



State of New Mexico  
**House of Representatives**  
Santa Fé

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August 10, 2023

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

**Re: US 380 Safety Improvements**

Dear Grant Reviewers:


Please accept this letter in support of using MPDG funds to make safety improvements to Highway US 380. Highway US 380 from Roswell, New Mexico, to the Texas state line is a two-lane, east-west oriented rural highway just 100 miles north of the New Mexico/Mexico border. It connects communities across the Southwest, and serves diverse freight, agricultural, and tourist commerce along the way. One of the primary freight uses of this corridor is associated with oil and gas production. New Mexico is a leading producer of crude oil and natural gas, and much of this oil and gas comes from the Permian Basin in southeast New Mexico and west Texas. Highway US 380 is the primary route which oil and gas is transported from this basin to other parts of the country in order to fuel America's economy.

The road also services the regional agricultural economy and is used by cattle ranchers and farmers to transport livestock and a multitude of crops to market. Residents, and tourists equipped with various recreational vehicles, traverse Highway US 380 in order to access nearby recreational areas. The city of Ruidoso, 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 are all popular destinations. This stretch of Highway 380 also allows Tatum residents- a town of less than 300 households- to access jobs, shops and services in larger neighboring municipalities.

This diverse group of motorists converge to share this single Highway; a rural 2-lane road with one lane in each direction. Due to these constraints and existing less than ideal conditions, the results have been dangerous – and sadly, often lethal. Slow trucks and farm traffic back up on the two-lane road causing impatient drivers to attempt unsafe lane changes as there are almost no passing lanes.

Our proposed improvements to Highway US 380, which include adding passing lanes at key intervals (every 7-10 miles) and improving the pavement conditions, would greatly increase motorist safety. These interventions would transform this corridor into a safe, reliable method to connect communities, facilitate the flow of commerce and provide safe passage for locals 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 this busy region of southern New Mexico.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jimmy B. Mason". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Representative Jimmy Mason

District 66