

# Funding Commitment

---



**Office of the Executive Director**  
**Tim J. Gatz**  
200 NE 21<sup>st</sup> St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
(405) 522-1800

September 10, 2024

Amit Bose Administrator  
Federal Railroad Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue  
SE Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Bose

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) supports the Regional Transportation Authority of Central Oklahoma (RTA)'s request for FY24 Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program funding to support the Prioritizing Crossings to Save Lives in Central Oklahoma Project (Project).

This critical planning project will complete a comprehensive master planning effort evaluating 52 at-grade crossings within the urban areas serviced by the RTA. The RTA, in partnership with BNSF and the cities of Edmond, Oklahoma City, and Norman, seeks to use 37 miles of the existing BNSF freight network through Oklahoma City for the proposed North/South commuter rail service. Due to a history of incidents at the at-grade crossings within the RTA's service area, this Project seeks to develop a prioritization matrix identifying grade-separation, safety improvements, and closure projects that provide the greatest benefits to disadvantaged communities, safety, emissions, accessibility to emergency services, community connectivity, and good jobs.

The Project will lead to the elimination of highway-rail grade crossings, thus reducing the impacts of freight and railroad operations on underserved communities while also supporting the RTA's proposed North/South commuter rail service. Oklahoma is the 28<sup>th</sup> most populous state yet was ranked 17<sup>th</sup> for the most highway-rail grade crossing collisions based on the 2023 Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) analysis of U.S. grade-crossing trends. Oklahomans are disproportionately at risk of collisions at at-grade rail crossings.

ODOT is a strong supporter of the RTA and is committing the non-federal match of \$100,000 for this priority project in Central Oklahoma. The RTA is requesting \$400,000 (80%) in funding from the FY24 RCE Grant. The Project is in alignment with the goals for addressing safety challenges in ODOT's Highway-Rail Grade Crossing State Action Plan and ODOT's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. ODOT is pleased to support the RTA's RCE grant application for the Project. Thank you for your consideration of this important project and please don't hesitate to contact my office with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tim J. Gatz", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Tim J. Gatz,  
Executive Director

c: Dawn Sullivan, P.E.

*"The mission of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is to provide a safe, economical, and effective transportation network for the people, commerce and communities of Oklahoma."*

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER