



Merril G. Lieb
Assistant Vice President
Shortline Development

BNSF Railway Company
2500 Lou Menk Dr., AOB-1
Fort Worth, TX 76131
(817) 694-0311 (o)

merril.lieb@bnsf.com

October 13, 2017

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

Dear Secretary Chao:

BNSF Railway supports efforts by the City of Connell to secure funding from the 2017 TIGER and INFRA funding programs for the Connell Rail Interchange project. The Connell Rail Interchange project is located on BNSF's Lakeside Subdivision on the Great Northern Corridor and connects the Columbia Basin Railroad to the national rail network and the global marketplace.

The Connell Rail Interchange project would construct new interchange tracks that would improve the efficiency, capacity and safety of the interchange between BNSF Railway and the shortline operator that serves central Washington, the Columbia Basin Railroad. The proposed project would replace the existing constrained interchange that cannot efficiently handle growing freight volumes, including unit trains, without impacting mainline operations and capacity.

BNSF looks forward to continuing its collaboration on this project with project partners, including reaching an agreement with Columbia Basin Railroad for the usage of the proposed new infrastructure that will be constructed on BNSF property. BNSF has a strong partnership with Columbia Basin Railroad and believes an agreement will be reached in a timely manner.

BNSF is prepared to proceed pending satisfactory review of funding requirements, final engineering, operating impacts, financial impacts, and negotiation of definitive agreement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Merril Lieb". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Merrill Lieb
AVP Shortline Development



October 3, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Support of TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 Grant for Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Elaine Chao:

I am writing on behalf of Columbia Basin Railroad in strong support of a TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 Grant for the Connell Rail Interchange infrastructure improvement project.

The Connell Rail Interchange is a key rail interchange in Eastern Washington where the Columbia Basin Railroad line intersects with BNSF Railway's busy Lakeside Subdivision line, which runs between Spokane, WA and Pasco, WA. The Columbia Basin Railroad Line goes through the heart of the Columbia Basin in eastern Washington and serves Moses Lake, Wheeler, Schrag, Warden, Bruce, Othello and Connell in Grant, Adams and Franklin Counties.

Over the past several years, a significant amount of economic development has been occurring in communities on the Columbia Basin Railroad Line, especially in Grant and Adams Counties. Consequently, the Columbia Basin Railroad line has become one of the busiest short lines in Washington State, hauling over 10,000 carloads annually of various agricultural, industrial commodities and other cargo for 60 active rail shippers in the Columbia Basin, which employ nearly 7,000 people in Grant and Adams Counties.

The Connell Rail Interchange was built nearly 100 years ago and the configuration of the Interchange is outdated and inefficient. **As a result, the Connell Rail Interchange needs to be upgraded and improved to accommodate the tremendous growth in rail cargo that is flowing to and through Connell.**

The Connell Rail Interchange also sits on the Northern Corridor Rail Line, which is a key strategic freight transportation corridor that spans the northern US between the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest. The Corridor unifies the population centers of the Midwest and Pacific Northwest, and is a critical logistics channel for goods produced or consumed in the Northern Tier.

Without a new and improved rail interchange at Connell, the existing conditions there will create a choke/pinch point which could adversely impact rail velocity on the Northern Corridor and hinder economic growth in several communities in the Columbia Basin.

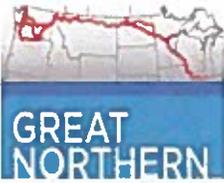
In conclusion and for the above mentioned reasons, Columbia Basin Railroad urges USDOT to approve the City of Connell's TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 grant application to improve and upgrade the Connell Rail Interchange.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brig Temple".

Brig Temple
President/CEO
Columbia Basin Railroad
111 University Parkway, Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98901



**GREAT
NORTHERN**

CORRIDOR COALITION

The Mission of the Great Northern Corridor Coalition is to

Promote a premier multi-state corridor by acting collectively to promote public policy, research, and multimodal infrastructure development that expands commerce and enhances safety on the corridor.

P.O. Box 1255 Williston, North Dakota 58802 (360) 567-7521

Members:

Idaho Transportation
Department

November 1, 2017

Minnesota DOT

Montana DOT

North Dakota DOT

Oregon DOT

Washington State
DOT

**The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590**

Wisconsin DOT

**Subject: City of Connell, WA – Rail Interchange Project INFRA Grant
Program Application**

Illinois DOT

Federal Highways
Administration

Dear Secretary Chao,

BNSF Railway

The purpose of this letter is to provide the Great Northern Corridor Coalition's support as a Project Co-Sponsor with the City of Connell to secure federal funding for the above referenced INFRA grant application that constructs a relocated rail interchange yard and other safety improvements in the City of Connell, Washington.

