

To: BUILD Grant Officials
Regarding: The Nielsville Bridge
Ervin Township, Traill County, ND

Dear BUILD Grant Personnel:

We continue to have a serious and severe problem in our township in Traill County, which is affecting us and may permanently impair our economy.

The Nielsville Bridge between North Dakota and Minnesota has fallen into disrepair and has been closed indefinitely for three years. Our county does not have the resources necessary to replace the bridge and will need help to procure funds for the building of a new structure. Please consider us for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) grant.

As a township, we have seen extra stress on our roads because of the diversion of traffic due to the closing of this bridge.

According to numbers shared with us, upwards of 500 vehicles per day had been crossing this bridge during peak season. This included 10,500 empty Trans-Systems trucks per year to bring sugar beets to the Hillsboro sugar beet factory to be processed. These jobs provide revenue to our area, all of North Dakota, and Minnesota. If a new bridge were to be constructed they would use the bridge for both loaded and empty trucks accounting for 21,000 trucks passing across just for this single commodity. Local farmers, businesses, and general citizens currently feel the pressure of this traffic due to the closing of the bridge.

Emergency services have been greatly impacted in our area, especially for our neighbors to the east in Bingham Township. Our fire/first responder district has had mutual aid with the Nielsville fire department, which is only a short distance across the river. It has left the residents of our township and Bingham township with a response time much longer than needed. This is a very important issue with our residents. From an insurance perspective, their rates will continue to go up and property values will go down because of a lack of access.

We are asking for your help with this difficult situation because its implications to our area are immense. As a township, we understand fully how difficult it is to appropriate funds on a small budget and understand how this project is too large for our county. This is a project critical to our area, the state of North Dakota, and Minnesota.

Sincerely,

Paul A. Mueller; Chairman

Ervin Township Board

Paul A. Mueller, Randy Fitzner, Lane Magnuson