



April 7, 2016

**SUPPORT APPROVED
FOR 2017 FASTLANE II**

City Councilmembers
City of Spokane Valley
11707 E Sprague, Suite 106
Spokane Valley, WA 99206

**RE: Pines Road and Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation Projects for the 2016 USDOT
Grant Application**

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

I am writing to express my support of the 2016 FASTLANE grant application for the Pines Road/BNSF and the Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation projects. As a state legislator who represents the residents of Spokane Valley and its many businesses, I am keenly aware of the potential detrimental effects of these at-grade crossings, especially given the proposed growth in train traffic through Spokane from increased oil and coal shipments to the west coast.

These projects would significantly improve key links to I-90 and the BNSF railroad. The rail and truck transports that move through these intersections are vital to job growth and economic development for the region. However, the current configuration of the intersections forces freight carriers to access I-90 at Barker Road and Pines Road via a circuitous and congested route. These interchanges serve as a secondary access to a major commercial/industrial area in Spokane County and are frequently over capacity.

The high train volumes intersecting Pines Road and Barker Road at the at-grade crossings create safety risks and hinder economic productivity. Removing these choke points will reduce the potential for rail/vehicle collisions, improve emergency access to residents and businesses, and improve the efficiency of rail and truck movement along the corridor.

I believe strongly in the future of Spokane Valley as a regional center for manufacturing. Reconfiguring the Pines Road and Barker Road interchanges will benefit the city of Spokane Valley, Spokane County, and the entire region. These projects are vital to safety of our residents and the health of our economy. Therefore, I urge you to provide the necessary funding for construction of the Pines Road/BNSF and Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation projects.

Sincerely,

Bob McCaslin
State Representative
District 4