The Northwest
Seaport Alliance

Port of Everett

Port of Seattle

Port of Tacoma

The Great Northern Corridor Coalition is a Multi-State, Multimodal Coalition which represents 8 States, 162 Counties and over 38 Million Americans. With the assistance of two FHWA Multi-State Corridor Operations and Management grants and our member contributions, we have been collaborating for several years to promote regional cooperation around Safety, Mobility, Economic Development and Project Prioritization and Support across the Great Northern Corridor.

Port of Grays Harbor

Port of Vancouver,
USA

Port of Portland, OR

Port of Pasco

Our collaboration with Coalition Members has helped to create a collective identification and prioritization of corridor enhancing projects that contribute to the seamless movement of freight and people across our great country. We are indeed a linked system!

Port of Quincy

WA Public Ports
Association

Port of Northern
Montana

The Connell Rail Interchange Project supports regional economic vitality by improving freight and passenger mobility, reducing the potential for critical rail crossing exposures and leverages Federal Funding through a robust public private partnership.

City of Spokane
Valley

City of Connell

The Great Northern Corridor is an east-west artery for commerce that is a vital link in the nation's supply chain for agriculture, energy products, raw materials and finished goods that support major U.S. Industries and consumer markets in our 8 states and provides a vital

City of Wenatchee

link for global trade. The underlying thread and primary focus of the Great Northern Corridor is the railroad and roadway infrastructure networks that connects the Great Lakes to the Pacific Northwest, and the Connell Rail Interchange Project certainly plays an important role as a shortline railroad connector that serves many other Central Washington Communities beyond just the City of Connell, WA.

The Connell Rail Interchange Project would add vital transportation mobility to our region and to the Great Northern Corridor. This project supports the Coalition's vision for "a globally competitive, multi-state freight corridor consisting of a seamless road and rail network that promotes economic growth for neighboring communities and accommodates the demand for safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation services."

We thank you for the opportunity to support this important project and urge your consideration for the Connell Rail Interchange Project funding from the INFRA grant program.

Sincerely,



Curtis E. Shuck, Jr.

Executive Director

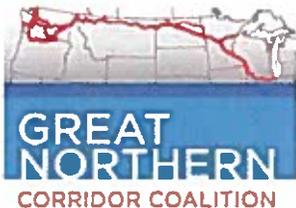
**Great Northern
Corridor Coalition**

P.O. Box 1255

Williston, North Dakota 58802

(360) 567-7521 / Mobile

www.greatnortherncorridor.org



CC: Mayor Bruce Blackwell - City of Connell, Washington

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4704

November 13, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing in support of an application submitted by the City of Connell and their co-sponsor Great Northern Corridor Coalition (GNCC) for the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grants* program for the Connell Rail Interchange project.

The City of Connell and the GNCC are seeking an INFRA grant to relocate, modernize, and expand the Connell Rail Interchange to an industrial area one mile south of its current location. The new interchange would support the 90 trains projected to be running through Connell daily by 2035, which is a significant increase from the 42 trains per day running through the city today.

The existing rail interchange, where the Columbia Basin Railroad (CBRR) enters onto the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) mainline, is outdated and inefficient. It is located in downtown Connell only 400 feet from primary streets and bifurcates the city center, disrupting access to residential areas, schools, and emergency services. It is undersized and cannot accommodate unit trains which must be separated into at least four segments, often blocking street crossings. At least 50 percent of the time, the CBRR or BNSF or both experience delays due to these constraints. Relocating the interchange and rail switch yard would increase safety and reduce congestion for freight and vehicle traffic.

The Connell Rail Interchange serves as a critical link for the CBRR to the BNSF mainline. The CBRR hauls over 10,000 carloads of agricultural and industrial goods each year between Connell and Moses Lake/Wheeler on a R2 Freight Rail Corridor, and has become the busiest short line railroad in eastern Washington. This project would better connect four counties by rail, including Moses Lake, Pasco, and communities to the north and south of Connell, providing access for manufacturing and agricultural goods in central Washington to ports and destinations served by the Great Northern Corridor.

The City of Connell and Washington state have recognized the importance of this project, securing over 40 percent of the project cost through local and state funding. The Connell Rail Interchange project would improve efficiency and accessibility for the CBRR and BNSF, residents, and businesses and support economic growth and job creation by opening new industrial lands at the site of the existing interchange.

