



**2022 RAISE Grant**

*Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity*

**PROJECT ACCESS YORK  
Project Narrative**

**City of York, Nebraska, 68467**

**FY 2022 RAISE Project Information Form - All Fields Required**  
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**WHEN SUBMITTING TO AVOID PROCESSING ERRORS\*\***



Field Name	Response	Instructions
Project Name	Project Access York	Enter a <b>concise</b> , descriptive <b>title</b> for the project. This should be the same title used in the Grants.gov SF-424 submission and the application narrative.
Project Description	Project Access York will build pedestrian safety infrastructure for York that includes a pedestrian overpass over a busy highway that intersects the city, pedestrian trails for access to jobs, food and quality of life amenities, and safe cross-walks for schools.	Describe the project in plain English terms, using <b>no more than 100 words</b> . For example, "The project will fund construction activities for streetcar service from location X to location Y" or "the RAISE grant will replace the existing bridge over the W river on Interstate-X between the cities of Y and Z." Please <b>do not</b> describe the project's benefits, background, or alignment with the selection criteria in this description field.
Urban/Rural	Rural	Identify whether the project is <b>located in a rural or urban area</b> , using the drop-down menu. For RAISE 2022, a project is designated as urban if it is located within (or on the boundary of) a Census-designated urbanized area that had a population greater than 200,000 in the 2010 Census. If a project is located outside a Census-designated urbanized area with a population greater than 200,000, it is designated as a rural project.
Urbanized Area		If you have identified the project as "urban," please select the <b>associated 2010 Census-designated urbanized area (UA)</b> from the drop-down. If you identified the project as "rural" but it is located in an UA with a population under 200,000, please select the UA from the drop-down. If you have identified the project as "rural" and it is located outside an urbanized area, please select "Not located in an urbanized area" from the drop-down.
Capital or Planning	Capital	Identify the project as <b>capital</b> or <b>planning</b> .  The " <b>capital</b> " designation is for projects that requesting funding for the construction of surface transportation capital infrastructure.  The " <b>planning</b> " designation is for projects that are requesting funding primarily for planning, preparation, or design of eligible surface transportation capital projects.
Amount Requested	\$15,625,000	Enter the <b>total amount of RAISE funds requested</b> for this project in this application. [See Section B.2 for minimum and maximum award size]
Project Location County	NE - York County	<b>Identify the county</b> where the project is located in using the drop-down. If the project is located in more than one county, please identify the county in which the majority of the project is located.
Additional Project Counties		<b>Identify additional counties separated by a comma</b> . For instance, if the project additionally runs through Middlesex County and Suffolk County, please enter 'Middlesex County, Suffolk County' in the cell.



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Field Name	Response	Instructions
US DOT FY22 Discretionary Application?	N/A	If the applicant intends to submit this project to another FY 2022 USDOT discretionary grant program, please list the name of the program(s).
Other Federal Agency Assistance?	N/A	If this project has applied for another Federal (non-USDOT) financial assistance or capacity-building program, please list the name of the program(s).
Total Project Cost	\$16,353,030	Enter the <b>total cost of the project</b> . This should equal the sum of Total Federal Funding and Total Non-Federal Funding. <i>This value may not be less than the amount requested.</i>
Total Federal Funding	\$15,625,000	Enter the <b>amount of funds committed to the project from ALL Federal sources including the proposed RAISE amount</b> . <i>This value may not be less than the amount requested.</i>  For RAISE projects designated as urban, Federal funding cannot exceed 80% of total project cost unless the project is located in a rural area, historically disadvantaged community, or an area of persistent poverty as defined in the RAISE NOFO.
Total Non-Federal Funding	\$728,030	Enter the <b>amount of funds committed to the project from non-Federal sources</b> . For RAISE projects designated as urban, the total non-Federal funding amount must be greater than or equal to 20% of the project cost unless the project is located in a rural area, a historically disadvantaged community, or an area of persistent poverty as defined in the RAISE NOFO.
Tribal Government?	No	Select "Yes" from the drop-down menu if the applicant is a <b>Federally recognized tribal government</b> .
Tribal Benefits?	N/A	<b>If the applicant is not a Federally recognized tribal government</b> , is the project located on tribal land? And if not, does it have direct tribal benefits? Answer using the drop-down menu.
Private Corporation Involvement	No	Does this project <b>involve (a) private entity(ies) that will receive a direct and predictable financial benefit</b> if the project is selected for award? This includes, but is not limited to, private owners of infrastructure facilities being improved and private freight shippers or carriers directly benefitting from completion of the proposed project.
Private Corporation Name(s)	N/A	<b>If this project directly involves or benefits a specific private corporation</b> , please list the corporation(s) separated by a comma.
TIFIA/RRIF?	No	Is the project currently, or does this project anticipate applying for Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act ( <b>TIFIA</b> ) or Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing ( <b>RRIF</b> ) <b>loans</b> ?
Department Financing Program?	Yes	If your application is unsuccessful, would you like to be contacted about the <b>Department's financing program</b> ?

## **Areas Affected by Project**

The pedestrian safety infrastructure in the project impacts far more than the 8,000 residents of York, Nebraska. York sits on the intersection of Interstate 80 and Highway 81. Over 28 million vehicles go through this intersection each year. Of these vehicles, over 7 million are trucks carrying freight across the country. About 90,000 families stay in York overnight in a year<sup>1</sup> and many more stop for food, gas, shopping and other attraction and events. About \$5.5 million gets spent by travelers, workers and residents on businesses related to this interstate exchange each year.

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<sup>1</sup> Estimate based on \$9,000,000 in 2021 lodging revenues divided by \$100 for an average hotel room cost.



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- York County Development Corporation
- York Chamber of Commerce
- Four Corners Health Coalition
- York Public Schools
- York State Bank

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Access York builds pedestrian trails and pedestrian safety infrastructure that includes a pedestrian overpass over a busy state highway that intersects the city and cross walk lights for street crossings for schools near streets with heavy traffic.

The project addresses three major transportation challenges for residents and visitors to York: 1) unsafe pedestrian conditions in an area of high use by travelers and residents; 2) unsafe crossing conditions for York students; and 3) inadequate pedestrian/bike trails. The project addresses the unsafe pedestrian conditions and inadequate trails with active transportation trails, expansion of curb cuts on existing sidewalks and a pedestrian overpass. The project addresses the unsafe school crossing condition with solar pedestrian cross walk lights.

The pedestrian infrastructure elements proposed in the project have long been identified as needs in the community. A grant that would allow the city to complete all these projects by 2026 would dramatically change the safety and opportunity space of our community. The sustainability climate change goals of the project also fit into recent sustainability efforts by the city of York. By the summer of 2022 100% of the electric power used by the City of York, York County, and York Public Schools will be solar, which means that 100% of the electric energy use by York community governments will be carbon free and renewable.

Project Access York clearly fits into the aim of Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity. The project builds infrastructure elements that have been identified by diverse mix of community members as key priorities for our infrastructure project pipeline, but that may never happen without game-changing outside funding. The pedestrian safety measures directly address barriers to opportunity created by automobile dependence in ways that will increase access to jobs, school, and recreational opportunities. While the infrastructure is critical for those without automobile access, it also provides greater opportunity for all residents and visitors to reduce automobile dependence and consequently reduce carbon emissions by choosing to walk or bike to work, shop and enjoy recreational facilities in York.

