



RESOLUTION TITLE: RESOLUTION TO SUPPORT APPLICATION TO U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S 2023 REBUILDING AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE WITH SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY (RAISE) GRANT PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Transportation's ("USDOT") Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity ("RAISE") provides funding for capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure; and,

WHEREAS, the Catawba Crossings Feasibility Study was completed in August 2022 and evaluates a 6.5-mile new location alignment between NC 279 (S. New Hope Road) in southeastern Gaston County to NC 160 (Steele Creek Road) in western Mecklenburg County; and,

WHEREAS, the Catawba Crossings ("the Project") would include new bridges over the South Fork Catawba River and Catawba River (collectively impounded in Lake Wylie) and a new, or expanded, interchange with I-485 south of the existing West Boulevard interchange; and,

WHEREAS, the Catawba River creates a natural barrier between western Mecklenburg County (NC), southeastern Gaston County (NC), and northeastern York County (SC) and considering the existing transportation deficiencies and the amount of future development planned in the region, there is a significant need to address congestion, increase mobility options, improve the vitality and resiliency of the regional transportation network, and enhance quality of life (e.g., reduced travel time, travel time reliability); and,

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Project is to improve mobility for all roadway users, including inter- and intrastate trips, within and between Gaston, Mecklenburg, and York counties by providing an additional connection over the Catawba River in an environmentally sensitive manner and establishing direct access to other regional transportation facilities, including the Charlotte Douglas International Airport; and,

WHEREAS, according to the Gaston County CLT Airport Connected Economic Positioning Strategy (2018), by virtue of providing a direct connection to CLT South, the Catawba Crossings Project would dramatically improve economic development and employment opportunities in Gaston County in addition to providing a secondary relief route for vehicle congestion on I-85 and US 29/74; and,

WHEREAS, the Project is included in both the Gaston-Cleveland-Lincoln Metropolitan Planning Organization (GCLMPO) and Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO) Comprehensive Transportation Plans (CTPs); and,

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I, Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the County Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

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WHEREAS, while funding has not yet been identified for this Project, the utilization of federal funding, federal permits, and/or federal authorizations are likely; and,

WHEREAS, it is highly reasonable to assume that this Project will be advanced through a rigorous planning and design process that meets the statutory requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other applicable federal, state, and local environmental laws and regulations; and,

WHEREAS, a comprehensive alternatives analysis will likely be required as part of the NEPA process and will include a No-Build Alternative, Mass Transit and Multimodal Alternatives, Traffic Management of Existing Roadways Alternatives, Improvement of Existing Roadways Alternatives, and New Alignment Alternatives; and,

WHEREAS, the completion of an environmental document for the Project will ensure that potential impacts to the social and natural environment are considered as well as the transportation needs of the public in reaching a decision that is in the best overall public interest (23 USC 109(h)).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gaston County Board of Commissioners hereby declares support for the Catawba Crossings Project and the RAISE Grant application for funding to complete an environmental document for the Project.

Adopted this 28th day of February, 2023.

Chad Brown, Chairman

ATTEST:

Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the Board

Certificate

The undersigned duly qualified Clerk of the Gaston County Board of County Commissioners certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted at a legally convened meeting of Gaston County held on February 28, 2023.

Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the Board Date

(SEAL)