154 RUSSELL SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4704
(202) 224-2621

2930 WETMORE AVENUE
SUITE 903
EVERETT, WA 98201-4107
(425) 259-6515

2988 JACKSON FEDERAL BUILDING
915 2ND AVENUE
SEATTLE, WA 98174-1003
(206) 553-5545
TOLL FREE: (866) 481-9186

10 NORTH POST STREET
SUITE 600
SPOKANE, WA 99201-0712
(509) 624-9515

950 PACIFIC AVENUE
SUITE 650
TACOMA, WA 98402-4450
(253) 572-3636

THE MARSHALL HOUSE
1323 OFFICER'S ROW
VANCOUVER, WA 98681-3858
(360) 896-7797

website: <http://murray.senate.gov>
e-mail: <http://murray.senate.gov/email>

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

402 EAST YAKIMA AVENUE
SUITE 420
YAKIMA, WA 98901-2780
(509) 453-7462

Thank you for your consideration of the City of Connell and the Great Northern Corridor Coalition's application. Please contact Samara Ressler in my Washington, D.C., office at 202-224-2621 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patty Murray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a loop at the end of the name.

Patty Murray
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4704

October 23, 2017

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing in support of an application submitted by the City of Connell for the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grants* program for the Connell Rail Interchange project.

The City of Connell is seeking a TIGER grant to relocate, modernize, and expand the Connell Rail Interchange to an industrial area one mile south of its current location. The new interchange would support the 90 trains projected to be running through Connell daily by 2035, which is a significant increase from the 42 trains per day running through the city today.

The existing rail interchange, where the Columbia Basin Railroad (CBRR) enters onto the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) mainline, is outdated and inefficient. It is located in downtown Connell only 400 feet from primary streets and bifurcates the city center, disrupting access to residential areas, schools, and emergency services. It is undersized and cannot accommodate unit trains which must be separated into at least four segments, often blocking street crossings. At least 50 percent of the time, the CBRR or BNSF or both experience delays due to these constraints. Relocating the interchange and rail switch yard would increase safety and reduce congestion for freight and vehicle traffic.

The Connell Rail Interchange serves as a critical link for the CBRR to the BNSF mainline. The CBRR hauls over 10,000 carloads of agricultural and industrial goods each year between Connell and Moses Lake/ Wheeler on a R2 Freight Rail Corridor, and has become the busiest short line railroad in eastern Washington. This project would better connect four counties by rail, including Moses Lake, Pasco, and communities to the north and south of Connell, providing access for agricultural goods in central Washington to ports and destinations on the West Coast.

The City of Connell and Washington state have recognized the importance of this project, securing 40 percent of the project cost through local and state funding. The Connell Rail Interchange project would improve efficiency and accessibility for the CBRR and BNSF, residents, and businesses and support economic growth and job creation by opening new industrial lands at the site of the existing interchange.

Thank you for your consideration of the City of Connell's application. Please contact Samara Ressler in my Washington, D.C., office at 202-224-2621 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patty Murray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Patty Murray
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

October 17, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am pleased to write in support of the application submitted by the City of Connell to the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program.

The Connell Rail Interchange Project will modernize this critical piece of infrastructure located in rural central Washington. The project will relocate the existing interchange to an industrial location more suitable for the interchange yard and capable of handling increased rail traffic. Connell currently has 42 trains traveling through its town each day, but it is anticipated that this number will exceed 90 trains per day by 2035. Additionally, the relocation will mitigate conflicts between through trains and trains moving to and from the shot line rail line. Safety will also be improved by relocating the interchange outside of the city center and away from residential areas and schools.

The City of Connell's project will increase safety and improve freight reliability and mobility. Therefore, I am pleased to support the Connell Rail Interchange Project and ask that it receive full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

EVERETT
2930 WETMORE AVENUE
SUITE 9B
EVERETT, WA 98201
(425) 303-0114
FAX: (425) 303-8351

RICHLAND
825 JADWIN AVENUE
SUITE 204/204A
RICHLAND, WA 99352
(509) 946-8106
FAX: (509) 948-6937

SEATTLE
JACKSON FEDERAL BUILDING
915 2ND AVENUE, SUITE 3206
SEATTLE, WA 98174-1003
(206) 220-6400
TOLL FREE: 1-888-648-7328
FAX: (206) 220-6404

SPOKANE
U. S. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE
WEST 920 RIVERSIDE, SUITE 697
SPOKANE, WA 99201
(509) 353-2507
FAX: (509) 353-2547

TACOMA
950 PACIFIC AVENUE
SUITE 615
TACOMA, WA 98402
(253) 572-2281
FAX: (253) 572-5879

VANCOUVER
MARSHALL HOUSE
1313 OFFICERS' ROW
FIRST FLOOR
VANCOUVER, WA 98661
(360) 696-7838
FAX: (360) 696-7844

WASHINGTON, DC
511 HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705
(202) 224-3441
FAX: (202) 228-0514

DAN NEWHOUSE
4TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON
www.newhouse.house.gov



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER
DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED AGENCIES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RULES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
LEGISLATIVE AND BUDGET PROCESS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON RULES AND
ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE

1318 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
OFFICE (202) 225-5816
FAX (202) 225-3251