York sits at the intersection of Interstate 80 and Highway 81, so it is a major transportation hub for travel and trucking. Over 28 million vehicles go through this intersection annually. About 90,000 hotel rooms are filled annually. The pedestrian infrastructure in Project Access York connects to this broader transportation network and provides benefits in terms of ease and safety of pedestrian movement to those who come through this major transportation hub. Charging stations are also located in this intersection and the proposed infrastructure connects to these charging stations.

The city of York has energetic and progressive leaders in all sectors of the community who step up and get big projects done. The city of York is ready and able to commit to the major infrastructure components in this grant with every confidence that all sectors of our community will be partners and that all sectors of our community, and the environment, will benefit. We are ready to rebuild and expand on our pedestrian infrastructure for sustainability and equity that results in a dramatic and game-changing overall benefit to our community, travelers, and the environment for years to come.

## I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Access York will build pedestrian safety infrastructure for York that includes a pedestrian overpass over a busy state highway that intersects the city, pedestrian trails for access to jobs, food, and quality of life amenities and cross walk lights for street crossings for schools near streets with heavy traffic.

The pedestrian safety infrastructure in the project impacts far more than the 8,000 residents of York. York sits on the intersection of Interstate 80 and Highway 81. Over 28 million vehicles go through this intersection each year<sup>1</sup>. Of these vehicles, over 7 million are trucks carrying freight across the country<sup>2</sup>. About 90,000 families stay in York overnight in a year<sup>3</sup> and many more stop for food, gas, shopping and other attraction and events. About \$5.5 million gets spent by travelers, workers and residents on businesses related to this interstate exchange each year<sup>4</sup>.

The project addresses three major transportation challenges for residents, workers, and visitors to York: 1) unsafe pedestrian conditions in an area of high use by travelers and residents; 2) unsafe crossing conditions for York students; and 3) inadequate pedestrian/bike trails. The project addresses the unsafe pedestrian conditions with pedestrian trails and a pedestrian overpass. The project addresses the unsafe school crossing condition with cross walk lights. The project addresses the inadequate trails challenge by completing trails identified by residents of the city as needed trails.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has a clear purpose of funding infrastructure opportunities that have long been in a community's strategic planning project pipeline, but that may never get completed without the availability of a game-changing funding opportunity like the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Project Access York clearly fits this purpose. The pedestrian infrastructure elements proposed in the project have long been identified as needs in the community. A grant that would allow the city to complete all these projects by 2026 would dramatically change the safety and opportunity space of our community.

The sustainability goal of Project Access York of reducing automobile dependency also fits recent sustainability efforts by the city of York. The city has worked with our local power provider (Nebraska Public Power District) and a solar power company to move to 100% carbon-free electricity use. By the summer of 2022, 100% of the electric power used by the City of York, York County, and York Public Schools will be solar, which means that 100% of the electric energy use by York community governments will be carbon free and renewable.

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<sup>1</sup> Nebraska Department of Transportation Average Annual Daily Traffic (2021) website shows 77,175 vehicles going through the intersection daily (<https://gis.ne.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8ed4b009b0d546f19f0284e5bba0f972>).

<sup>2</sup> Nebraska Department of Transportation Average Daily Traffic (2021) website reports 20,025 trucks going through the intersection daily (<https://gis.ne.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8ed4b009b0d546f19f0284e5bba0f972>).

<sup>3</sup> Estimate based on \$9,000,000 in 2021 lodging revenues divided by \$100 for an average hotel room cost.

<sup>4</sup> Estimate based on Nebraska Department of Revenue estimate that 28% of York sales tax revenues derive from interstate-dependent businesses.



The local power company (Nebraska Public Power District) has facilitated the placement of one set of fast-charging vehicle stations at this York interchange. Conversations are underway to add more charging options to the area north of the interstate.

The need for more pedestrian infrastructure has been identified in community input sessions by residents, leaders, and advocates for years. The 2017 Comprehensive Plan for the city, developed with citizen input, includes expansion of trails as a key priority and designates developing pedestrian infrastructure in the part of the city along highway 81 that runs from the bypass to the interstate as a key priority. The previous City of York Comprehensive Plan, developed in 2006 with resident input, identifies the fast growth of the South Highway 81 and Interstate 80 area a planning challenge for the city. The 2006 document notes that the area grew without adequate frontage road and pedestrian infrastructure. The 2006 report mentions the high numbers of school buses traveling between east and west Nebraska for events that stop in York and how this regularly results in students walking in unsafe conditions to restaurants and convenience stores in the area.

In 2021 and 2022 a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives of diverse and underserved populations and economic development interests have been meeting as a Walkability Coalition to discuss how to improve access to food and walkability in the city with support of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Local Foods Local Places and the Dept. of Health & Human Services Walkability grant, both of which were technical assistance grants to the community.

The Walkability Coalition has conducted planning sessions and walk audits throughout the city with attention to access for low-income populations and access for individuals with disabilities. This effort has identified trail expansion and safe pedestrian infrastructure as priorities. The walkability group has also identified the need for safer crossing for students in schools near busy streets in the city as a priority. (See Four Corners Letter of Support) In 2021, the City Council identified increasing pedestrian trails as a priority for the city in their strategic planning discussions. The 2021-22 budget for the City of York includes funding for a bridge that will connect to the existing trail with pedestrian safety lanes.

The existing pedestrian trail is heavily used and enjoyed by residents. It is short, though, so if one is biking for exercise, for example, one would need to go over and back on the trail multiple times. Also, it runs through a park, so it does not meet needs for pedestrian infrastructure to access jobs and food.

Project Access York clearly fits into the aim of Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity. The project builds infrastructure elements that have been identified by community members as key priorities for our infrastructure project pipeline, but that may never happen without game-changing outside funding. The active transportation measures directly address barriers to opportunity created by automobile dependence in ways that will increase access to jobs, school, and recreational opportunities. While the infrastructure is critical for those without automobile access, it also provides greater opportunity for all residents and visitors to reduce automobile dependence and consequently reduce carbon emissions by choosing to walk or bike to work, shop and enjoy recreational facilities in York.

Project Access York also fits well with a strong commitment by the community of York to reduce barriers for individuals with disabilities. Over the past 2 years our small community has come together to raise over \$1 million for an all-inclusive playground that broke ground this spring. The city and school collaboration that funds recreational and infrastructure projects committed an additional \$250,000 to add fully inclusive restrooms and other inclusive access infrastructure to the park.

### Statement of Work

Project Access York consists of four inter-related pedestrian safety infrastructure components:

- 1) A pedestrian overpass over Highway 81
- 2) Pedestrian trails:
  - a. Village 81 Trails: trails for pedestrians to access to the I-80/81 area and safely move without a car in that area.
  - b. Charging Station Trail: A pedestrian trail from the charging station to a nearby historical attraction.
  - c. Parkway Trails
- 3) School crosswalk safety signals
- 4) Curb cut expansions for pedestrian access and safety

#### 1) Pedestrian Overpass over Highway 81

Alfred Benesch & Company (Benesch) serves as the engineer for the City of York on transportation infrastructure projects. Benesch has identified a location for a pedestrian overpass in our current street layout near the interstate that complies with state highway rules (See Map 1). Benesch has structural engineers who can help us design an appropriate pedestrian overpass that will fit the area and help us secure state permits needed for this overpass. Since the city has an ongoing engineering contract with Benesch, we can move quickly to secure the engineering services that we need to design the overpass and secure needed environmental and state highway permits. Benesch has extensive experience with environmental review processes for infrastructure projects. The city of York is currently working with Benesch on environmental reviews for a bridge project that also increases active transportation infrastructure in the city. If the engineering design and permit processes take 2 years (to September 2024), this still leaves over 18 months for the construction to be completed by May 2026. If there are delays, the funds could still be obligated by June 30, 2026 expended well before September 30, 2031.

