



AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009
TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT GENERATING ECONOMIC RECOVERY
"TIGER"
DISCRETIONARY GRANT APPLICATION

Tower 55 At-Grade Improvement Project

APPENDIX A: Letters of Support and Endorsement

- US Senator John Cornyn
- US Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison
- US Representative Michael Burgess
- US Representative Kay Granger
- Texas Senator John Carona
- Texas Senator Wendy Davis
- Texas Senator Charlie Geren
- Texas Senator Jane Nelson
- Texas Senator Florence Shapiro
- Texas Senator Kirk Watson
- Texas Representative Lon Burnam
- Texas Representative Mark Shelton
- Texas Representative Vicki Truitt
- Texas Representative Marc Veasey
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Oklahoma Department of Transportation
- City of Fort Worth Mayor Mike Moncrief
- Tarrant County Judge Glen Whitley
- Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce
- Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition

Website: www.bnsf.com/communities/govtaffairs/tower55/intro.pdf



BUILDING AMERICA®

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4305
September 9, 2009

The Honorable Heideh Shahmoradi
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, District of Columbia 20590

Dear Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary Shahmoradi:

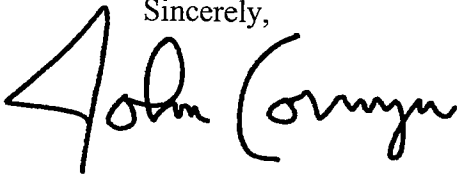
I am writing to express my support for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) funding application through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act submitted to the Department of Transportation by the North Central Texas Council of Governments.

As you and your staff review the proposal, I trust you will give full consideration to the many strengths of this application. As you may know, Tower 55 commonly handles more than 100 Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Union Pacific and Amtrak trains a day. The volumes are such that without needed improvements, freight and passenger rail mobility will be hampered. While I am not personally familiar with this ranking, I have been informed that a Texas Department of Transportation screening panel rated Tower 55 as the highest priority TIGER project in the state. It is estimated that if the project is funded, 20,429 hours of rail congestion delay will be eradicated over a 20 year period and 12,000,000 gallons of fuel will be saved on average per year over that time period. Also, the project will accommodate at least 40 percent more rail volume than in 2009 once completed. As you can see, a grant award would greatly improve regional commerce, reduce the cost of transporting goods, and spur job growth and economic expansion.

I would appreciate your efforts to ensure that I am kept informed as to the progress of this application. Please contact Andrew Blaylock, my Grants Coordinator, with any developments regarding this proposal as soon as they are available.

Thank you for your assistance and consideration.

Sincerely,



JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4304

September 11, 2009

Michael Morris, P.E.
Director of Transportation
North Central Texas Council of Governments
P.O. Box 5888
Arlington, TX 76005-5888

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your correspondence regarding the grant proposal submitted by the North Central Texas Council of Governments to the U.S. Department of Transportation. I appreciate the information you provided about your grant proposal, and I am pleased to support the application.

I have contacted the Department on your behalf and have encouraged the grant office to carefully consider the merits of this grant proposal. Your project will have a positive impact on the community by strengthening our transportation infrastructure.

I am committed to ensuring that each grant application receives a fair and thorough review, and you may be certain that I will continue to monitor the progress of this proposal. As the application process moves forward, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Kay Bailey Hutchison

KBH/mk

RECEIVED
SEP 15 2009
TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL C. BURGESS, M.D.
26TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
229 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-7772
www.house.gov/burgess

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4326

COMMITTEE:
ENERGY AND COMMERCE
SUBCOMMITTEES:
HEALTH
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE
CONGRESSIONAL HEALTH CARE CAUCUS,
CHAIRMAN

September 9, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

The Texas Department of Transportation has recognized Tower 55 to be one of the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program projects to the state, and I write to support the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application submitted by BNSF for two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. Goods move to-and-from Texas ports, distribution centers and logistics parks in North Texas, through the border gateways of Mexico, down from the Pacific Rim and up to the consumers of the southeast U.S., thus resulting in more than 100 trains a day coming through Tower 55. U.S. manufacturers all along the Gulf Coast rely on Tower 55 to assure a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.

Unfortunately, due to the tremendous amount of freight movement, Tower 55 is more congested rather than the clear thoroughfare it should be. Should the U.S. Department of Transportation approve this project, it would allow Tower 55 to accommodate at least 40 percent more volume through installing new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, as well as improved street and pedestrian crossings. This lack of congestion would also improve the air quality in this, current, non-attainment basin.

Furthermore, all of this can be completed by February 2012, well within the ARRA stimulus assistance timeframe.