Congress of the United States House of Representatives

3100 GEORGE WASHINGTON WAY
SUITE 130
RICHLAND, WA 99354
OFFICE (509) 713-7374

402 EAST YAKIMA AVENUE
SUITE 445
YAKIMA, WA 98901
OFFICE (509) 452-3243

P.O. Box 823
TWISP, WA 98856
PHONE (509) 406-0028

October 30, 2017

VICE-CHAIR
NUCLEAR CLEANUP CAUCUS

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Subject: City of Connell, Connell Rail Interchange Project

Dear Secretary Chao,

I am pleased to support the City of Connell, Washington in their endeavor to secure TIGER 2017 and INTRA FY17/18 grants to fund the Connell Rail Interchange Project. The Connell Rail Interchange is a key element to bringing efficient and reliable rail service to North Central Washington State as well as reducing congestion caused at rail crossings, increasing rail capacity, and reducing safety concerns.

This important project would relocate the current rail interchange south of the City of Connell to a location more appropriate and suitable for an interchange yard. Currently, 42 trains run through Connell daily but it is anticipated that by 2035 that number will exceed 90. The relocation and improvement of this regionally significant rail interchange will guarantee that the region's manufacturers and agricultural producers have consistent and safe access to trade gateways served by the Great Northern Corridor.

Connell is a small rural community about 100 miles south of Spokane, Washington without the local resources to finalize this massive undertaking and needs the assistance of grant funds to ensure the completion of this vitally important transportation project. Their request is for the final \$14 million so that the project remains on schedule. As a United States Congressman that has the supreme honor of serving the people of Connell, as well as all of my constituents in Washington State's 4th Legislative District, I ask that you give their request for funding full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

Member of Congress

DMN/KA



Washington State Legislature

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

October 5, 2017

Secretary Chao,

I appreciate the opportunity to support the City of Connell in their efforts to submit a TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 grant request, which will provide the final \$14 million of funding needed for this important project.

Connell is a small rural community about 100 miles south of Spokane, Washington. It does not have access to local funding to finalize the \$24 million needed for this project – and needs the assistance of grant funds to ensure this regionally significant rail project is completed. The request is for the final \$14 million to ensure that construction of project remains on schedule.

The Connell rail interchange is a key element to bringing efficient, reliable rail service to North Central Washington. It will guarantee that the region's manufacturers and agricultural producers have consistent access to trade gateways served by the Great Northern Corridor.

The proposed project would relocate the current rail interchange south of the City of Connell to an industrial location that is more suitable for the interchange yard. The new larger yard is expected to meet 21st Century rail demands. Currently, 42 trains per day run through Connell. It is anticipated that by 2035, this number will exceed 90 trains per day. The proposed investment in the relocation will reduce conflicts between through trains and trains moving to and from our short line rail line (the CBRW) that serves our region.

In addition to increasing the rail capacity of this important region, the project will reduce the congestion caused at rail crossings that bifurcate the city center and residential areas of Connell from other needed services. Specifically, the realignment will reduce safety concerns associated with the rail crossings and our local schools.

As a State Senator representing the 9th Legislative District, I whole-heartedly support these efforts and hope that you will consider this request.

With respect,

Senator Mark Schoesler
Senate Majority Leader
State of Washington

Representative Mary Dye
9th Legislative District
State of Washington



STATE REPRESENTATIVE
9th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
JOE SCHMICK

State of
Washington
House of
Representatives

HEALTH CARE & WELLNESS
RANKING MEMBER
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL
RESOURCES
APPROPRIATIONS



October 20, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Hersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

As the State Representative from the 9th Legislative District, I would like to extend my strong support for the City of Connells application for INFRA FY17/18 for the Connell Rail Interchange Project. This project has a potential to help and encourage continued economic growth for the entire region and our rural farming communities.

This project would relocate the current rail interchange south of the city to an industrial location that is more suitable for the interchange yard. The new, larger yard will be built to meet 21st Century rail demands. Currently, 42 trains per day run through Connell and it is anticipated that by 2035 this number will exceed 90 trains per day. The proposed investment in the relocation will reduce conflicts between through trains and trains moving to and from a short line rail line that serves this region.

I have had the honor of touring this project and have met with local leaders on several occasions. Although Connell is a small, rural community, they have done due diligence in securing local funding and working with state and local partners to facilitate this project in a smart and environmentally friendly way.

The Connell rail interchange is a key element to bringing efficient, reliable rail service to North Central Washington. It will help guarantee that the region's manufacturers and agricultural producers have consistent access to trade gateways served by the Great Northern Corridor. In addition to increasing the rail capacity of this important region, the project will reduce the congestion caused at rail crossings that bifurcate the city center and residential areas of Connell from other needed services. Specifically, the realignment will reduce safety concerns associated with the rail crossings and the local schools.

Again, I urge full and fair consideration of the City of Connells application for TIGER grant funding for this much needed project.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Schmick".

