

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

04/18/2022

RE: City of Spokane Valley - Pines Rd/BNSF Grade Separation Project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg;

Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Spokane County, Washington. The SRTC Board of Directors wishes to express support for the City of Spokane Valley's \$21.7 million RAISE grant application to fund **Pines Rd/BNSF Grade Separation Project**. This surface transportation project is included in SRTC's Horizon 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan as part of the regional priority freight network and can be added to our Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) immediately if funding is made available.

In 2017 the Washington State Legislature directed the Freight Mobility Strategic Investment Board to update the Road Rail Conflicts database and develop a Corridor-Based Project Prioritization Process. Out of this process, the Pines Rd/BNSF Grade Separation Project emerged as the top-ranked priority in Washington State. Additional benefits of this project include improvements to:

Regional Economic Competitiveness

- Promotes efficient freight mobility via road and rail networks.
- Enhances access to over 150 acres of prime buildable industrial and mixed-use properties.

Mobility

- The BNSF line carries an average of 65 freight and 2 passenger trains daily. Usage is estimated to increase to 104 trains by 2040.
- On average, people and freight are delayed over 26,000 hours per year at this crossing.
- By 2040, the intersection will operate at a Level of Service F. Conversion of the intersection will improve to a Level of Service A in the morning and B in the afternoon.

Quality of Life and the Environment

- The project will eliminate 67 daily train horns across a 2.1-mile section in a residential area.
- Reduced fuel consumption and tailpipe emissions from vehicles idling in delayed traffic.

The *Pines Rd/BNSF Grade Separation* project offers considerable opportunity to address issues of rail and vehicular efficiency, safety and mobility in our region and we request this project be fully funded in the requested amount of \$21.7 million. On behalf of the SRTC Board of Directors, I thank you for your consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,



Lois Bollenback, Executive Director,
Spokane Regional Transportation Council

SRTC MEMBER AGENCIES

- City of Airway Heights • City of Cheney • City of Deer Park • City of Medical Lake • City of Millwood • City of Spokane
- City of Spokane Valley • Kalispel Tribe of Indians • Spokane County • Spokane Transit Authority • Spokane Tribe of Indians
- Town of Fairfield • Town of Latah • Town of Rockford • Town of Spangle • Town of Waverly
- Washington State Dept of Transportation • Washington State Transportation Commission