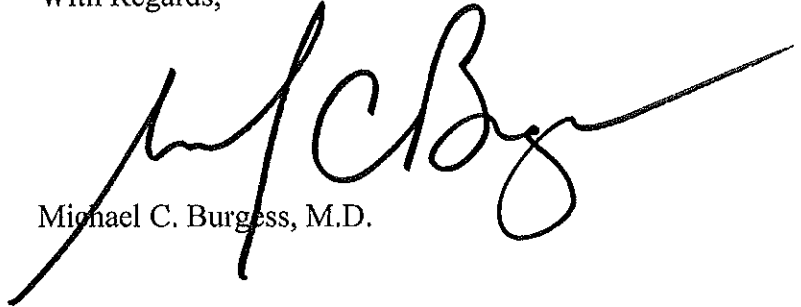
DISTRICT OFFICE:
1660 SOUTH STEMMONS FREEWAY
SUITE 230
LEWISVILLE, TX 75067
(972) 434-9700

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1100 CIRCLE DRIVE
SUITE 200
FORT WORTH, TX 76119
(817) 531-8454

With its broad and long-term benefits, I believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves and in many categories exceeds the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

I appreciate this opportunity to express my support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

With Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. C. Burgess', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael C. Burgess, M.D.

cc: BNSF

Texas Department of Transportation

Michael Morris
North Texas Council of Governments

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

RANKING MEMBER,
STATE AND FOREIGN OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

MEMBER, DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE

DISTRICT OFFICE:
SUITE 407
1701 RIVER RUN ROAD
FORT WORTH, TX 76107
(817) 338-0909
FAX: (817) 335-5852
kaygranger.house.gov

September 9, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington DC, 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I believe that intelligent transportation and infrastructure investments are a great way to boost local and regional economies. I am writing to support funding applications for such investments in my district.

The North Central Texas Council of Governments' (COG) Regional Transportation Council, which is the transportation arm of my region's metropolitan planning organization, will soon submit its list of transportation and infrastructure projects that it deems eligible and worthy of receiving Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) funding from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

I wish to express my support for the COG's list, particularly the projects impacting my district. I hope that you will give these projects particular consideration as the Department reviews projects for discretionary grants under the TIGER program.

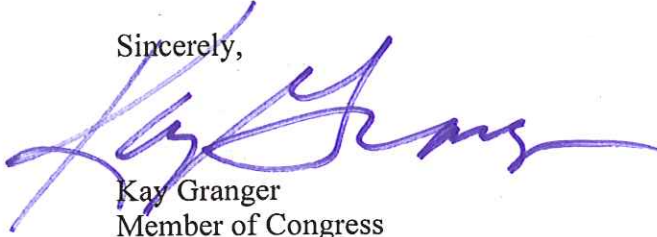
- 1) **Regional Accessibility to Downtown Dallas and Fort Worth** – This joint project request between the City of Dallas and the City of Fort Worth proposes the complete integration of housing, employment and rail transit through the linkage of respective downtowns and their urban neighborhoods. This project meets 100 percent of the TIGER criteria as part of the Livability Principles, established by DOT, HUD and EPA. The grant would fund the final design and construction of modern streetcar systems and bridge crossings across the Trinity River in each city to link mixed use neighborhoods with employment centers. The City of Fort Worth is committing over \$90 million toward this project.
- 2) **IH 35W / IH 820 Interchange** – This joint project request combines efforts of 22 public and private entities to improve links between residents and jobs, and increases the reliability of transportation systems by relieving congestion in a major access point to an area with expanding industrial and employment opportunities.
- 3) **Tower 55 At-Grade Improvement Project** – Tower 55 is one of the busiest at-grade rail intersections in the U.S. This project, which has been planned by public and private sector partners, would improve transportation efficiency for hundreds of businesses and thousands of passengers that rely on cost-effective rail in the region. This project would accommodate a more than 33 percent increase in train counts

versus current volumes, directly impacting 1,400 jobs and resulting in nearly \$210 million in economic impact. Once rail improvements are constructed, all maintenance would be privately funded.

- 4) **SH 121 (Southwest Parkway) from South of Overton Ridge Blvd. to Altamesa Blvd.** – The Southwest Parkway is part of a regionally planned freeway/tollway system that, in anticipation of the opening of this roadway, has attracted commercial, mixed use developments that are expected to contribute to the local tax base and economic growth of south Fort Worth. This section of the project would create approximately 3,500 jobs in the local community and would construct a six-lane tollway. The Parkway will utilize several innovative solutions such as the Intelligent Transportation Systems and All-Electronic Toll Collections to support a transportation system that avoids the delays due to traditional toll booth conditions. Completion of such a project would enable commuting workers better, more reliable transportation alternatives into Fort Worth's downtown business center.
- 5) **SH 121/DFW Connector from Tarrant County Line to near Denton Creek** – This project, located adjacent to Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, provides needed congestion relief and enhances connections between residents and retail, commercial and industrial jobs. By adding six lanes to the existing four freeway lanes, the improved transportation connections will promote further industrial and retail development at D/FW Airport and in nearby commercial, industrial and retail complexes.
- 6) **IH 30 HOV Managed Lanes** – A priority for the regional mobility plan, this project adds toll gantries and direct connections to fully implement HOV/managed lanes in the IH 30 corridor, which connects the metropolitan cities of Fort Worth and Dallas, TX. This project would improve interstate capacity by moving high occupancy and express traffic to HOV/managed lanes and improving goods movement and commuter transportation to spur economic growth. Further, this project will reduce traffic collisions, congestion, and will improve air quality.