Joe Schmick
State Representative
9th Legislative District

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE: 426-B LEGISLATIVE BUILDING • PO BOX 40600, OLYMPIA, WA 98504-0600 • 360-786-7844
E-MAIL: Joe.Schmick@leg.wa.gov

TOLL-FREE LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE: 1-800-562-6000 • TDD: 1-800-635-0003 • www.leg.wa.gov



Washington State Legislature

October 5, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao,

As Legislators of the 13th District, we are writing to express our strong support for the Connell Rail Interchange Project's TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY 17/18 grant requests.

Connell is home to a small rural community located in Eastern Washington. Connell is in need of grant funds to complete the Connell Rail Interchange Project due to the lack of local funding. The requested \$14 million is necessary to keep the project moving and on time.

Over the past several years, we have seen a significant increase in economic development in Connell and the surrounding areas of Grant and Adams Counties. The Connell rail line interchange currently serves 42 trains per day. That number is expected to exceed 90 trains per day by 2035. The proposed project will allow the current rail interchange to relocate to a new larger yard in a more industrial location allowing room for continued economic growth.

The Connell rail interchange is vital to bringing more efficient, reliable rail service to North Central Washington. Completing this project will guarantee the region's manufacturers and agricultural producer consistent access to trade gateways served by the Great Northern Corridor.

Additionally, the relocation of the rail interchange reduces congestion at rail crossings that are currently dividing the city center and residential areas of Connell from other needed services. The completion of the project will greatly reduce safety concerns associated with the current location.

We ask that you fully support the city of Connell's TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY 17/18 grant requests for the final \$14 million to complete the Connell Rail Interchange Project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Senator Judy Warnick in cursive.

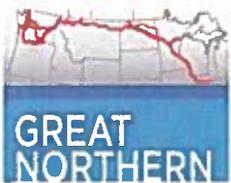
Senator Judy Warnick
13th Legislative District

Handwritten signature of Representative Tom Dent in cursive.

Representative Tom Dent
13th Legislative District

Handwritten signature of Representative Matt Manweller in cursive.

Representative Matt Manweller
13th Legislative District



The Mission of the Great Northern Corridor Coalition is to

"Promote a premier multi-state corridor by acting collectively to promote public policy, research, and multimodal infrastructure development that expands commerce and enhances safety on the corridor"

P.O. Box 1255 Williston, North Dakota 58802 (360) 567-7521

Members:

Idaho DOT

Minnesota DOT

Montana DOT

North Dakota DOT

Oregon DOT

Washington State
DOT

Wisconsin DOT

Federal Highways
Administration

BNSF

Port of Everett

Port of Seattle

Port of Tacoma

Port of Grays Harbor

Port of Longview

Port of Vancouver,
USA

Port of Portland, OR

Port of Pasco

Port of Quincy

WA Public Ports
Association

Port of Northern
Montana

October 12, 2017

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Secretary Elaine L. Chao
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Connell Rail Interchange Project Letter of Support - TIGER 9

Dear Secretary Chao,

The Great Northern Corridor Coalition is a multi-state cooperative which promotes region-wide vision, planning and infrastructure investment. Our collaborative efforts sustain and enhance economic vitality and global competitiveness for the region.

The Connell Rail Interchange is a critical component along the Corridor. It was identified as a bottleneck or chokepoint for an efficient freight system, which serves a large productive region of national significance. Thankfully, innovative solutions were created for this important connection that significantly reduce the delays at this chokepoint.

Construction funding from the TIGER 9 Program will complement work already performed in a cost-effective way that will complete this project. The result will promote seamless transportation and positive economic growth. It will improve operational capacity and efficiency and enhance safety.

The sheer volume of freight and the magnitude of economic impact this project supports clearly demonstrates value and return on investment. For these reasons, the Great Northern Corridor Coalition wholeheartedly supports the Connell Rail Interchange Project as a candidate for TIGER 9 Program Funding.

Respectfully,

Great Northern Corridor Coalition

Curtis E. Shuck, Jr.
Executive Director



FRANKLIN COUNTY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

BRAD PECK
DISTRICT 1

ROBERT E. KOCH
DISTRICT 2

RICK MILLER
DISTRICT 3

KEITH JOHNSON
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

October 3, 2017

Maria Peña, City Administrator
City of Connell, Washington
104 E. Adams St., P.O. Box 1200
Connell, WA 99326

Re: Connell Rail Interchange Project

Dear Maria:

The Franklin County Board of Commissioners is pleased to offer our support for the Connell Rail Interchange Project. We are well aware of the effort the City of Connell has undertaken to make this project a reality and have been pleased to participate by including the project in our list of economic development activities for Franklin County using proceeds from the Economic Development Fund for Rural Counties pursuant to R.C.W. 82.14.370. This project is critical to fostering job growth and commercial development in the region and will provide Franklin County businesses with better access to markets.

