



Legislative Building

## Washington State Legislature

Olympia, WA 98504-0600

January 26, 2023

The Honorable Peter Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

As the state legislators for the 42nd legislative district, we are writing to you in support of the Bell Road-BNSF Railway Grade Separation Grant Application submitted by the City of Blaine (City), Washington to the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program.

The City has been working with the Washington State Department of Transportation, and BNSF Railway to address the traffic impacts at this location for a number of years. The at-grade crossing is near the location of the Department of Homeland Security's railcar scanner. Whenever a train from Canada enters the US, it must slow and be scanned. This process is lengthy, and there are substantial impacts to traffic and emergency services as trains are inspected several times a day.

The Bell Road-BNSF Railway Grade Separation project will eliminate these substantial delays to vehicle traffic at this location and provide safe and reliable access between unincorporated Whatcom County, Interstate 5, and emergency services in Blaine. This project will also eliminate potential conflicts with highway vehicles, Amtrak and BNSF trains on this Federally designated high speed rail corridor between Seattle, WA and Vancouver, BC Canada.

The City is currently completing its 10% design phase for the project. RAISE grant funding would enable the City to immediately begin work on the Preliminary engineering and NEPA phase of the project.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of the City of Blaine's grant application.

Sincerely,

Sharon Shewmake  
Senator  
42<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District

Alicia Rule  
Representative, Position 1  
42<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District

Joe Timmons  
Representative, Position 2  
42<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District