



April 7, 2022

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

To the Honorable Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of Del Mar College, I write this letter to support the City of Corpus Christi's (City) Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant application for the **Yorktown Boulevard Complete Streets Project (Project)**. The Project, located on the Southside of Corpus Christi, will increase capacity and resiliency of the asset while improving safety conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians traveling along the corridor. Yorktown Boulevard is south of Texas State Highway (SH) 358 and runs parallel to SH 358 between the Flour Bluff and Southside areas, which are both experiencing population growth and expanding development.

The **Project** will reconstruct Yorktown Boulevard from Rodd Field Road in the community of Southside to the Oso Creek Bridge east toward the historically disadvantaged area of Flour Bluff, expanding the corridor from two (2) lanes to four (4) lanes with a landscaped median, separated bike facilities, and ADA sidewalk on both sides of the road. Drainage improvements are also a critical element of the project. In addition, to further improve this corridor, TxDOT will be participating in the replacement and improvements to the Oso Creek Bridge, known locally as the Mud Bridge.

Without adequate emergency evacuation routes, the extreme weather conditions resulting from climate change are leaving residents within the Southside and Flour Bluff areas susceptible to storm impacts. For emergency evacuations, the City includes two designated emergency evacuation routes to usher traffic movement inland from Flour Bluff including Yorktown Boulevard and SH 358. SH 358 is a limited access freeway that crosses Oso Bay and the only connection to Padre Island. Yorktown Boulevard is the only alternative evacuation route to SH 358 because it also crosses the Oso Bay.

The **Project** is the next step in the City's effort to improve community resilience by improving east-west service capacity for the area's only other evacuation alternative. The project will also improve community connectivity and provide critical safety improvements for residents and visitors to the area through multimodal facilities and access management.

The Yorktown Boulevard corridor is vital to local economic and community development in the Southside and Flour Bluff areas. For Del Mar College, the **Project** will benefit the Oso Creek Campus located at the north west corner of the intersection of Yorktown Boulevard and Rodd Field Road. The Project provides increased and improved access to the Campus which consists of three main Academic buildings of approximately 250,000 gross square feet offering specialized courses in Culinary Arts, Architecture, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math as well as core curriculum classes. In addition, Del Mar College has partnered with the City of Corpus Christi for the construction of City of Corpus Christi Police Training Academy that is located on Oso Creek campus. Del Mar College is also partnering with the Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority (CCRTA) for two new major bus stops which will be on Yorktown Boulevard and Rodd Field Road. The **Project** made the implementation of these bus stops a high priority to CCRTA. The Project's improved pedestrian access and ADA accessibility provide additional benefit to Del Mar College in that families living in the neighborhoods near Oso Creek Campus can walk or ride their bicycle to the Campus. Del Mar College partnered with the City of Corpus Christi to construct a pedestrian path and a bridge across the drainage channel to provide increased pedestrian access to Yorktown Boulevard and Rodd Field Road. The benefit of this improved pedestrian access to Oso Creek is an additional benefit of the **Project**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Escamilla', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mark S. Escamilla, Ph.D.
President/CEO