Thank you for your consideration of these projects, which will greatly improve the lives of my constituents. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Rachel Carter on my staff at 202-225-5071 should you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,



Kay Granger
Member of Congress



SENATOR JOHN CARONA
CHAIRMAN

SENATOR KIRK WATSON
VICE-CHAIRMAN

SENATE COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND HOMELAND SECURITY

MEMBERS:
SENATOR WENDY DAVIS
SENATOR RODNEY ELLIS
SENATOR JOAN HUFFMAN
SENATOR ROBERT NICHOLS
SENATOR FLORENCE SHAPIRO
SENATOR ELIOT SHAPLEIGH
SENATOR JEFF WENTWORTH

September 1, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This letter expresses my support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods this intersection handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

Direct benefits of the project include:

- The ability for the Tower 55 crossing to accommodate at least 40 percent more volume than in 2009 - and to do so with less congestion and delay than the region has experienced in recent years.
- The potential to achieve a double-digit improvement in overall on-time performance for two of Amtrak trains that link North Texas with other communities in the region and the nation – The Texas Eagle and The Heartland Flyer.

- Elimination of the need to divert freight to trucks and circuitous rail routes that without the project, will be required in the near future to avoid Tower 55 gridlock.
- Improved air quality in a non-attainment basin by reducing train delay and improving rail's potential to move more freight to relieve overburdened highways.
- Greater safety through improvements to several existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings, reduced vehicle crossing dwell time, and almost 10 percent less life-of-project vehicular emissions at affected crossing locations, compared with the no-build alternative.
- Improved goods movement to and from Texas ports, distribution centers and logistics parks in North Texas, the border gateways of Mexico, the Pacific Rim to the consumers of the southeast US; and U.S. manufacturers along the Gulf Coast – assuring a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.

With its broad and long-term benefits, I believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves and in many categories exceeds the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

Thank you for this opportunity to express support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



John Carona
Chairman

Texas Senate Committee on Transportation and Homeland Security



SENATOR WENDY R DAVIS
District 10

The Senate of The State of Texas

COMMITTEES
Education
International Relations & Trade
Transportation & Homeland Security
Veteran Affairs & Military Installations

September 9, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

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Dial 711 For Relay Calls

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(817) 332-3338
FAX: (817) 332-1230

E-Mail: wendy.davis@senate.state.tx.us

- Elimination of the need to divert freight to trucks and circuitous rail routes that without the project, will be required in the near future to avoid Tower 55 gridlock.
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Thank you for this opportunity to express support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Wendy R. Davis
Texas Senate - District 10

State of Texas
House of Representatives



Charlie Geren

CAPITOL OFFICE:
P.O. Box 2910
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768-2910
512-463-0610
FAX 512-463-8310

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1011 ROBERTS CUT-OFF
RIVER OAKS, TEXAS 76114
817-738-8333
FAX 817-738-8362

September 3, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Letter of Support: High Speed Rail – Track 1A and Tiger Grant Applications: Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project, Fort Worth, Texas

Dear Secretary LaHood:

This letter expresses my support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application for two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods, it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail, which remains the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

Direct benefits of the project include:

- The ability for the Tower 55 crossing to accommodate at least 40 percent more volume than in 2009, and to do so with less congestion and delay than the region has experienced in recent years.
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- Eliminates the need to divert freight to trucks and circuitous rail routes that, without the project, will be required in the near future to avoid Tower 55 gridlock.
- Improves air quality in a non-attainment basin by reducing train delay and improving rail's potential to move more freight and relieve overburdened highways.
- Greater safety through improvements to several existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings, reduced vehicle crossing dwell time, and almost 10 percent less life-of-project vehicular emissions at affected crossing locations, compared with the no-build alternative.
- Improved goods movement to and from Texas ports, distribution centers, and logistics parks in North Texas, the border gateways of Mexico, the Pacific Rim to the consumers of the southeast US, and U.S. manufacturers along the Gulf Coast, assuring a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.

With its broad and long-term benefits, we believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves, and in many categories exceeds, the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

We appreciate this opportunity to express our support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charlie Geren".

Charlie Geren

P.O. BOX 12068
CAPITOL BUILDING
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78711
512/463-0112
FAX: 512/463-0923

DISTRICT OFFICE
1235 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 280
GRAPEVINE, TEXAS 76051
817/424-3446
FAX: 817/488-6648

E-MAIL: jane.nelson@senate.state.tx.us



The Senate of the State of Texas

Jane Nelson
Senate District 12

Committees:

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, CHAIR
TEXAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION
NOMINATIONS
FINANCE

August 28, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to support the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

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- Improved goods movement to and from Texas ports, distribution centers and logistics parks in North Texas, the border gateways of Mexico, the Pacific Rim to the consumers of the southeast US; and U.S. manufacturers along the Gulf Coast – assuring a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.

