

MARIA CANTWELL
WASHINGTON



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

May 27, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing in support of the City of Spokane Valley's application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program for the Pines Road/BNSF Grade Separation project.

The City of Spokane Valley is seeking \$21.69 million in RAISE funds to complete the Pines Road/ BNSF project final engineering design phase and construction phase. Funds will be used to eliminate the BNSF at-grade crossing where it intersects the BNSF mainline. The current at-grade railway-highway crossing at Pines Road poses problems to traffic and safety. According to the City of Spokane Valley, people and freight are delayed an average of 67 times per day totaling an average of 26,000 vehicle delay hours per year. The city estimates that the number of trains at this crossing could increase to 107 per day by 2045. In 2018, Washington State's Joint Transportation Committee released its *Prioritization of Prominent Road-Rail Conflicts*, which ranked the Pines Road/BNSF grade separation project as the top unfunded project in the state out of over 300 crossings reviewed and out of nearly 4,200 total crossings statewide.

The Pines Road/ BNSF Grade Separation project will build an underpass at Pines Road where it intersects with the BNSF mainline that will accommodate up to four total tracks, three more than exist today. The increased capacity of the underpass and improved efficiency of the intersection of Pines Road (SR 27) and Trent Avenue (SR 290) will improve safety and reduce the risk of road-related commodity spills that can occur at at-grade crossings. The project will also replace an existing signalized intersection of two state highways (SR 27 and SR 290) with a dual lane roundabout that will improve congestion and reduce the number and severity of highway collisions. The project will help improve the efficiency of the rail movements along the corridor and improve safety, noise, and congestion.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of the City of Spokane Valley's request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maria Cantwell". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator