



June 24, 2014

Charles Zelle, Commissioner  
Minnesota Department of Transportation  
395 John Ireland Blvd, Mail Stop 100  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Commissioner Zelle:

Thank you for recently taking the time to tour Highway 14 with Senator Klobuchar, making stops in several communities to hear how this highway affects the region's economic development and safety. Your support for the Corridors of Commerce program and completing the four lane expansion of Highway 14 from Rochester to New Ulm is deeply appreciated by the commuters, farmers, and businesses that rely on this corridor. We look forward to continued discussions on the investment needed to meet Minnesota's infrastructure needs, including Highway 14.

While Minnesotans engage in this serious transportation conversation, the local chambers along Highway 14 urge you to invest 2014 Corridors of Commerce program funding in Highway 14 project development. The availability of a Trunk Highway Fund appropriation provides the flexibility for right of way acquisition out of the program—purchases that are needed to make the unfinished segments of Highway 14 shovel-ready. This is an opportunity that should be captured.

MnDOT estimates show that \$25-28 million in right of way is needed for the Owatonna to Dodge Center Phase 2 and 3 expansions. The estimated right of way cost from west Nicollet through the New Ulm Highway 14/15 interchange is \$16-19 million.

Our members are grateful that MnDOT recognized that Highway 14 is southern Minnesota's "Corridor of Commerce" in the 2013 project authorizations. Our region's economy is the strongest in the state, but lack of a consistent four-lane corridor presents shipping delays, recruitment concerns, and missed development opportunities. An investment from the 2014 Corridors of Commerce program funds would not only continue upon the progress that is presently being made on Highway 14, but accelerate the ability

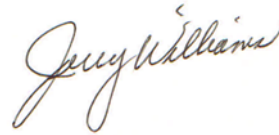
to finish the corridor once a comprehensive transportation package is passed—a fact that could help build business and public support for this investment.

Again, we thank you for the time and attention that you have given Highway 14 during your tenure as Commissioner. We look forward to continued collaboration toward providing the infrastructure that is needed to support our growing economy.

Sincerely,



Audra Shaneman, President/CEO  
New Ulm Area Chamber of Commerce



Jerry Williams, Interim President  
Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce



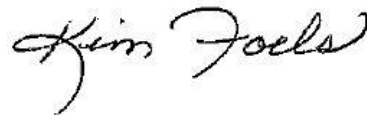
Jonathan Zierdt, President/CEO  
Greater Mankato Growth



Alesia Slater, President  
Nicollet Chamber of Commerce



Jennifer Libby, President/CEO  
Owatonna Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism



Kim Foels, President  
Waseca Area Chamber of Commerce

CC: Governor Mark Dayton