A key requirement for the design of the bypass will be accessibility for individuals with all levels of ability. A key requirement for construction bids will be attention to labor standards and equity. Benesch estimates the total cost of the engineering and construction of the pedestrian overpass to be \$8 Million (\$500,000 engineering and permits; \$500,000 for construction management; \$7,000,000 for construction). Purchase of needed ROW is estimated to be \$2,400.

#### 2) Pedestrian Trails

Benesch recommends the use of a trail paving machine that makes the construction of trails an efficient process. Most of the trail alignment and will require minimal grading for the construction of trails. Based on their past work with other locations to design and build trails,

Benesch estimates the cost of pedestrian trail expansion in York to be \$750,000 per mile of trail. This estimate includes engineering, constructing the trail, trail lights.

Since Benesch already serves as our city engineer and the city has already worked with Benesch to identify trail locations, that follow recommendations of documents based on extensive public involvement, we can contract with Benesch to begin the engineering of the trails immediately upon receiving the grant notification.

The timeline for engineering for the new trails and getting environmental approvals would be twelve months. A component of the engineering will be the development of a bid documents, with attention to equitable labor standards, for the construction of the trails, and for the lighting of the trails. The RFP and selection process for these bids can be done in 45 days. The trail alignment for the three trail components equals 9.7 miles, which yields a cost of \$7,275,000 for the engineering, paving, and lighting for all the active transportation trails. The estimated time for construction of the trails is eight months.

The trails will also require safety signs where the trails cross existing streets. The maps for each trail component identify the safety crossings that will require signage. If we can follow the preferred Village 81 trailway, 76 safety signs will be needed, if we need to use an alternative route (marked in orange on Map 1), then 102 safety signs will be needed, resulting in \$15,200 to \$20,400 in sign costs for the Village 81 trails. The parkway trails add another 17 crossings that will need signs. Another coalition working with the York Chamber of Commerce has applied for grants for way-finding signs throughout the city, that may help with wayfinding on the trails. However, the trails will still need directional signage for pedestrians and cyclists. An internet search for prices for Union-made trail signs suggests that \$1,000 will purchase over 70 Union-made trail marking signs.

a. Village 81 Trails

The city of York has identified locations for pedestrian trails to get from the existing pedestrian trail and sidewalk infrastructure in the central part of the city to the I-80 intersection area, as well as trails to allow safe pedestrian movement in this area (see Map 1).

b. Charging Station Trail

A truck stop complex on the south side of the interstate has a set of fast-charging stations. Project Access York includes a ½ mile trail to allow those who stop to charge their car to get to one of our historical sites near the interstate (Wessel's Living History Farms). (See Map 2)

c. Ballpark Trails

Multiple community planning discussions in York have identified completion of trails around the parks, schools and York College priorities. The 2017 Comprehensive Plan for the city identifies a Parkway Loop Trail and a Nobes to Ballpark Trail as two trail priorities. These trails provide improved access for children who ride bikes or walk and York College students (many of whom do not own vehicles) to access recreational facilities and get to city sidewalks to access food and jobs. The city of York has mapped out locations for these priority trails using existing city Right of Way where possible (see Map 3).



### 3) School crosswalk safety signals

There are four crosswalk locations near the public schools that cross busy streets. Three of these have been identified regularly by public input as dangers for students walking to York Public Schools. However, all are used by students and cross streets that pose danger. Public input by those involved in the inclusive playground project identifies the need for a crosswalk that connects the elementary school to the new inclusive playground. This will allow teachers and students of all abilities to access the new all-inclusive playground safely. It also allows families who walk to the playground to cross the busy street safely. (see Map 4, see Letter of Support from York Public Schools). Project Access York includes five sets of solar powered crosswalk signals at a cost of \$6,000 a piece for a total of \$30,000 for the signals. The City of York can install these signals for \$1,000 total, for a total cost of only \$31,000. These signals require no engineering or state or federal approvals and thus can be in place a month after the signals can be purchased and delivered. (Estimated timeline of completion December 2022).

### 4) Curb cut expansion and improvement for pedestrian access and safety

The City of York began a major streets improvement bond project in 2021. Of these bond funds, \$430,000 was designated for improving curb cuts for pedestrian access for individuals of all abilities. The need for more complete curb cuts was identified by walk audits completed by the Walkability Coalition in 2021. The curb cut project has already been engineered, bid out, and a local contractor has been selected to complete the work. The work will continue through the first year of the Project Access York grant period. The curb cuts improvements occur throughout the city (see Map 5).

Project Schedule

The project schedule assumes that award notification occurs in August 2022.

Component	Public Input	Engineering & Approvals	Construction RFP & Selection	Construction & Inspections
Pedestrian Overpass	Completed: Walkability Grant 2021-22; 2006 & 2017 City Comp Plans	September 2022 – September 2024	September 2024– October 2024	October 2024 – May 2026
Trails	Completed: Walkability Grant 2021-22; City Council Strategic Plan 2021; 2006 & 2017 City Comp Plans	September 2022- September 2023	September 2023 – October 2023	November 2023 – September 2024
School Crossings	Completed: Walkability Grant 2021-22;	September 2022	Purchase October, 2022	Installed by December 2022/December 2023 – if supply chain delays
Curb Cut Improvements	Completed: 1 & 6 Year Street Plan; City Council Hearings 2021; Walkability Grant 2021-22	Completed [\$25,730]	Completed	April 2022 – November 2023

## Project Budget

The project budget includes costs for engineering, construction management, ground preparation, construction, lights, right of way purchase and signage. The total budget for Project Access York is \$16,353,030 with \$15,625,000 coming from RAISE grant funds and \$728,030 coming from local funds. The largest portion of the funding (over \$15 million) goes to the pedestrian overpass and active transportation infrastructure to create a community that provides for safe pedestrian access to jobs, food, education, shopping, sports, and recreation. The remaining funds go towards improving safety and mobility for students and adults of all abilities to get around town and to get to school safely. Since schools are a critical source of food for many low-income students, safe access to school also means safe access to food for children from food insecure families.

Project Access York Budget										
Components	Engineering	Construction Management	Ground Preparation	Construction	Lights	ROW Purchase	Signage	RAISE	Local	Total
Pedestrian Overpass	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$7,000,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$2,400.00	\$200.00	\$8,150,000.00	\$2,600.00	\$8,152,600.0
Trails (9.7 miles)	\$485,000.00	\$485,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$4,850,000.00	\$1,455,000.00	\$269,760.00	\$20,400.00	\$7,475,000.00	\$290,160.00	\$7,765,160.0
School Crossings	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$30,000.00	\$0.00	\$31,000.00	\$31,000.0
Curb Cut Expansion	completed	\$48,504.00	\$0.00	\$355,766.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$404,270.00	\$404,270.0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$985,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,033,504.00</b>	<b>\$250,000.00</b>	<b>\$12,206,766.00</b>	<b>\$1,555,000.00</b>	<b>\$272,160.00</b>	<b>\$50,600.00</b>	<b>\$15,625,000.00</b>	<b>\$728,030.00</b>	<b>\$16,353,030.0</b>

## II. PROJECT LOCATION

Project Access York will be in the City of York, Nebraska, a rural community near central Nebraska. York sits on the intersection of Interstate 80 and Highway 81, so it is a major midwestern transportation hub. As Map 6 shows, the active transportation and pedestrian safety infrastructure for this project connect well to this major transportation hub. The pedestrian overpass and some of the trails will be in Census district 9698, however, the project impacts access and mobility for all residents of York in all of York's Census districts (9696, 9697, 9698, 9699) as well as travelers from all parts of the country who stop in York on their way across the country.