In accordance with our endorsement of the project, we encourage you to provide this letter as support in your requests for additional funding. We recognize that the total cost of the project is beyond the capacity of local funding and so we support the request for additional grant funds from other sources. While the City of Connell and Franklin County may be primary beneficiaries of completing the interchange, ultimately this will benefit consumers of products shipped by rail as well as enhance public safety and improve efficiencies in the marketplace, as our goods are delivered around the world.

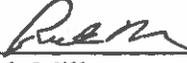
Please contact our county administrator, Keith Johnson, if we can be of any further assistance on this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

Franklin County Board of Commissioners.



Robert Koch, Chairman



Rick Miller



Brad Peck



7130 W. Grandridge Blvd., Ste. A
Kennewick, WA 99336-7725

(509) 735-1000
TryTri-Cities.org

October 9, 2017

City of Connell
Attn: Maria Peña
City Administrator
PO Box 1200
Connell, WA 99326

RE: Connell Rail Interchange Project

Dear Ms. Peña,

The Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC) supports the City of Connell's request for grant funds needed to complete the Connell Rail Interchange Project. TRIDEC is the lead economic development organization for Benton and Franklin Counties in the State of Washington.

In the recent past, the region has seen extraordinary growth. According to the Washington State Office of Financial Management, between 2000-2015, the area's population has grown almost 47% - making it the fastest growing region in the State of Washington.

This tremendous growth necessitates investment in our area's infrastructure, including vital services like efficient, reliable rail services to North Central Washington. Connell is a small rural community about 100 miles south of Spokane, Washington and 40 miles north of the Tri-Cities. The City does not have access to local funding to finalize the \$24M needed for this project. The assistance of grant funds would ensure this regionally significant rail project is completed.

Completion of this project will guarantee that the region's manufacturers and agricultural producers have consistent access to trade gateways served by the Great Northern Corridor which is vital to its sustainability in transportation and growth.

TRIDEC therefore supports this project to improve the City of Connell's ability to serve the region's expanded and re-located rail interchange needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carl Adrian".

Carl Adrian
President & CEO

/jlb





BENTON-FRANKLIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

1622 Terminal Dr. • Richland, WA 99352
<http://bfcog.us>

Ph: (509)943-9185
Fax: (509)943-6756

October 12, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: City of Connell TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 Connell Rail Interchange Project Grant Request

The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCG), as Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Tri-Cities Metropolitan Area and Regional Transportation Planning Organization for Benton and Franklin Counties supports the City of Connell TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 grant request for the Connell Rail Interchange Project. The request is for \$14 million to supplement the \$10 million in hand to ensure construction of this project remains on schedule. Connell, a small rural community in east-central Washington, does not have access to local funding to complete this project.

The proposed project would relocate the current rail interchange south of the City of Connell to an industrial location that is more suitable. Currently, 42 trains per day run through Connell. It is anticipated that by 2035, this number will exceed 90 trains per day.

Specifically, the realignment will reduce safety concerns associated with the rail crossings and local schools. Additionally, the project will reduce the congestion caused at rail crossings that bifurcate the city center and residential areas of Connell from first responders and other needed services.

The project is identified in Transition2040 (T2040), the BFGC 2017-2040 Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Plan. The project supports T2040 Goal #1, Safety and Security, which calls for provision and improvement of the safety of transportation system through design and operations, and Goal #4, Freight Movement and Economic Vitality which calls for development of a transportation system that stimulates, supports and enhances the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy.

Sincerely,

Brian Malley
Executive Director
Benton-Franklin Council of Governments



Port of Pasco Administrative Office
 Phone: 509.547.3378
 Fax: 509.547.2547
 portofpasco@portofpasco.org
 1110 Osprey Pointe Blvd.
 Suite 201
 P.O. Box 789
 Pasco, Washington U.S.A. 99301

Port Commissioners
 Jean Ryckman
 James T. Klindworth
 Vicki Gordon

Executive Director
 Randy Hayden

October 4, 2017

City of Connell
 PO Box 1200
 Connell, WA 99326

RE: Connell Rail Interchange Project

Dear Ms. Peña:

The Port of Pasco supports the City of Connell's \$14 million grant application to complete the Rail Interchange Project.

Connell is a small rural community within the Port District that does not have access to local funding necessitating the City to seek grant-funding options to ensure this rail project is completed.

The Connell rail interchange is a key element to bringing efficient, reliable rail service to Central Washington. It will guarantee that the region's manufacturers and agricultural producers have consistent access to trade gateways served by the Great Northern Corridor.

