



SPOKANE VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Est. 1940

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April 7, 2016

City Councilmember's
City of Spokane Valley
11707 E Sprague, Suite 106
Spokane Valley, WA 99206

RE: Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation project 2016 FASTLANE Grant Application

**SUPPORT APPROVED
FOR 2017 FASTLANE II**

Honorable Mayor and Councilmember's:

I am writing to express my support of the 2016 FASTLANE grant application for the Pines Road and Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation project. As the Fire Chief of Spokane Valley, I am keenly aware of the potential detrimental effects of this at-grade crossing, especially given the proposed growth in train traffic through Spokane from increased oil and coal shipments to the west coast.

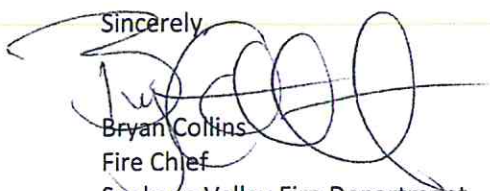
The new grade separation project will address the current failing level of service and public safety access issues on both the Pines and Barker Rd (SR 290) intersections while opening up hundreds of acres of industrial zoned land for development. This development land is immediately adjacent to one of the largest business/industrial parks in the country, the Spokane Business & Industrial Park.

The high train volumes intersecting Pines Road and Barker Road at the at-grade crossing are an increasing safety risk as they inhibit our ability to respond to areas on the other side in a timely manner. Removing the at-grade rail crossing will improve public safety by reducing the potential for rail/vehicle collisions and improve emergency our access to residents and businesses.

These projects would significantly improve a key link to I-90 and the BNSF railroad for expanded freight use, and is crucial to jobs and economic development for the region. Because the existing intersection is a failing intersection, many freight trips are forced to access I-90 via a circuitous route, and suffer from congestion due to inadequate capacity for vehicles accessing the Barker Road/I-90 interchange. Additionally, Barker Road serves as a secondary access to a major commercial area in Spokane County; the intersection is frequently over capacity.

I believe strongly in the future of Spokane Valley as a safe and prosperous regional center for manufacturing. A new overpass at this intersection will be an important transportation facility and safety measure for the city of Spokane Valley, for Spokane County, and for the Spokane region. In order to help our business and our community to thrive, we urge you to provide funding crucial to the construction of the Pines and Barker Road/BNSF Grade Separation project.

Sincerely,


Bryan Collins
Fire Chief

Spokane Valley Fire Department