With its broad and long-term benefits, I believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves and in many categories exceeds the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Nelson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Senator Jane Nelson

September 1, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

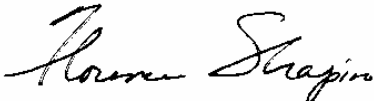
Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing in support of the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

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Very truly yours,



Florence Shapiro
Texas State Senator
Senate District 8

FS/sb



KIRK WATSON
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 14

COMMITTEES:
TRANSPORTATION & HOMELAND SECURITY - VICE-CHAIR
BUSINESS & COMMERCE
JURISPRUDENCE
NOMINATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES
& ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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September 11, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**LETTER OF SUPPORT –
HIGH SPEED RAIL – TRACK 1A AND TIGER GRANT APPLICATIONS
TOWER 55 AT-GRADE RAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - FORT WORTH, TEXAS**

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I am writing to express my support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two USDOT strategic discretionary grant programs: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

As State Senator and Vice Chair of the Texas Senate Committee on Transportation and Homeland Security, I can tell you that this project would provide double digit improvements in freight and passenger mobility as well as safety, security and environment.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

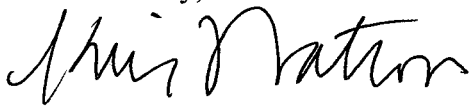
Tower 55 is a unique chokepoint in the nation since it impacts so many different industries, shippers, and communities. For example, Tower 55 affects trains moving refined products from the Texas Gulf Coast, Kansas grain to Texas ports, consumer goods moving between the U.S. west coast ports, North Texas, and the Southeast; and low-sulfur coal destined to Texas power plants.

With its broad and long-term benefits, I believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves, and in many categories exceeds, the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

The at-grade improvement project is an implementable, cost-effective, and unobtrusive solution that will provide immediate benefits for the community and the flow of commerce in Texas and the south central region of the United States. The vast majority of the project's work is within existing railroad right of way and does not displace any residents or businesses.

I appreciate this opportunity to express my support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirk Watson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kirk Watson

TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



CAPITOL OFFICE:
P.O. BOX 2910
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768-2910
512-463-0740

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1067 W. MAGNOLIA
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76104
817-924-1997

EMAIL: LON.BURNAM@HOUSE.STATE.TX.US

TARRANT COUNTY DELEGATION, CO-CHAIR
MEXICAN-AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS
LEGISLATIVE STUDY GROUP, VICE CHAIR
ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS
WOMEN'S HEALTH CAUCUS

LON BURNAM
DISTRICT 90 • FORT WORTH

September 8, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

I write to express my support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program, and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as **the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state**, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

Direct benefits of the project include:

- The ability for the Tower 55 crossing to accommodate at least 40 percent more volume than in 2009, and to do so with less congestion and delay than the region has experienced in recent years.

- The potential to achieve a double-digit improvement in overall on-time performance for two Amtrak trains that link North Texas with other communities in the region and the nation – The Texas Eagle and The Heartland Flyer.
- Elimination of the need to divert freight to trucks and circuitous rail routes that, without the project, will be required in the near future to avoid Tower 55 gridlock.
- Improved air quality in an ozone non-attainment area by reducing train delay and improving rail's potential to move more freight to relieve overburdened highways.
- Greater safety through improvements to several existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings, reduced vehicle crossing dwell time, and almost 10 percent less life-of-project vehicular emissions at affected crossing locations, compared with the no-build alternative.
- Improved goods movement to and from Texas ports, distribution centers and logistics parks in North Texas, the border gateways of Mexico, the Pacific Rim to the consumers of the southeast US; and U.S. manufacturers along the Gulf Coast – assuring a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.

With its broad and long-term benefits, I believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program and would greatly benefit the residents of central Fort Worth. It is my belief that the Project achieves, and in many categories exceeds, the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

I appreciate this opportunity to express my support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lon Burnam".

Lon Burnam

State of Texas
House of Representatives



MARK SHELTON

CAPITOL OFFICE:

P.O. Box 2910
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768-2910
PHONE: (512) 463-0608
FAX: (512) 463-8342
TOLL FREE: (888) 874-2707

DISTRICT OFFICE:

1050 FOREST PARK BLVD. STE. 200
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76110
PHONE: (817) 927-0061
FAX: (817) 927-0042

September 10, 2009

Mr. Ray Lahood
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, SC 20590

Secretary Lahood:

As a member of the Texas Legislature representing House District 97 in Fort Worth, Texas, I would like to express my full support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project, including the High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

During peak times, Tower 55 handles more than 100 trains per day, making it one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. This project will allow for increased efficiency, improved air quality, and enhanced safety. Furthermore, because this project is scheduled for completion in February 2012, Texas can provide an almost immediate solution to the ever-increasing need for rapid goods movement across our nation.