Map 6 provides an overview of the location of the components of Project Access York. Since York is geographically a small town, these components will all work well together to dramatically increase pedestrian access and safety for all York residents and York students.

Although some census blocks impacted by the project have LMI populations over 50%, the project is not located in an Area of Persistent Poverty, nor in a historically disadvantaged community. The project does not have any urban census tracts, nor any tracts in federally designated development zones.



### III. GRANT FUNDS, SOURCES AND USES OF ALL PROJECT FUNDING

The Curb Cut element of the Project Access York has already been engineered, approved, and bid. The costs of the engineering and bidding process have not been included in the budget below since that work is already completed. The budget below includes \$40,270 for the remaining construction and construction management costs of the Curb Cut Expansion component. The Curb Cut Expansion component is 2.5% of the Project Access York budget. The School Crossing component involves installing solar push button cross walk signs on city streets, which will not require engineering nor approvals. This component is .2% of Project Access York funding. The other components (97%) have yet to be engineered. The estimates are based on the expertise of an engineering firm used by the city based on their experience with previous projects.

Over 95% of the funds for Project Access York come from RAISE grant funds (95.5%). The remaining 4.5% come from local sources. Of the local funds, \$404,270 has already been budgeted and financed by the City of York. Local funds for Right of Way purchase (\$272,160) currently exist in the City of York land acquisition fund. The \$1,000 for installation of the school crosswalk signals easily comes out of the City of York's Public Works budget. The \$50,600 for school safety crosswalk signals can be allocated from sales tax dollars that go to a fund created by an interlocal agreement between the city and the public school district that commits \$.50 of city sales taxes for school and recreational infrastructure. The City of York has been fortunate to receive healthy sales tax revenues over the past year and expects the revenues to remain steady or grow for the 2022-2023 budget year, which will yield sufficient revenues to meet the \$50,600 budget.

Project Access York Budget										
Components	Engineering	Construction Management	Ground Preparation	Construction	Lights	ROW Purchase	Signage	RAISE	Local	Total
Pedestrian Overpass	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$7,000,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$2,400.00	\$200.00	\$8,150,000.00	\$2,600.00	\$8,152,600.00
Trails (9.7 miles)	\$485,000.00	\$485,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$4,850,000.00	\$1,455,000.00	\$269,760.00	\$20,400.00	\$7,475,000.00	\$290,160.00	\$7,765,160.00
School Crossings	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$30,000.00	\$0.00	\$31,000.00	\$31,000.00
Curb Cut Expansion	completed	\$48,504.00	\$0.00	\$355,766.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$404,270.00	\$404,270.00
<b>Totals</b>	\$985,000.00	\$1,033,504.00	\$250,000.00	\$12,206,766.00	\$1,555,000.00	\$272,160.00	\$50,600.00	\$15,625,000.00	\$728,030.00	\$16,353,030.00

#### IV. MERIT CRITERIA

Project Access York clearly meets High standard requirements on 7 of the 8 grant criteria and could potentially meet the standard on the 8th criteria. Project Access York implements plans that have long been identified as infrastructure needs but that did not seem possible without a game-changing opportunity like the RAISE grant. The pedestrian safety infrastructure in Project Access York will remove barriers created by automobile dependence and by infrastructure that was not constructed to be inclusive of individuals of all abilities and encourage the reduction of carbon use by residents, workers, and visitors in York.

##### Safety

Project Access York mitigates a clear systemic safety issue in the City of York that affects the ability of residents without cars to get to their jobs. According to a 2019 Census report, the largest sector of employment in York is the retail sector.<sup>5</sup> According to analysis conducted for the City of York by the Nebraska Department of Revenue, 28% of York business revenues have a strong interstate connection. Many of the retail jobs and most of the hospitality jobs exist near the interstate, while almost all residents live in the central and northern parts of the city. Students who attend the college in town (York College) live in the north end of the city. The distance for residents from the central and northern parts of the city to walk to these jobs is quite reasonable for walking but is currently extremely unsafe. Students and adults with no cars regularly walk along the busy state highway to get to these jobs with no accommodations for pedestrian travel such as sidewalks or bike lanes. According to a US Census 2019 report, about 4% of York employees walk to work currently<sup>6</sup>, many in these unsafe conditions.

Recently the safety concern of people walking along the busy Highway 81 has been raised as a priority in discussions in the community by a cross-section of stakeholders participating in a walkability analysis tied to both the EPA Local Foods Local Places and the Dept. of Health & Human Services Walkability grant, both of which were technical assistance grants to the community (See Table 1 and the Letter of Support from Four Corners Health Department). Getting from residential areas to the area with retail and hospitality jobs poses one risk. Getting across the busy highway to get to a job or a lunch on the other side of the highway poses another safety hazard. The Village 81 trails from the central part of the city to the area by the interstate would allow workers without cars to get to these jobs safely. A pedestrian overpass over Highway 81 near the interstate would allow workers without cars to safely cross the highway.

In addition to protecting the safety of residents commuting to jobs, Project Access York mitigates a clear systematic safety issue for our visitors. Since York sits on the intersection of I-80 and Highway 81, many travelers go through the town. Over 28 million vehicles go through

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<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census. DataUSA: York, NE. Economy. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/york-ne#economy>. Accessed April 9, 2022.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census. DataUSA: York, NE. Housing and Living. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/york-ne#housing>. Accessed April 9, 2022.



this intersection each year<sup>7</sup>. Of these vehicles, over 7 million are trucks carrying freight across the country<sup>8</sup>.

Many of these travelers, including many truck drivers, stop in York for gas, food, and lodging. About 90,000 families stay in York overnight in a year<sup>9</sup> and many more stop for food, gas, shopping and other attraction and events. About \$5.5 million gets spent by travelers, workers and residents on businesses related to this interstate exchange each year<sup>10</sup>. Currently, the infrastructure around the businesses that provide these services near the interstate has been designed only for cars and trucks. There are no pedestrian safety elements. Since the road that intersects the interstate has heavy traffic at relatively high speeds with no pedestrian cross walks, it is not uncommon to see visitors unsafely crossing Highway 81 to get to restaurants on the other side of the highway. For example, a bus will park near Wendy's and some visitors will cross over to the other side of the highway to get to Arby's or McDonalds. As noted above, this safety hazard also impacts our residents who walk to their jobs in this area. A pedestrian overpass near the interstate allows these travelers to safely cross Highway 81.

The pedestrian cross walk signals in Project Access York near the schools in the community address another significant systemic safety issue in York. Our schools sit near some busy streets, some of which are truck routes. For years there have been discussions about how to make crossing these streets safer for our students. Project Access York provides an opportunity for the city to provide the infrastructure to make these crossings safer. One of these busy street crossings separates the elementary school from a new all-inclusive playground in a city park across the street. A safe way to cross that street would allow teachers to take able-bodied students and students with disabilities across the street to play together in this new playground.

