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Regional Transportation Authority of Central Oklahoma

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Regional Transportation Authority of Central Oklahoma awarded a federal grant to evaluate at-grade rail crossings along the proposed RTA commuter rail corridor

CENTRAL OKLAHOMA – In partnership with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) of Central Oklahoma has been awarded \$400,000 through the Railroad Crossing Elimination Program (RCE) by the U.S. Department of Transportation. The proposal will evaluate 52 at-grade crossings from Edmond to Norman ahead of the RTA's Commuter Rail Project.

The RCE project will analyze various suitable strategies, balancing the community's needs and safety against improved mobility and surface traffic flow at rail crossings. The goal of the project will be to enhance safety by reducing crossing incidents along a busy corridor. The Project aims to enhance the mobility of various transportation modes, improving accessibility to community services, local businesses, healthcare, schools, and various other amenities.

"This grant will allow us to evaluate and determine which crossings will need upgrades so we can improve traffic patterns across the metro and continue to advance planning for Commuter Rail," RTA Executive Director Jason Ferbrache said. "Reducing rail congestion will help us create better pedestrian and automobile traffic flow for our residents."

ODOT will be contributing 20% matching funds on the project.

"ODOT is excited to work with the RTA on finding safe traffic for trains and vehicles along the RTA route through the Oklahoma City metro," said Jared Schwennesen, multi-modal division manager for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation.

The outcome of this rail crossing study will allow the RTA to prioritize crossings that need improvement and serve as the foundation for future grant submissions as the commuter rail project develops.

"One of the benefits to being the last metro of our size to develop a regional transit system is that we get to look at what other cities have done and emulate their success, as well as learn from their mistakes," said RTA Vice-Chair Marion Hutchison to the Norman Transcript. "Commuter Rail service between Norman and Oklahoma City and Edmond would be transformational for those cities, from both a quality of life and economic development perspective."

The RCE Program provides a federal funding opportunity to fund highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods in preparation for RTA's Commuter Rail Project. Such projects will improve American rail infrastructure to enhance rail safety, improve the health and safety of communities, eliminate highway-rail and pathway-rail grade crossings that are frequently blocked by trains, and reduce the impacts that freight movement and railroad operations may have on underserved communities.



About RTA: <https://rtaok.org/>

The Regional Transportation Authority of Central Oklahoma (RTA) is an independent government agency responsible for funding, planning, and creating additional mobility options within the regional transportation district. RTA seeks to expand regional mobility by connecting the communities in the region through the implementation of a world-class, high-capacity transit system for the benefit of the residents of Central Oklahoma.