The Texas Department of Transportation's organized screening panel rated the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project as the highest priority for the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program, thus making it a promising candidate. These grants will ensure that one of the nation's busiest rail intersections remain in good condition, providing sustainability and economic growth for the bustling DFW metroplex.

Please feel free to contact me at 512-463-0608 or mark.shelton@house.state.tx.us should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark M. Shelton".

Mark M. Shelton M.D.
House District 97
Texas House of Representatives



TARRANT COUNTY • DISTRICT 97

COMMITTEES: PUBLIC EDUCATION, BORDER & INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
MARK.SHELTON@HOUSE.STATE.TX.US

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



CAPITOL OFFICE:
P.O. BOX 2910
AUSTIN, TX 78768-2910
(512) 463-0690
FAX: (512) 477-5770

E2.502 CAPITOL
EXTENSION

VICKI TRUITT
DISTRICT 98

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1256 MAIN STREET, SUITE 248
SOUTHLAKE, TX 76092-7624
(817) 488-4098
FAX: (817) 488-4099
SOUTHLAKE TOWN SQUARE

August 27, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, Washington DC 20590

LETTER OF SUPPORT --

**HIGH SPEED RAIL – TRACK 1A AND TIGER GRANT APPLICATIONS
TOWER 55 AT-GRADE RAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - FORT WORTH, TEXAS**

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This letter expresses Texas State Representative Vicki Truitt's support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

CHAIRMAN:
BUDGET AND OVERSIGHT, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH
VICE CHAIRMAN:
SUNSET ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEMBER:
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Direct benefits of the project include:

- The ability for the Tower 55 crossing to accommodate at least 40 percent more volume than in 2009 - and to do so with less congestion and delay than the region has experienced in recent years.
- The potential to achieve a double-digit improvement in overall on-time performance for two of Amtrak trains that link North Texas with other communities in the region and the nation -- The Texas Eagle and The Heartland Flyer.
- Eliminates the need to divert freight to trucks and circuitous rail routes that without the project, will be required in the near future to avoid Tower 55 gridlock.
- Improved air quality in a non-attainment basin by reducing train delay and improving rail's potential to move more freight to relieve overburdened highways.
- Greater safety through improvements to several existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings, reduced vehicle crossing dwell time, and almost 10 percent less life-of-project vehicular emissions at affected crossing locations, compared with the no-build alternative.
- Improved goods movement to and from Texas ports, distribution centers and logistics parks in North Texas, the border gateways of Mexico, the Pacific Rim to the consumers of the southeast US; and U.S. manufacturers along the Gulf Coast – assuring a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.

With its broad and long-term benefits, we believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves and in many categories exceeds the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

We appreciate this opportunity to express our support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Additional Talking Point Ideas to Consider – Tower 55 Letters of Support

- Tower 55 is one of the most congested rail intersections in the nation. This congestion is costly, affecting air quality (in a non-attainment metropolitan air basin), limiting economic development and affecting prospects for expanded passenger rail service.

- Today, Tower 55 causes hundreds of Amtrak delays in any given year. Passenger rail would benefit from improvements at Tower 55 because the at-grade intersection acts as a chokepoint causing passenger trains to be delayed, contributing to reduced on-time performance of Amtrak trains. Both the Heartland Flyer, which connects Fort Worth with Oklahoma City, and the Texas Eagle, which operates between Chicago and San Antonio with connecting service to Los Angeles, are impacted. On BNSF lines alone, in 2008 rail congestion at Tower 55 caused more than 100 Heartland Flyer trains to be delayed, while Amtrak's Texas Eagle was delayed 125 times.
- The at-grade improvement project is an implementable, cost-effective, and unobtrusive solution that will provide immediate benefits for the community and the flow of commerce in Texas and the south central region of the United States. The vast majority of the project's work is within existing railroad right of way and does not displace any residents or businesses.

Congestion affects jobs and growth. Tower 55 is a unique chokepoint in the nation since it impacts so many different industries, shippers, and communities. For example, Tower 55 affects trains moving refined products from the Texas Gulf Coast, Kansas grain to Texas ports, consumer goods moving between the U.S. west coast ports, North Texas, and the Southeast; and low-sulfur coal destined to Texas power plants. **Industries, consumers, and citizens are impacted when critical shipments are forced to slow or stop when they reach Tower 55.**

Sincerely,



Vicki Truitt
State Representative



State of Texas
House of Representatives

Marc Veasey
Member

Committees:
Law Enforcement
Government Reform
Rules & Resolutions

September 8, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I am writing in support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is located in House District 95, which I represent in the Texas Legislature. It is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. It is my understanding that this project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with America Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) assistance.

Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals. Furthermore, it is my hope that this project will improve air quality in a non-attainment basin by reducing train delay and improving rail's potential to move more freight to relieve overburdened highways. Also, I'm hopeful that vehicular pedestrian crossings would be improved and vehicular emissions would be reduced due reduced vehicle crossing dwell time.

With its broad and long-term benefits, I believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. Both programs have the potential to stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery and could have positive effects for the constituents I serve in the legislature.

Once again I ask you to please strongly consider the Tower 55 application. It has the potential to help our region, one of the largest in the country, in many critical areas. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Maureen Hagan in my district office (817) 339-1430.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Veasey".

Marc Veasey
State Representative
House District 95



Texas Department of Transportation

DEWITT C. GREER STATE HIGHWAY BLDG. • 125 E. 11TH STREET • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701-2483 • (512) 463-8585

September 3, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: High Speed Rail – Track 1A and Tiger Grant Applications
Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project - Fort Worth, Texas

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This letter expresses Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) strong support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a TxDOT organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

Direct benefits of the project include:

- The ability for the Tower 55 crossing to accommodate at least 40 percent more volume than in 2009 - and to do so with less congestion and delay than the region has experienced in recent years.
- The potential to achieve a double-digit improvement in overall on-time performance for two of Amtrak trains that link North Texas with other communities in the region and the nation – The Texas Eagle and The Heartland Flyer.
- Eliminates the need to divert freight to trucks and circuitous rail routes that without the project, will be required in the near future to avoid Tower 55 gridlock.

THE TEXAS PLAN

REDUCE CONGESTION • ENHANCE SAFETY • EXPAND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY • IMPROVE AIR QUALITY
INCREASE THE VALUE OF OUR TRANSPORTATION ASSETS

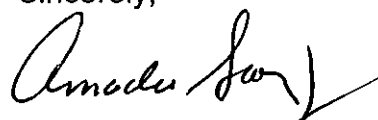
An Equal Opportunity Employer

- Improved air quality in a non-attainment basin by reducing train delay and improving rail's potential to move more freight to relieve overburdened highways.
- Greater safety through improvements to several existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings, reduced vehicle crossing dwell time, and almost 10 percent less life-of-project vehicular emissions at affected crossing locations, compared with the no-build alternative.
- Improved goods movement to and from Texas ports, distribution centers and logistics parks in North Texas, the border gateways of Mexico, the Pacific Rim to the consumers of the southeast US; and U.S. manufacturers along the Gulf Coast – assuring a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.
- The at-grade improvement project is an implementable, cost-effective, and unobtrusive solution that will provide immediate benefits for the community and the flow of commerce in Texas and the south central region of the United States.

With its broad and long-term benefits, we believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves and in many categories exceeds the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

We appreciate this opportunity to express our strong support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Amadeo Saenz, Jr., P.E.
Executive Director



STATE OF OKLAHOMA

August 31, 2009

Secretary Ray LaHood
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

LETTER OF SUPPORT

TIGER GRANT APPLICATION
TOWER 55 AT-GRADE RAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Dear Secretary LaHood:

This letter expresses the State of Oklahoma's support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to the USDOT TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

Direct benefits of the project include:

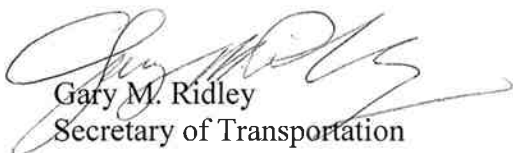
- The ability for the Tower 55 crossing to accommodate at least 40 percent more volume than in 2009 - and to do so with less congestion and delay than the region has experienced in recent years.
- The potential to achieve a double-digit improvement in overall on-time performance for two of Amtrak trains that link North Texas with other communities in the region and the nation – The Texas Eagle and The Heartland Flyer.
- Eliminates the need to divert freight to trucks and circuitous rail routes that without the project, will be required in the near future to avoid Tower 55 gridlock.

- Improved air quality in a non-attainment basin by reducing train delay and improving rail's potential to move more freight to relieve overburdened highways.
- Greater safety through improvements to several existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings, reduced vehicle crossing dwell time, and almost 10 percent less life-of-project vehicular emissions at affected crossing locations, compared with the no-build alternative.
- Improved goods movement to and from Oklahoma and Texas assuring a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.
- Tower 55 is one of the most congested rail intersections in the nation. This congestion is costly, affecting air quality (in a non-attainment metropolitan air basin), limiting economic development and affecting prospects for expanded passenger rail service.
- Today, Tower 55 causes hundreds of Amtrak delays in any given year. Passenger rail would benefit from improvements at Tower 55 because the at-grade intersection acts as a chokepoint causing passenger trains to be delayed, contributing to reduced on-time performance of Amtrak trains. Both the Heartland Flyer, which connects Fort Worth with Oklahoma City, and the Texas Eagle, which operates between Chicago and San Antonio with connecting service to Los Angeles, are impacted. On BNSF lines alone, in 2008 rail congestion at Tower 55 caused more than 100 Heartland Flyer trains to be delayed, while Amtrak's Texas Eagle was delayed 125 times.