### Environmental Sustainability

Environmental Sustainability is an explicit purpose for Project Access York. The immediate safety concerns for residents without cars that makes trails and the pedestrian overpass so critical also make it difficult for residents who have cars to choose to walk or ride bikes instead of drive to work and to shop at the retail and hospitality businesses near the interstate. Currently, about 4% of York employees walk to work.<sup>11</sup> Safer options for pedestrian travel could increase these numbers. The trails and pedestrian overpass will allow residents to choose to walk to this area and safely go from business to business in this area without a car. The 2017 Strategic Plan for the city, developed with much resident and stakeholder participation, included plans for making this part of town, called Village 81, more amenable to pedestrian traffic. Project Access York clearly fits those plans.

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<sup>7</sup>Nebraska Department of Transportation Average Annual Daily Traffic (2021) website shows 77,175 vehicles going through the intersection daily

(<https://gis.ne.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8ed4b009b0d546f19f0284e5bba0f972>).

<sup>8</sup> Nebraska Department of Transportation Average Annual Daily Traffic (2021) website reports 20,025 trucks going through the intersection daily

(<https://gis.ne.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8ed4b009b0d546f19f0284e5bba0f972>).

<sup>9</sup> Estimate based on \$9,000,000 in 2021 lodging revenues divided by \$100 for an average hotel room cost.

<sup>10</sup> Estimate based on Nebraska Department of Revenue estimate that 28% of York sales tax revenues derive from interstate-dependent businesses.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census. DataUSA: York, NE. Housing and Living. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/york-ne/housing>. Accessed April 9, 2022.



Project Access York also supports zero emission vehicle infrastructure. Fast-charging stations for travelers with zero emission vehicles sit near the interstate. Project Access York includes a trail that allows these drivers to access cultural attractions in York while their vehicle charges.

Safer school crossings will encourage more parents to allow their children to walk to school. Currently, many parents drive students to school each day. The dangerous crossing conditions make it more difficult for parents to choose to have their students walk. Converting some of these car trips to pedestrian trips will have an environmental impact and start good pedestrian habits for these children, which could have long-range environmental impacts.

### Quality of Life

Quality of life is an explicit Project Access York purpose. The project has clear, direct, and date-driven significant benefits to improve the quality of life of York residents and travelers who come through York. As noted earlier, 28% of the retail and hospitality revenues in York come from businesses related to the interstate. Currently no pedestrian safe infrastructure exists to get residents to jobs in this area and to allow residents and travelers to get from business to business in this area. Opportunities for residents and travelers to get to these businesses safely will improve the quality of life of residents and travelers.

Project Access York provides pedestrian infrastructure that allows low-income residents to live in parts of the city that have more affordable housing and still get to jobs and recreational opportunities. Recent affordable housing initiatives have been in the central and north ends of the city, where the residential infrastructure exists. Project Access York will allow these low-income residents to safely get to jobs in the southern part of town and allow these low-income residents to know that their children can walk to school safely.

Project Access York will also provide safe pedestrian travel options for residents to take advantage of the unique recreational opportunities in York. York has a portion of its sales tax devoted to recreational and educational infrastructure, so it has an amazing array of parks throughout the town as well as a large ball complex and large family aquatic center. Residents of the community have recently raised over a million dollars to build a large all-inclusive playground in one of the city parks near the elementary school. Project Access York will provide pedestrian infrastructure to allow residents and visitors to access these unique opportunities without a car.

The most racially diverse area of York is around York College. York College recruits a racially diverse student body with a large portion of international students. Many of these students do not have cars. Enhanced trails and a pedestrian overpass will allow these students to take advantage of the recreational opportunities in the city, as well as have safe ways to walk for shopping and jobs.

As noted above, about 90,000 families stay in hotels in the city of York as they travel across the county or come to York for sports events. The city sits on a major crossroad near the center of the country that is heavily travelled. At this point, someone staying in the hotels near the interstate would need to use a car to safely travel to the restaurants and recreational opportunities

that are near the hotels because no safe pedestrian infrastructure exists. The trails and pedestrian overpass will also enhance the quality of life of travelers by providing a safe way for them to run or walk for exercise during their stay in York.

#### Mobility and Community Connectivity

Mobility and community connectivity is an explicit Project Access York purpose, and the project has clear, direct, and data-driven significant benefits to increase affordable transportation options for underserved communities by providing safe pedestrian transportation options to access jobs, shopping, and recreational facilities in the community. Project Access York focuses on increasing the accessibility of non-motorized residents and travelers. The project trails and pedestrian overpass will be compliant with Americans with Disability standards to allow mobility and connectivity for residents and travelers of all abilities.

The trails, pedestrian overpass and cross walk infrastructure clearly encourage York to become a more thriving and connected community where individuals with or without a car can get to jobs, shopping, school, continuing education options at York College, and the large number of recreational opportunities, including the new all-inclusive playground.

Project Access York uses a Universal Design approach. Increasing access for pedestrians of all abilities is the core function of the project. The pedestrian infrastructure will also improve access to a new all-inclusive parallel play park that will be completed in the community by the fall of 2022.

#### Economic Competitiveness

Project Access York has clear, direct, and data-driven substantial benefits for economic competitiveness by increasing the transportation options and system connectivity for disadvantaged communities. The trails and pedestrian overpass will allow residents and York College students better job opportunities and will provide York businesses access to more workforce in this tight labor market.

Project Access York also has clear, direct, and data-driven substantial benefits for economic competitiveness by substantially enhancing the tourism opportunities for the city of York. A 2019 study by Brian Williams, Ph.D., Nebraska Public Power District economist, estimated that the Ballpark Complex attracts more than 35,000 visitors annually which provides an economic impact to the city of York that tops \$4.56 million per year.<sup>12</sup> The trails and pedestrian overpass will allow these families to enjoy the recreational, eating and shopping opportunities in York, which will enhance these tourism businesses and encourage these families to return to York as tourists.

Over 28 million vehicles pass through York in a year. Our whimsical rainbow balloon water tower encourages many to use York as their stopping point. The pedestrian overpass and the trails will allow York to market itself better as a tourism location for these travelers.

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<sup>12</sup> Williams, Brian R. 2019. Economic Importance of and Economic Impacts Associated with York Parks and Recreation Facilities, York, Nebraska. Economic Development Department, Nebraska Public Power District publication.

York is less than an hour from Lincoln, Nebraska, the second largest city in the state and an hour and half from the largest city in the state (Omaha). It is less than an hour to the fourth largest city in the state (Grand Island). There are also many small towns in the York market area. This location lends itself to being a regional tourist location. The pedestrian overpass and trails will provide an additional benefit to draw these regional tourists for a day or weekend away.

Project Access York also directly creates jobs through the jobs needed to complete the infrastructure projects. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) projects that pedestrian and bike-oriented projects like Project Access York create 17 jobs for each million of dollars invested.<sup>13</sup> Since Project Access York invests almost 16 million dollars in the pedestrian overpass and active transportation trails, this equates to 272 jobs.

#### State of Good Repair

Project Access York clearly, directly, and substantially addresses current system vulnerabilities for underserved, overburdened, or disadvantaged communities. Currently no safe pedestrian infrastructure exists to allow low-income residents and racially diverse York College students to access job opportunities and food from the businesses near the interstate. The project also provides pedestrian infrastructure to improve their access to recreational opportunities. Also, the current infrastructure near the schools does not have safe crossing technology, making it more difficult for parents to know that their children can get to school safely on their own if a parent needs to be at work.

#### Partnership and Collaboration

York has already engaged diverse people and communities in the identification of the priorities for the pedestrian infrastructure in Project Access York. The priorities for the project align with the priorities established by the community-driven strategic planning process that led to the 2006 and the 2017 Comprehensive Plan for the city. During the Local Foods, Local Places EPA technical assistance grant to the York County Development Corporation, walkability was identified as a priority and an action plan was developed which led to a Walkability Grant funded through the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to Four Corners Health Department. The priorities of the project align with the priorities established by the walkability coalition in the community that has been funded by this grant and that has representatives from a broad mix of stakeholders in the community including leaders from education, recreation, economic development, environmental sustainability government and nonprofit organizations, as well as private business leaders and advocates for individuals with disabilities. The walkability group explicitly works to ensure that equity considerations are meaningfully integrated into the planning, development, and implementation of transportation options in the community. This group also works to ensure that these walkability efforts include attention to access to food and health care for populations without a car (See Table 1 and Letter of Support from Four Corners Health Department).

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<sup>13</sup> Torsha Bhattacharya, Ph.D.; Kevin Mills, J.D.; and Tiffany Mulally, Ph.D., Active Transportation Transforms America: The Case for Increased Public Investment in Walking and Biking Connectivity (Washington, D.C.: Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 2019).

York has a strong history of collaboration on infrastructure development. The city has a unique interlocal agreement with the public school district, supported by a vote of the residents, that invests \$.50 of each sales tax dollar into recreational or educational infrastructure for the community. Together, with this resource, the city and schools have invested in major projects that benefit the quality of life of residents and visitors.

The interlocal collaborative funding source funds a large portion of infrastructure build in the city, including the curb cut component and the school crossing component that are parts of Project Access York. Improvements in parking and infrastructure for individuals with disabilities for improved access to City of York educational and recreational facilities is an expected priority for some spending from this source in the 2022-2023 budget year. The city also has a history of collaboration with the regional Natural Resource District (Upper Big Blue) on parks and recreational opportunities. Recently, Upper Big Blue contributed funding to inclusive restrooms that the city is building near the all-inclusive playground. The cross walk in Project Access York by the York Public Elementary School will improve safe access to this inclusive park for children and families of all abilities.

#### Innovation

Project Access York has strong potential to provide an innovative model for a pedestrian overpass in a rural community. The area around the overpass is already built up, so an innovative design that allows inclusive access, but does not require a large swath of land will be necessary. This design may then be a model for other cities to improve the inclusiveness of their active transportation infrastructure.

## **V. PROJECT READINESS: ENVIRONMENTAL RISK**

Project Access York has the advantage of being a project that can be completed with confidence by 2026. Extensive public input processes have already been completed that have identified the components of the project and the locations of the components in the project. The public input processes include the 2006 and 2017 City of York Comprehensive Plan processes, the Walkability strategic planning process and walk audits that have engaged a broad cross-section of stakeholders, and public hearings tied to infrastructure planning in the city.

As noted in the Project Timeline, all components of Project Access York can be completed well before the deadline for expending funds. They will likely be completed before the deadline for obligating funds.

The Curb Cut component has already been engineered and the construction bid has been publicized and selected. Curb cuts require no environmental reviews. The curb cut component is expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

Technology exists to construct the proposed trails efficiently with a paving machine. The proposed trails use existing City of York Right of Way as much as possible and funds exist to purchase the remaining Right of Way needed. Since trails are actually a good use of flood plain



VILLAGE 81 TRAILS & PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS (Map 1)



RED Section is Pedestrian Bridge; BLUE Sections are proposed trails; ORANGE is secondary trail option



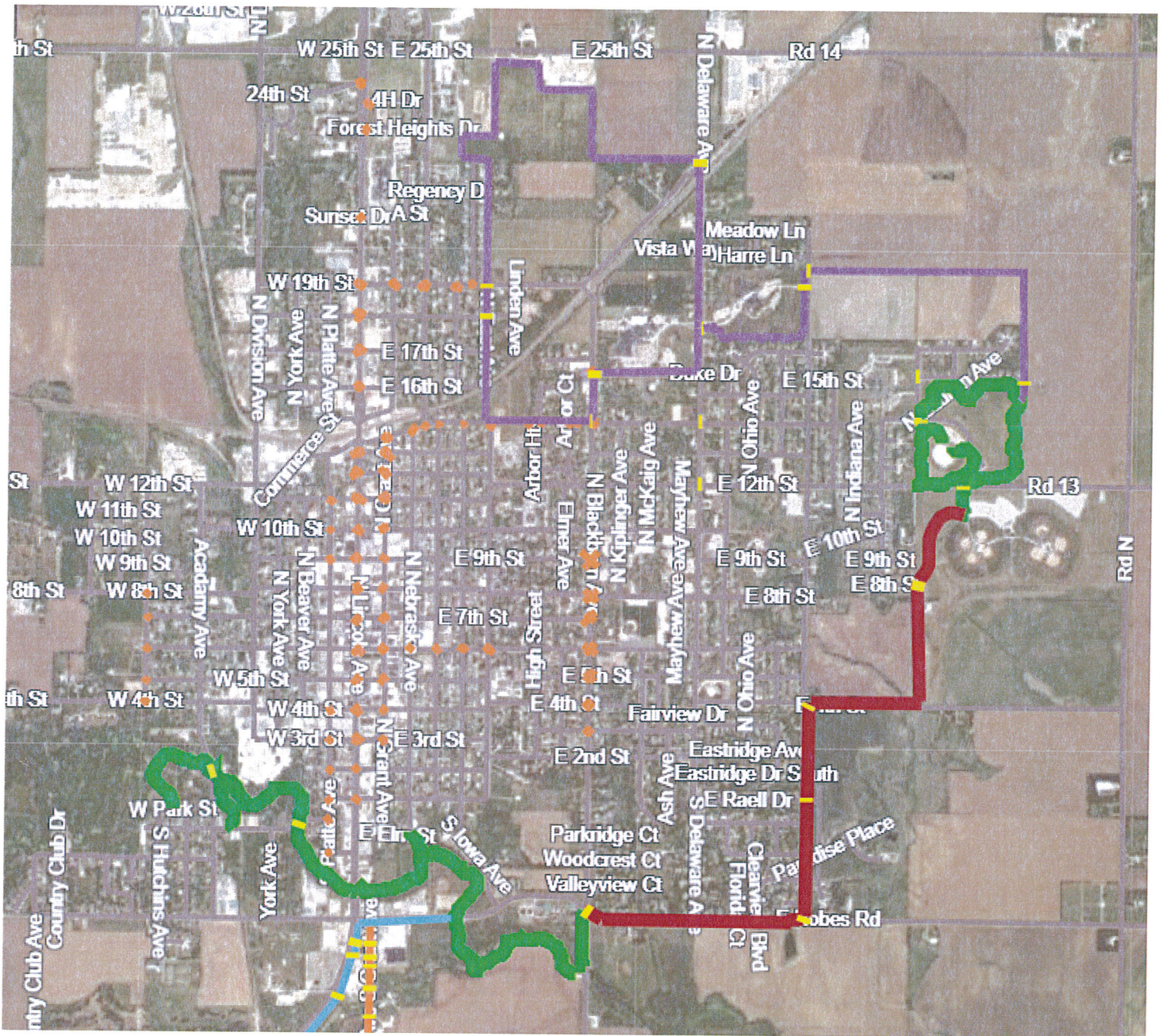
CHARGING STATION TRAIL (Map 2)



BLUE Section is proposed trail



PARKWAY LOOP & BALLPARK TRAILS (Map 3)



Green trails are trails that are currently in place. Purple trail is referred to as the Parkway Loop trail. Red trail is referred to the Ball Park Trail.