The Port District is a transportation district and this proposed project will create a new larger industrial yard to meet 21st Century rail demands. Currently, 42 trains per day run through Connell, and by 2035 it is projected this number will exceed 90 trains per day. The proposed investment to relocate the rail interchange will reduce conflicts between through trains and trains moving to and from the short line rail line (the CBRW) that serves our region.

In addition to increasing the rail capacity of this important region, the Port believes this project will reduce the congestion caused at rail crossings that bifurcate Connell's city center and residential areas of Connell from other needed services.

The Port of Pasco enthusiastically supports this grant application that will allow the City of Connell to complete this regionally significant rail interchange project that will create economic development opportunities, and improve the transportation corridor that serves our region.

Sincerely,


 Randy Hayden
 Executive Director



October 3, 2017

To whom it may concern,

I am writing on behalf of Grant County Port District No 8 (Port of Warden) in support of the City of Connell's request for TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 grant funds. The City of Connell's Rail Interchange Project would increase rail capacity and enhance rail service within the Port of Warden and other Port's and Cities in Grant, Adams, and Franklin Counties.

As a result of the economic and business growth in the Port of Warden, the Rail Interchange in Connell is needed to allow for the efficient loading and unloading of rail cars and movement of trains on the Columbia Basin Rail Line to and from Warden and other areas. In particular, our company continues to grow and we are increasingly using rail to ship our products either inbound or outbound.

Furthermore, with continued rising fuel costs in the United State, access to rail is becoming increasingly important in the expansion and the competitiveness of our company and for other businesses and industries in Washington State that need to competitively ship cargo fairly long distances (such as to major population centers in the Eastern United States) as rail on average is four times more fuel efficient than trucks.

In conclusion, we support the City of Connell's request for the Rail Interchange Project.

Thank you for your consideration of this important Interchange project.

Sincerely,

Pat Millard
Port of Warden, Manager



October 10, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington D. C. 20590

RE: Support of TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 Grant for Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Elaine Chao:

I am writing on behalf of the Port of Othello in strong support of TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 Grant for the Connell Rail Interchange infrastructure Improvement Project.

The Connell rail interchange is a key element to bring efficient, reliable service to North Central Washington. It intersects the Columbia Basin Railroad line with the BNSF Railroad's Lakeside Subdivision line. The Columbia Basin Railroad line services the Port of Othello's Bruce Industrial Park which is home to potato storage, food processing, seed processing and fertilizer plants.

With several hundred acres available for future development, the rail system helps make the Bruce Industrial Park an ideal location. The Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project will guarantee that the region's manufacturers and agricultural producers have consistent access to trade gateways, and bring efficient and reliable service to Central Washington.

The Port of Othello urges WSDOT to approve the City of Connell's TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY 17/19 grant application to improve and upgrade the Connell Rail Interchange.

Thank you for your considering of this request.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Doyle Palmer", is written over a white background.

Doyle Palmer
Executive Director



P.O. Box 147
4975 Road 13.5 SW
Royal City, WA 99357

October 12, 2017

TIGER and INFRA Funding

RE: TIGER and INFRA Applications for Funding
Letter of Support for City of Connell
Connell Rail Interchange Project

The Port of Royal Slope is asking for your consideration of the City of Connell's application for the Connell Rail Interchange. This project is paramount for economic development, and responsive to local and regional needs.

Within the last year, rail service has returned to the Royal City area after approximately 30 years of not having rail service. Being a start-up situation, it will take time to build up our demand for rail service, however, we will be adding to the train traffic issue at the Connell interchange as it accesses the BNSF. Resolving a "pinch-point" at the Connell Rail Interchange is essential to provide incentive for business and industry expansion, and to add viable freight delivery options.

Our region needs to position our communities for future growth. The rail interchange at Connell needs to meet the 21st Century rail demands.

For these reasons, we request that you support the funding for the Connell Rail Interchange.

Thank you,

Cathy Potter
Executive Director



GRANT COUNTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT FOREIGN TRADE ZONE #203

T. 509.762.5363
F. 509.762.2713
PORTOFMOESLAKE.COM

October 13, 2017

Elaine L. Chao, Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

I am writing in support of the City of Connell, Washington TIGER 2017 funding request for the Connell Rail Interchange Project. The requested funding will allow the City of Connell the necessary \$14 million needed to complete their project plans. Connell is a small rural community located fifty-four miles southeast of Moses Lake and one-hundred miles south of Spokane, WA.

The proposed project will move the current rail interchange south of the City of Connell to an industrial location more suited for an interchange yard. The new larger yard will be built to meet 21st century rail demands. Connell now has forty-two trains per day and it is predicted by 2035 to exceed ninety trains per day. The Connell Rail Interchange is a key element to bringing efficient and reliable rail service to North Central Washington, and will guarantee regional manufacturers and agricultural producers have consistent access to trade gateways served by the Great Northern Corridor.

