

July 1, 2021

Peter Paul Montgomery Buttigieg
Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Oglala Sioux Tribe RAISE Planning Grant 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

The purpose of this letter is to report safety concerns from the Road Maintenance Department on BIA Route 2 from Kyle to South Dakota Highway 44.

The Oglala Sioux Tribe Department of Transportation is responsible for snow removal on all arterial routes, bus routes, and emergency access roads. This 20-mile stretch of BIA Route 2 from Kyle to SD Hwy 44 is very narrow, has sharp curves and many hills. Plowing snow on this section is extremely dangerous because it is hard for people to see our plows when we are on the other side of a hill or around a curve. Since there isn't a shoulder, we must crowd the centerline to not get pulled into the ditch and unfortunately the width that is plowed is narrower than the existing road. A narrower road is challenging for larger vehicles like OST Transit buses, school buses and landfill trucks not to mention the semi-trucks that use the highway. Additionally, this route has worse snow drifting than some of our other arterial highways due to the steep backslopes on the north side. School buses must periodically stop and without shoulders, and especially when snow is piled up on the side of the road, it is extremely dangerous for the drivers and children.

On several occasions, the snow plow has had a hard time climbing the steep hills and ends up sideways in the road which is very scary because another vehicle could be coming from the other direction. Also, we've had trouble with a snow plow getting too close to the edge of the road and getting pulled off from the snow, getting stuck and then being in a dangerous situation.

During the warmer seasons, maintenance takes place, including filling potholes, sign replacements, and mowing. The asphalt pavement on this

road has lots of cracks and it seems every year there are more potholes. Again, without a shoulder to park maintenance vehicles on, it is very difficult to safely perform maintenance activities. And mowing on the steep side slopes causes damage to our equipment, which is very costly. Our road maintenance budget is already very low, and we cannot afford to pay for constant repairs of vehicles due to bad road conditions.

We fully support this project. In addition to huge improvement it would bring to Tribal Members, it would also benefit our Road Maintenance Department and the personnel.

Please consider the Oglala Sioux Tribe's application for this grant.

Sincerely,

NAME  A.V. Eye Shunder
TITLE  Admin Director
OST Road Maintenance