SCHOOL CROSSWALKS (Map 4)



**YELLOW** areas are school crosswalk areas. Crosswalk at East 14<sup>th</sup> would be a "New Proposed"











Table 1: Summary of Strategic Planning by Walkability Coalition

What do you want to see (your vision) in the next 5 to 10 years for the City of York for improving that connects with access to food, services, and amenities?

8/3/2021

Expand trails and Enhancing infrastructure	Develop a Bikeable Culture	Expand Community Wide Transportation	Improve Access to Basic Needs	Improve Pedestrian Safety
Develop Pedestrian Infrastructure @ Interstate	Bike Rental Rentable	Use of Public Transit	Better access to Blue Valley	Walk over bridge @ 12th St/Delaware
Trail connecting interstate to downtown	Individual transport - bikes/scooters	Community Shuttle	Food drop off sites	Train crossing safety
Existing trail enhancement Link to	Bike Infrastructure/ bike stores stands	Preschool Transportation	Access to grocery stores	Pedestrian crosswalks (more)
FAC/ballpark/gardens	Bike Lanes		Access to pharmacy	Increase safety (traffic)
Trails connecting destination Bike trails that connect			Signage to all areas of town	Develop protected paths
Walk/bike path to interstate				Improved sidewalks
Public restrooms Interpretive signs (education)				Smooth even surfaces
Connect destinations with trail or ADA				Safety signage
sidewalks Pedestrian connection by				Bike lanes
blackburn bridge-park intrance				Curb cuts snow ice removal
Link to recharge Connect other communities				
Better park connection Historic Lighting				
Trail to McCool ID route and level of difficulty				
Pet cleanup				

land, flood plain concerns do not threaten this project. There are no other major environmental concerns that our engineer has identified as risks for this project.

The only project component that has serious unknowns is the pedestrian overpass. The risks come because it is a major innovative undertaking that still needs to be designed and approved. Since the other components have little risk of delay, focus can be put on keeping the pedestrian overpass within the grant timeline. Communication has already begun with the Nebraska Department of Transportation about the needed permits for this overpass over the state highway.

## **VI. BENEFIT COST ANALYSIS**

The biggest benefits of Project Access York are difficult to measure for an economic benefit cost analysis. Dramatic safety improvement will be the biggest immediate impact for York residents and travelers who come through York. The project clearly reduces risks to pedestrians in the Interstate 80 area of the city. It also clearly reduces risk to students who walk to York Public Schools.

The reduction in carbon emissions from more residents and travelers using the pedestrian infrastructure is also difficult to model in a benefit cost analysis, but it would be a clear benefit of the project. Likewise, the improvement in the quality of life for York residents and for travelers who come through York that results from having access to trails for exercise and safe pedestrian transport is difficult to quantify, but will be a clear and direct benefit from Project Access York.

### Economic Benefit Cost Analysis

See Table 2 for the Benefit Cost analysis of Project Access York that projects tangible benefits and construction costs. The Benefit Cost Analysis uses a 7% discount rate and calculates the benefits and costs over a 10-year period. The resulting Benefit/Cost Ratio of 1.87 and Net Present Value of over \$12 million dollars provide strong investment rationales for Project Access York. These results do not even consider the strong safety, quality of life, and environmental benefits of the project.

The benefit analysis uses the following assumptions:

Data from DATAUSA: York NE (US Census 2019).

Number of York employees: 3,940

Number of York employees who currently walk to commute = 158 (4%)

Number of York employees who currently bike to commute = 28 (.07%)

Total Number of Bike/Walk commuters = 186

Estimated Economic Benefits of a job added in the retail/service sector = 43,823<sup>14</sup>  
Estimated Increase in State and Local Tax Revenues from an added retail/service job = 4,812<sup>15</sup>  
Total Per Retail/Service Sector Job = \$48,635

Benefits Of Increased Pedestrian Access Over Time Starting Year 3:

1% increase in number of employees per year due to increased access (retail/service focus)

2% increase in number of bike/walk commuters per year

2% increase in hospitality industry revenues per year from added tourism

Hospitality/Retail near 1-80 percent of sales tax revenues for York, NE = 28%

28% Hospitality/Retail/1-80 Sale Tax Revenues = 1,545,910

Estimated Hospitality/Retail/I-80 Revenues in 2021 based on 28% local sales tax = 5,521,106

State/Local Sales Tax Rate = 7.5%

Bike/Pedestrian Economic Benefit

Short Commutes in York: 5 miles; 5 days a week; 50 weeks a year = 1,250 miles work commute

April 2022 Gas Price in York NE = \$3.69

Gas Milage for Pick up 15 city; Blazer 20 city – 17.5 MPG estimate for York commuters

1250 miles/17.5 (MPG) = 71.43 Gallons @ \$3.69 = \$263.58 Annual Savings

Benefits During the 3 years of construction:

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) projects that pedestrian and bike-oriented projects like Project Access York create 17 jobs for each million dollars invested.<sup>16</sup> For Project Access York this equates to 272 jobs

Estimate of Economic Impact of 1 Construction Job = 70,435<sup>17</sup>

Estimate Increase in State and Local Tax Revenue = 4,779<sup>18</sup>

Total Per Construction Job = \$75,214

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<sup>14</sup> Estimate based on IMPLAN analysis for Kentucky in 2018. Just the Facts: Economic Impact of 100 Jobs. ThinKKentucky. <https://ced.ky.gov/kyedc/pdfs/100jobs.pdf>. (Accessed April 9, 2022).

<sup>15</sup> Estimate based on IMPLAN analysis for Kentucky in 2018. Just the Facts: Economic Impact of 100 Jobs. ThinKKentucky. <https://ced.ky.gov/kyedc/pdfs/100jobs.pdf>. (Accessed April 9, 2022).

<sup>16</sup> Torsha Bhattacharya, Ph.D.; Kevin Mills, J.D.; and Tiffany Mulally, Ph.D., Active Transportation Transforms America: The Case for Increased Public Investment in Walking and Biking Connectivity (Washington, D.C.: Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 2019).

<sup>17</sup> Estimate based on IMPLAN analysis for Kentucky in 2018. Just the Facts: Economic Impact of 100 Jobs. ThinKKentucky. <https://ced.ky.gov/kyedc/pdfs/100jobs.pdf>. (Accessed April 9, 2022).

<sup>18</sup> Estimate based on IMPLAN analysis for Kentucky in 2018. Just the Facts: Economic Impact of 100 Jobs. ThinKKentucky. <https://ced.ky.gov/kyedc/pdfs/100jobs.pdf>. (Accessed April 9, 2022).

The cost figures for construction for the Benefit Cost Analysis come from the Project Access York Project Budget.

