



June 17, 2019

Dean Haselhorst, Chairman
Ellis County Board of Commissioners
718 Main Street
Hays, KS 67601

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Northwest Kansas Economic Innovation Center, Inc. (NWKEICI), is a private operating foundation that serves twenty-six counties in northwest Kansas. As the President/CEO of the NWKEICI, I write to support Ellis County's efforts to seek funding from the federal Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) discretionary grant program for the Northwest Business Corridor project. The Northwest Business Corridor provides four principal advantages to the Hays community:

- Better access to federal highways for the transportation-dependent businesses located along the Corridor.
- Improved safety for the workers and visitors who travel the Corridor on a daily basis.
- A bypass route around the City of Hays for large loads that cannot safely pass under the I-70 bridge over U.S. Route 183.
- The potential for continued development of the business corridor, including new developments to serve the traveling public.

One of the main objectives of the NWKEICI is to reverse the population drain occurring in northwest Kansas. The continued development of this business corridor in Hays is instrumental in retaining current businesses and also in attracting new businesses. According to an economic impact study conducted by Wichita State University, Hess Manufacturing (a current business) would add an estimated 175 new jobs to Ellis County over a ten-year period with approximately 40% of people moving into Ellis and adjacent counties for those jobs.

Please accept the NWKEICI's support for this important project and feel free to include this letter with your grant application. We hope the U.S. Department of Transportation will look favorably upon Ellis County's grant request. Please contact me if I can answer further questions about our support for the Northwest Business Corridor project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Sproul". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Scott Sproul
President/CEO