



**CITY OF
TUCSON**

OFFICE OF THE
MAYOR

ROBERT E. WALKUP

February 17, 2010

The Honorable Gabrielle Giffords
U.S. House of Representatives
1728 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: Letter of Support - Houghton Road Bridge over the Union Pacific
Railroad Tracks, Tucson, Arizona**

Dear Congresswoman Giffords:

The City of Tucson is requesting Federal funding for the design and construction of a replacement bridge along the Houghton Road Corridor, over existing Union Pacific Railroad tracks.

Houghton Road from Tanque Verde Road to Interstate 10 is the primary route for distributing traffic in one of the fastest growing areas of metropolitan Tucson. The current two-lane roadway is operating at or over its design capacity along many segments of the corridor. A 10-year projection suggests extreme congestion resulting in the degradation of safety in the corridor. Much of the corridor must be widened in the near term to maintain operating efficiency and safety for the area's growing population.

The current structure was designed in accordance with 1957 AASHTO Specifications, 1954 Criteria for Prestressed Concrete Bridges, and construction was completed per ADOT's 1960 Standard Specifications. The existing bridge is a narrow two-lane structure that is aged and has suffered fatigue damage. As a result, traffic load restrictions have been placed on the bridge, impacting commuter traffic, area industrial traffic, and bus routing for the Vail School District.

With funding from the 2006 voter-approved Regional Transportation Plan, the City of Tucson is currently undertaking the planning, public participation, and design work to improve Houghton Road from Tanque Verde Road to just north of the I-10 interchange. The requested funds will enable the City to plan and design the replacement bridge, including all necessary coordination with Union Pacific. Local matching funds are available through the Regional Transportation Authority.

This project is critical to the viability and safety of the Tucson community. I request your support in obtaining the requested funding.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Walkup, Mayor
City of Tucson