Project Access York Budget										
Components	Engineering	Construction Management	Ground Preparation	Construction	Lights	ROW Purchase	Signage	RAISE	Local	Total
Pedestrian Overpass	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$7,000,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$2,400.00	\$200.00	\$8,150,000.00	\$2,600.00	\$8,152,600.00
Trails (9.7 miles)	\$485,000.00	\$485,000.00	\$200,000.00	\$4,850,000.00	\$1,455,000.00	\$269,760.00	\$20,400.00	\$7,475,000.00	\$290,160.00	\$7,765,160.00
School Crossings	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$30,000.00	\$0.00	\$31,000.00	\$31,000.00
Curb Cut Expansion	completed	\$48,504.00	\$0.00	\$355,766.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$404,270.00	\$404,270.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$985,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,033,504.00</b>	<b>\$250,000.00</b>	<b>\$12,206,766.00</b>	<b>\$1,555,000.00</b>	<b>\$272,160.00</b>	<b>\$50,600.00</b>	<b>\$15,625,000.00</b>	<b>\$728,030.00</b>	<b>\$16,353,030.00</b>

## VII. CONCLUSION

The city of York has energetic and progressive leaders in all sectors of the community who step up and get big projects done. As one recent example, private and nonprofit organizations and individuals came together to raise over a million dollars for the inclusive playground in less than two years. The City of York committed an additional \$250,000 in accessible infrastructure to support the project. The city also provided city land dedicated to the project in July 2020.

The city of York also has a commitment to safe and inclusive infrastructure. In 2021 the city secured a \$5 million dollar bond for major street improvements and curb cut improvements and expansion. The city of York is ready and able to commit to the major infrastructure components in this grant with every confidence that all sectors of our community will be partners and that all sectors of our community, and the environment, will substantially benefit. We are ready to rebuild and expand on our pedestrian infrastructure for sustainability and equity that results in a dramatic and game-changing overall benefit to our community, travelers, and the environment for years to come.





April 13, 2022

RAISE Grant Program Staff

To Whom it May Concern,

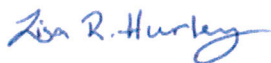
RE: Project Access York Application

I am writing this letter in support of Project Access York. As the local Economic Developer, I have been involved in many initiatives and conversations regarding access and walkability. York County Development has been involved in the York Comprehensive Plan, received the Local Foods Local Places, two York County Housing Studies, and is active in the Walkability study funded by the Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services.

These activities all had community input and engagement. During all three of these, the lack of accessibility and difficulty of walking/biking in the community has been addressed. The disconnect between the downtown and the Village 81 neighborhood presents many safety challenges as there is no housing by the interstate. This, in addition, with no sidewalks or trail system to connect the two areas of the community, and a complete focus on vehicle traffic, prevents a walking access to the employees working in the interstate district. Community members see both teenagers and adults walking along side of the highway to reach their jobs or to head home. There are parents that will not let their teenagers work in that area because of the safety factor of walking home on the highway when they don't have multiple vehicles. Most of the service jobs are located in this area, which impacts the employer's ability to attract workers. In addition, people staying at the mission are unable to reach this area without walking.

To fix this problem is unattainable without assistance. Please reach out to me with any questions either at [lhurley@yorkdevco.com](mailto:lhurley@yorkdevco.com) or 402.362.3333.

Sincerely,



Lisa R Hurley, CEcD  
Executive Director



April 11, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

York Chamber of Commerce is an organization of progressive members dedicated to building a strong vibrant business community in the York Area. The Chamber, through its membership, provides community leadership, promotion, communication and unity to insure continued economic support and growth. Our team has been involved with various groups and studies centered on the walkability and safety of the York Community.

Over the years, York residents and visitors have noted issues accessing businesses, schools and recreational areas of the community. This barrier has detoured attendance in these areas that are not easily accessible and has made it difficult for those wanting to shop and conduct business in York. In 2018, the Chamber and its interns gathered a community group to research and put forth a plan regarding signage for the community.

The findings from the survey not only highlighted the importance of wayfinding signage, but also noted areas that would benefit from walkability infrastructure improvements. Accessibility projects will make for more positive work environments and friendlier shopping experiences. Expanding our trail systems to connect our various business districts in York will be another vital step in the community's effort to make York a great place to retire or work and raise families.

I am strongly supporting the City of York in its efforts to invest in safe walking passages throughout the community as it will further enhance the economic climate of York.

Sincerely,

Madonna Mogul  
Executive Director



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

April 13, 2022

To RAISE Grant Program Staff,

Four Corners Health Department is pleased to show our interest and support for the project titled "Project Access York". The objectives of the City of York led project will focus on safer pedestrian infrastructure with a pedestrian overpass to cross Hwy 81, pedestrian access to that part of town, cross walks by the schools, curb cuts, and completing the trails proposed by residents in the 2017 comprehensive plan.

In 2020, community stakeholders created an Action Plan through a project called Local Food, Local Places (LFLP), which helped to identify community needs related to access to food. In collaboration with LFLP, Four Corners has been facilitating a project focused on the safety and availability of walkable routes to food, work, amenities, and services.

For this work, we have held public engagement discussions and included a diverse set of stakeholders. The stakeholders have identified key priorities, including safer pedestrian access in the area by the interstate and better trails throughout the city to improve access to food, jobs, and recreation. In our discussions, community leaders have shared that safe pedestrian access has been a long-standing need.

This project fits well with our focus on public health being for all people, everywhere, and at all times. We look forward to our ongoing partnership in helping residents have easier and safer access to food, work, amenities, and social services. Four Corners Health Department strongly supports the City of York's request for RAISE funding to be granted for Project Access York.

Sincerely,

Laura McDougall

Executive Director

Four Corner Health Department





# YORK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

4/12/2022

RAISE Grant Program Staff:

Please consider this letter of support for the Project Access York grant application from the City of York.

For several years, York Public Schools has been working with the administration at the City of York to identify areas that are safety concerns for our students that walk to school. All three of our schools, (York Elementary, York Middle School, York High School) were built in neighborhoods and have several high traffic areas that need safer infrastructure to help create safer areas for our students and drivers.

I have been part of the administrative team at York Public Schools for 22 years. During those years, I've had multiple students and parents voice their concerns about several unsafe areas to walk and cross streets to get to school. The city of York and York Public Schools have formed a partnership to help bring public awareness to this situation. Sue Crawford, City Administrator, has formed a small committee to receive community input and YPS student feedback. I'm very appreciative of Sue's leadership and hope the RAISE grant staff will approve the Project Access York grant. Creating safer crosswalks and routes to our schools is an important project in the York community

Sincerely,

Mitch Bartholomew – Superintendent

York Public Schools





# York State Bank

Member FDIC

April 12, 2022

RAISE Grant  
Office of Infrastructure Finance and Innovation  
Office of the Secretary of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Grant Application by City of York, Nebraska

Dear RAISE Grant Staff,

I am writing this letter in support of the City of York's application for a 2022 RAISE Grant. The project to be funded with this grant is much needed our community. If approved, the grant funding will vastly improve public and pedestrian safety in and around our existing vehicle transportation system.

If funding is awarded to the City of York, our local banks have a history of collaborating for community betterment projects. Furthermore, if there is a need for interim funding for this project, the banks in our community will be very supportive in providing a way to make this progressive project a reality.

I encourage you to look favorably upon the City of York's application for funding. Your grant could go a long way in providing a safer environment to the residents and visitors in our community.

Respectfully,

Mark A. Way  
President & CEO

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