With its broad and long-term benefits, we believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves and in many categories exceeds the goals of the program and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

We appreciate this opportunity to express our support for this project. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,


Gary M. Ridley
Secretary of Transportation



September 2, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: Support of Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project in Fort Worth, Texas
Submitted in High Speed Rail – Track 1A and TIGER Grant Applications**

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Tower 55 is one of the busiest and most congested at-grade rail intersections in the nation. It is an impediment to freight traffic flow that needs major improvement and the above referenced project will have positive benefits for our City and the greater Fort Worth-Dallas Region. In Fort Worth, it will assist in improved street safety and pedestrian crossings near local schools in the area. Stalled trains waiting to get through the Tower create a dangerous situation for our school children needing to get to and from school.

The Tower is within a mile of our Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC), an example of true intermodalism that includes the local bus service main transfer center, Greyhound terminal, Fort Worth-Dallas commuter rail known as the Trinity Railway Express (to be joined by another regional passenger rail line from southwest Fort Worth to downtown and on to DFW International Airport and beyond), Amtrak, and a car rental outlet. We are also planning to implement central city streetcar service to connect to the regional rail service at the ITC. Furthermore, there are plans to have future regional passenger rail lines through this area. The Tower 55 project will improve the operations of two freight rail companies benefiting current and planned services.

We know ARRA funds are scarce, but strongly believe this project will make the most of any funding and be completed by the targeted date of February 2012. The project will assist a hard-hit freight industry, and contribute to short-term jobs in the construction period. BNSF Railway headquarters is located in Fort Worth and the company is an outstanding corporate citizen that works well with our community. More importantly these improvements will give all of us positive direct results in long-term mobility. Rail is our future. I urge you to support the initiative.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mike Moncrief
Mayor

MIKE MONCRIEF, MAYOR

THE CITY OF FORT WORTH * 1000 THROCKMORTON STREET * FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102
817-392-6118 * FAX 817-392-2409



B. GLEN WHITLEY
COUNTY JUDGE
of
TARRANT COUNTY

September 10, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

As Tarrant County Judge, I want to express my support for the **Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project** application to two U.S. Department of Transportation discretionary funding opportunities – The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Track 1A grant program and the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant program.

Tower 55, one of the busiest and most congested at-grade rail intersections in the nation, is on the southeast edge of downtown Fort Worth, a mile from the county courthouse. The rails cross in the center of Tarrant County, part of the urban core of North Texas, the nation's fourth largest metropolitan area. During peak periods, Tower 55 handles more than 100 trains a day. The current backup can stall automobile traffic, delay Amtrak trains and the idling diesel locomotives add to the pollution burden in an area long out of attainment for ozone smog. The congestion at the crossing limits economic development in the fast growing North Texas region.

The project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north-south mainline and improve street and pedestrian crossings. It would allow Tower 55 to accommodate more than 40 percent more volume than 2009 levels and still ease congestion and pollution. It would eliminate the need to divert freight to trucks and other rail lines, a move that could become necessary in a few years if Tower 55 becomes gridlocked.

The project, which could be completed by February 2012, is a cost-effective solution that will provide benefits to the North Texas community and commerce in the southeast, central and southwest United States. The vast majority of the project's work is within existing railroad right of way. I strongly encourage you to select this project for discretionary funding.

Sincerely,



B. Glen Whitley
Tarrant County Judge



September 9, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce fully supports the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application for two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

With its broad and long-term benefits, we believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves and in many categories exceeds the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Thornton".

Bill Thornton
President and CEO
Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce



August 8, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

LETTER OF SUPPORT –

**HIGH SPEED RAIL – TRACK 1A AND TIGER GRANT APPLICATIONS
TOWER 55 AT-GRADE RAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - FORT WORTH,
TEXAS**

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This letter expresses the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

Tower 55 is a unique chokepoint in the nation since it impacts so many different industries, shippers, and communities. For example, Tower 55 affects trains moving refined products from the Texas Gulf Coast, Kansas grain to Texas ports, consumer goods moving between the U.S. west coast ports, North Texas, and the Southeast; and low-sulfur coal destined to Texas power plants. **Industries, consumers, and citizens are impacted when critical shipments are forced to slow or stop when they reach Tower 55.**

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. The project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

Due to its regional and national significance, the Tower 55 project was rated by a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) organized screening panel as the highest priority TIGER Competitive Grant Program project in the state, compared with more than 90 other proposals.

