



PORTS-TO-PLAINS ALLIANCE

Securing the Benefits of Commerce to
North America's Energy & Agricultural Heartland

News Release - For Immediate Release

September 20, 2016

Contact: Michael Reeves
(806) 775-2338
michael.reeves@portstoplains.com

SDDOT Recommends Heartland Expressway and Theodore Roosevelt Expressway as Critical to Rural Freight Movement

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) closed a comment period on September 6, 2016 allowing state departments of transportation (DOTs) to make recommendations to the Undersecretary of Transportation for Policy on critical rural freight facilities and corridors that should be included in the National Multimodal Freight Network (NMFN). The NMFN looks to the future with the purpose of assisting states in directing resources, informing freight transportation planning, and assisting in prioritization of Federal investment.

The Theodore Roosevelt Expressway Association, Ports-to-Plains Alliance and South Dakota Department of Transportation submitted comments urging USDOT to include the Heartland Expressway, the Theodore Roosevelt Expressway and the Ports-to-Plains Corridor in this Final National Multimodal Freight Network.

The Theodore Roosevelt Expressway Association provided comment asking USDOT to *“Consider inclusion of the congressionally designated High Priority Corridors on the National Highway System, Including the Heartland Expressway from Rapid City south to Nebraska and U.S. Highway 85 from the South Dakota/North Dakota state line to Interstate 90 at Spearfish, South Dakota, as a Critical Rural Freight Facility and Corridor (CRFFC).”*

Michael Reeves, President of the Ports-Alliance, submitted the following request: *“The Alliance respectfully requests the Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy to include in the Final National Multimodal Freight Network the Ports-to-Plains Alliance Corridor, which is made up of congressionally-designated high priority corridors and is critical to international freight movements.”* Reeves also stated *“The Alliance requests the Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy to give special consideration to comments made by states that identify portions of the Ports-to-Plains Alliance Corridor that meet the criteria for Critical Rural Freight Facilities and Corridors for inclusion in the National Multimodal Freight Network.”*

South Dakota DOT recommended the Theodore Roosevelt Expressway via US 85 from I-90 to North Dakota stating *“(It) Provides connectivity and access to numerous intermodal facilities with origins, destinations, and movement within the US. Has volume and tonnage of strategic importance, particularly in international trade. Provides service for equipment and supplies to the oil fields in North Dakota. Accesses major areas of agricultural production and livestock auction facilities located along the route. The route provides intermodal links and intersections that promote connectivity. The route provides access to major agriculture resource areas producing significant products for global and domestic supply chains. US 85 has truck traffic of 20-40 percent along some sections. The route is a*

Congressional High Priority Corridor. The route meets the following conditions to qualify as a NMFN route: Is a principal arterial. Provides access and service to energy exploration, development, installation, and production areas. Provides access or service to agricultural facilities. Provides access to significant rail and other freight facilities. Has been determined by the state to be vital to improve the efficient movement of freight of importance to the economy of the state.” Additionally South Dakota recommended the Heartland Expressway writing “*US 385/US18/SD79/US16B from Nebraska to I-90. The route enhances factors required to be considered by the Under Secretary: Provides connectivity and access to numerous intermodal facilities with origins, destinations, and movement within the US. Has volume and tonnage of strategic importance, particularly in international trade. Portion of the corridor is a STRAHNET Connector Route providing access to Ellsworth Air Force Base. The corridor provides intermodal links and intersections that promote connectivity. The corridor provides access to major agriculture resource areas producing significant products for global and domestic supply chains. The corridor has truck traffic of 20-30 percent along some sections. The corridor is a Congressional High Priority Corridor. This corridor is a part of the CanAm Highway. The corridor meets the following conditions to qualify as a NMFN corridor: Is a principal arterial. Provides access and service to energy exploration, development, installation, and production areas. Provides access to significant rail and other freight facilities. Has been determined by the state to be vital to improve the efficient movement of freight of importance to the economy of the state.”*

In addition to these comments, the state departments of transportation in Texas, Colorado, Nebraska, Wyoming, North Dakota, and Montana also recommended the entire corridor for inclusion the Final National Multimodal Freight Network. The USDOT has until December 4, 2016 to make the final designations for the NMFN.

-30-

Ports-to-Plains is a grassroots alliance of over 275 communities and businesses, including alliance partners Heartland Expressway, Theodore Roosevelt Expressway and Eastern Alberta Trade Corridor Coalition, whose mission is to advocate for a robust international transportation infrastructure to promote economic security and prosperity throughout North America's energy and agricultural heartland including Mexico to Canada. Additional information on the Ports-to-Plains Alliance is available at <http://www.portstoplains.com/>.