



SOUTHEASTERN
A CENTURY OF BUILDING FUTURES

September 10, 2009

James H. Dunegan, City Manager
City of Durant
P. O. Box 578
Durant, OK 74701

Re: Letter of Commitment: *Partnerships Supporting Economic Recovery*

Dear Mr. Dunegan:

Thank you so much for working with Southeastern Oklahoma State University to identify transportation needs related to our campus. We appreciate the partnership between the university and the city of Durant to jointly improve streets serving our campus. We also appreciate your willingness to seek funding to invest in other transportation and pedestrian safety improvements that will benefit our university community.

With the recent opening of the new Bloomer Sullivan Arena with seating over 3000 and our growing enrollment of over 4100 students, additional traffic congestion in and around our campus is a growing problem that must be addressed. In addition, the traffic on Highway 78 (N. 1st Avenue) that divides our campus has become a major pedestrian safety issue. Depending on the event, potentially hundreds if not thousands of pedestrians must try to cross a highway with a daily traffic count of over 6600 vehicles a day, a high percentage of which are gravel trucks hauling rock from quarries to the north. A pedestrian bridge would greatly alleviate the pedestrian safety issues at this location.

Widening Highway 78 (N. 1st Avenue) would also serve to reduce traffic congestion around our campus. As you know, northbound Highway 78 reduces in width when it reaches our campus from three lanes to two lanes. It would be a huge benefit to traffic flow and safety to widen this highway at least as far as the narrow bridge approximately 1000 feet north of our campus. This bridge has no roadway shoulder and is a safety hazard. The widening of Highway 78 (N. 1st Avenue) to add a turn lane will also improve traffic safety for vehicles both north and south bound who are making a left turn to access the campus. This benefit is even greater due to the fact that the campus spans both sides of Highway 78.

The City of Durant and Southeastern Oklahoma State University have a long history of working together as partners to find solutions to the issues that we have faced together. The partnership between the city and the university to fund improvements to the university's football stadium and to fund the construction of a new arena represent over \$9,000,000 in projects for the university made possible through city sales tax funds. We deeply appreciate our mutual efforts to build for the future. The requested funding for the improvements on

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
SOUTHEASTERN OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Highway 78 will directly benefit the stadium and arena projects and will serve our growing university community and provide economic benefits for Durant and southeastern Oklahoma.

We commit to you our full cooperation and continued partnership to work together to find solutions to traffic and pedestrian safety issues. Thank you again for your courtesy and cooperation. We look forward to continuing to work together as partners to improve our city and our university.

Sincerely,



Larry Minks

Interim President

Southeastern Oklahoma State University