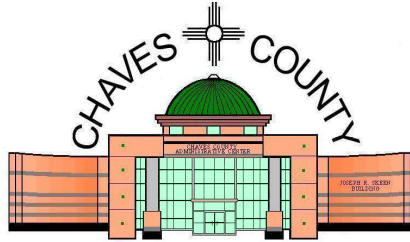


COUNTY MANAGER

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Office of the Secretary of Transportation
2023-2024 Multimodal Project
Discretionary Grant Opportunity (MPDG)
Notice of Funding Opportunity

August 16, 2023

Re: US 380 Safety Improvements

Dear Grant Reviewers:

Please accept this letter in support of using MPDG funds to make safety improvements to US 380 from Roswell to the Texas state line. This two-lane highway is a primary route in and out of New Mexico. It is one of the main avenues of access for tourists coming to Southeastern New Mexico who bring huge sums of money to our economy. US 380 continues to be used heavily for trucks and large equipment supporting the oil and gas industry, which provides much of the funding for all of New Mexico's roads. Highway US 380 is how this oil and gas gets from this basin to other parts of the country to fuel America's economy.

The road also services the regional agricultural economy and is used by farmers and ranchers to get livestock, cattle, calves, and milk as well as crops like pecans, alfalfa, peppers, corn, wheat, peanuts, and cotton to market. In addition, retirees, families, and other adventurers with campers and various recreational vehicles drive Highway US 380 to access Ruidoso and the Lincoln National Forest, the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Roswell's famous UFO and alien museum, and fishing spots and hiking trails along the Pecos River – which Highway US 380 crosses just east of Roswell. This stretch of Highway also allows Tatum residents, a town with less than 300 households, to access jobs as well as shops and services in bigger neighboring municipalities.

These diverse drivers share the rural 2-lane road, one lane in each direction, and because of the constraints and existing condition, the result has been dangerous – often lethal. Slow trucks and farm traffic back up on the two-lane road and impatient drivers attempt unsafe lane changes because there are no passing lanes. Our proposed improvements to Highway US 380 – adding passing lanes at key intervals (every 7-10 miles) while also improving the pavement conditions – would greatly increase safety outcomes and transform this corridor into a way to safely connect communities, facilitate the flow of commerce, and provide safe passage for local and visitors alike. These proposed Highway US 380 improvements align with National Roadway Safety Strategy and DOT's commitment to take "substantial, comprehensive action to significantly reduce serious and fatal injuries on the Nation's roadways." With this funding, we can make that vision a reality for a stretch of southern New Mexico.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "William B. Williams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William B. Williams
County Manager
Chaves County, NM