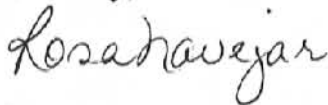
Direct benefits of the project include:

- The ability for the Tower 55 crossing to accommodate at least 40 percent more volume than in 2009 - and do so with less congestion and delay than the region has experienced in recent years.
- The potential to achieve a double-digit improvement in overall on-time performance for two of Amtrak trains that link North Texas with other communities in the region and the nation – The Texas Eagle and The Heartland Flyer.
- Eliminates the need to divert freight to trucks and circuitous rail routes that without the project, will be required in the near future to avoid Tower 55 gridlock.
- Improved air quality in a non-attainment basin by reducing train delay and improving rail's potential to move more freight to relieve overburdened highways.
- Greater safety through improvements to several existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings, reduced vehicle crossing dwell time, and almost 10 percent less life-of-project vehicular emissions at affected crossing locations, compared with the no-build alternative.
- Improved goods movement to and from Texas ports, distribution centers and logistics parks in North Texas, the border gateways of Mexico, the Pacific Rim to the consumers of the southeast US; and U.S. manufacturers along the Gulf Coast – assuring a competitive supply chain that will support regional and national businesses' ability to grow and add sustainable jobs in the future.

With its broad and long-term benefits, we believe the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project is a strong candidate for both the HSR Track 1A Grant Program and the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program. It achieves and in many categories exceeds the goals of both programs and would stimulate and sustain both short and long-term economic recovery.

We appreciate this opportunity to express our support for this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Rosa Navejar, President/CEO
Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce



Tarrant Regional Transportation Coalition

1509B South University Drive, Suite 276 • Fort Worth, TX 76107 • 817-850-7940 • 817-850-7944 fax • www.trtcmobility.org

August 19, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

LETTER OF SUPPORT –

HIGH SPEED RAIL – TRACK 1A AND TIGER GRANT APPLICATIONS
TOWER 55 AT-GRADE RAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - FORT WORTH, TEXAS

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This letter expresses TRTC's support for the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application to two strategic discretionary grant programs being led by USDOT: (a) The High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail (HSR) Track 1A Grant Program and (b) the TIGER Discretionary Grant Program.

The Tower 55 rail interlocker is one of the busiest and most congested rail intersections in the nation. During peak periods it commonly handles more than 100 trains a day. This project would install new signaling, bridge upgrades, a third north/south mainline, and improved street and pedestrian crossings, and it can be completed by February 2012 with ARRA stimulus assistance. This regionally and nationally significant project will deliver an immediate and lasting improvement to the efficiency of rail – the most cost-effective, fuel-efficient, and environmentally-sound land transportation mode for moving the nation's freight.

The project will reduce delay and increase the intersection's capacity by at least 40 percent, benefiting not only freight traffic but also passenger traffic on the The Texas Eagle and The Heartland Flyer. It will reduce congestion and emissions harmful to air quality in a non-attainment area. It will increase safety through improvements to several existing vehicular/pedestrian crossings. And it is critical to efficient goods movement in a competitive supply chain that involves Kansas grain, North Texas distribution centers and logistics parks, border gateways of Mexico, U.S. manufacturers along the Gulf Coast, Pacific Rim shipment to consumers in the southeast US, and many others. Without the improvements this project implements, Tower 55 will soon face gridlock.

We urge your favorable consideration of the Tower 55 At-Grade Rail Improvement Project application.

Sincerely,

Vic Suhm
Executive Director

AECOM, Arlington Chamber of Commerce, City of Arlington, City of Azle, City of Bedford, City of Benbrook, City of Blue Mound, Blue Star Investments (Dallas Cowboys), Brown & Gay Engineers, City of Burleson, BNSF, Cantey Hanger, Clean Energy, City of Cleburne, City of Colleyville, City of Crowley, Dannenbaum Engineering Corporation, City of Decatur, City of Denton, Denton County, Denton County Transportation Authority, Downtown Fort Worth, Inc., City of Euless, Town of Flower Mound, City of Forest Hill, Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Fort Worth Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce, City of Fort Worth, Freese & Nichols, Graham Associates, City of Grand Prairie, City of Grapevine, Greater Fort Worth Association of Realtors, Halff Associates, City of Haltom City, City of Haslet, Hicks Holdings (Texas Rangers), Hillwood Properties, City of Hudson Oaks, Huitt Zollars, HEB Chamber of Commerce, City of Hurst, Jacobs Engineering, Johnson County, City of Joshua, City of Keller, City of Kennedale, Kimley Horn, Thomas Krampitz Law, City of Lake Worth, City of Mansfield, Metroport Cities Partnership, National Association of Railroad Passengers, Northeast Tarrant Chamber of Commerce, City of North Richland Hills, Northeast Leadership Forum, Northwest Communities Partnership, Town of Pantego, City of Rhome, City of Richland Hills, S & B Infrastructure, Ltd., Saginaw Area Chamber of Commerce, City of Saginaw, City of Southlake, Tarrant County, Tarrant County College, Taylor Olson Adkins Sralla & Elam L.L.P., Teague Nall and Perkins, The T, Town of Trophy Club, URS Corporation, City of Watauga, Town of Westlake, City of Westover Hills, City of Westworth Village, City of White Settlement, Wise County