



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

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June 30, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Washington State Department of Transportation is pleased to support the City of Spokane Valley's 2021 RAISE grant application for the Pines Road/BNSF Grade Separation Project.

The project will improve the safety and efficiency of rail movements along the corridor, improve connectivity of the regional highway system, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase transportation options for Spokane Valley's most disadvantaged communities surrounding the project area. The project adds a new shared-use path and trailhead facility at the Spokane River and Centennial Trail, a regional pathway connecting Spokane, WA and Coeur d'Alene, ID. The new underpass promotes transit service expansion into disadvantaged communities and will link people to commercial and industrial employment centers while eliminating train crossing hazards and improving neighborhood connectivity amongst residences, businesses, schools, and parks.

The project is consistently recognized as one of the region's top road-rail conflict priorities that would reduce the risk of fatalities, serious injuries, and freight commodity spills that can occur at highway-railway at-grade crossings. In August 2018, our state's Joint Transportation Committee evaluated all of Washington's at-grade road-rail crossings and this project was selected as the top-ranked, unfunded project.

As of June 2021, WSDOT has approved various design milestones for the project. The project's highest-risk properties have all been acquired and the path forward for final design and final right of way acquisition are relatively low-risk. With USDOT support, the City will be in a great position to deliver a much-needed grade separation project that promotes national objectives while maximizing local and regional prosperity and quality of life. I hope you will give this project full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

Roger Millar, PE, FASCE, FAICP  
Secretary of Transportation