

**Olympia Address:**

106 Irv Newhouse Building
PO Box 40404
Olympia, WA 98504-0404
Phone: (360) 786-7606
FAX: (360) 786-7173
Toll-Free: 1-800-562-6000
E-mail: Mike.Padden@leg.wa.gov

Washington State Senate

Senator Mike Padden
4th Legislative District

Committees:

Law & Justice, Chair
Accountability & Reform, Vice Chair
Human Services, Mental
Health & Housing
Ways & Means

District Office:

11707 E. Sprague Ave., Suite 305
Spokane Valley, WA 99206
Phone: (509) 921-2460

April 5, 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 and the Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation projects. As the state senator representing the 4th Legislative District which includes the Spokane Valley, 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. Pines Road, Barker Road and the BNSF tracks provide a vital transportation link to the businesses and residents along the BNSF tracks and I-90.

These projects would significantly improve a key link to I-90 and the BNSF railroad for expanded freight use, and are crucial to jobs and economic development for our region. Because of the current status of existing intersections, many freight trips are forced to access I-90 via a circuitous route, experiencing congestion due to inadequate capacity for vehicles accessing the Barker Road and the Pines Road/I-90 interchanges. Additionally, Pines Road and Barker Road serve as a secondary access to a major commercial and industrial area in Spokane County; these intersections are frequently over capacity.

The high train volumes intersecting Pines Road and Barker Road at the at-grade crossings are an increasing safety risk. Removing the at-grade rail crossings will improve public safety by reducing the potential for rail/vehicle collisions and improve emergency access to residents and businesses.

Both proposed grade separation projects will help improve the efficiency of the rail movements along the corridor and address environmental, noise, safety, and congestion issues impacting the City's street network.

Improved access will help make businesses in the Spokane Valley more competitive. Improved access will enhance business growth, and will increase the number of good paying jobs in this area.

I believe strongly in the future of Spokane Valley as a regional center for manufacturing. A new overpass at these intersections will be an important transportation facility for the city of Spokane Valley, Spokane County, and the Spokane region. In order to help our businesses and our community thrive, I urge you to provide funding crucial to the construction of the Pines Road and Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike Padden".

Senator Mike Padden