In addition to increasing rail services within our unique region, this project will reduce the congestion caused at rail crossings that bifurcate the City Center and residential areas of Connell. Specifically, the realignment will reduce safety concerns associated with our current rail crossings and local schools. As Executive Director of the Port of Moses Lake, statewide rail infrastructure is of crucial importance to me. I hope the U.S. Department of Transportation will fully support the City of Connell funding request for TIGER FY17 funds for the Connell Rail Interchange Project.

We greatly appreciate your time and attention.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jeffrey T. Bishop', is written over a circular stamp or seal.

Jeffrey T. Bishop, Executive Director
Port of Moses Lake



Stephen McFadden
Adams County Economic
Development Director
425 East Main St., Ste. 300
Othello, WA 99344
Office: 509-331-2025
Mobile: 509-660-1062
stephenm@co.adams.wa.us

Julie Flyckt
ACDC Business Development
& Marketing Coordinator
425 East Main St., Ste. 300
Othello, WA 99344
Office: 509-331-2042
Mobile: 509-660-0966
julie@growadamscounty.com

ADAMS COUNTY
Development
Council



October 12, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington D.C., 20590

RE: Support of TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY 17/18 Grants for Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Elaine Chao:

Please accept this letter as evidence of strong local support from Adams County and its partner, the Adams County Development Council, for the City of Connell's application for a TIGER and/or INFRA Grant for the Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project.

The existing interchange between the short line and the BNSF mainline in Connell was built 100 years ago and is inefficient for meeting existing rail customers' needs. The line currently serves 60 active shippers (in Adams and Grant Counties) that collectively employ thousands of residents. One of the most recent businesses to locate along the rail line is Pacific Coast Canola which built a \$109 million facility and relies on rail to deliver unit trains on a regular basis.

Other large rail users include Simplot, Akzo Nobel, ConAgra LambWeston, McCains, REC Silicon, Western Polymer, and Basic American Foods. As these companies grow so does the pressure on the existing rail system. The Connell Rail Interchange Improvement Project will eliminate significant rail congestion and delays when it comes to the shipping and receiving needs the employers mentioned above.

The Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project is critical to facilitating existing shipments and the planned growth of future inbound and outbound rail traffic on behalf of the employers in the region who rely on the railroads. Approved in 2015, the new Washington State Transportation Package made a substantial investment in this project, providing a \$10 million investment.

Investment in this infrastructure project will serve as a spring board for continued economic growth in Adams County and will keep Eastern Washington's rail transportation system competitive for years to come.

Sincerely,


Stephen McFadden
Adams County Economic
Development Director


David Baumann
Chairman, Adams County
Development Council



OFFICE OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

509-659-3236
210 West Broadway Avenue, Ritzville, Washington 99169

John N. Marshall, District 1
Roger L. Hartwig, District 2
Jeffrey W. Stevens, District 3

Patricia J. Phillips, Clerk of the Board, Executive Services Manager

October 16, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington D.C. 20590

RE: Support of Tiger 2017 and INFRA FY 17/18 Grants for Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Elaine Chao:

The Adams County Commissioners enthusiastically support the City of Connell's application for a TIGER and/or INFRA Grant for the Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project.

Short line railroad service is a major transportation component in Adams County. It is key to economic development expansion here and already serves numerous companies. The short line system can only be successful with efficient access to the Class #1 main line rail operated by Burlington Northern Santa Fe. The Connell Interchange makes that possible.

The existing interchange between the short line and the BNSF mainline in Connell was built 100 years ago and is inefficient for meeting existing rail customers' needs. The line currently serves 60 active shippers (Adams and Grant Counties) that collectively employ thousands of residents. These companies move several thousand rail car loads annually through the Connell Interchange.

As these companies grow, so does the pressure on this existing rail interchange. Constructed so long ago, the interchange was not designed to handle the size of trains utilizing it today. Routinely 110-car shuttle trains are moved through the interchange to serve Pacific Coast Canola.

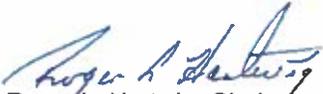
The Connell Rail Interchange Infrastructure Improvement Project will eliminate significant rail congestion and delays when it comes to the shipping and receiving needs of current and future industries.

In 2015 the Washington State Legislature, via the State Transportation Package, committed \$10 million to this vital project. The U.S. Department of Transportation's grant funding would ensure the project can be constructed, which will provide the next 100 years of stable and efficient freight mobility.

Investment in this infrastructure improvement project will serve as a spring board for continued economic growth in Adams County and we highly encourage you to support this grant request.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ADAMS COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Roger L. Hartwig, Chairman


Jeffrey W. Stevens, Vice-Chairman


John N. Marshall, Commissioner



6594 Patton Boulevard NE Moses Lake, WA 98837
Ph: 509.764.6579 Fax: 509.762.5161
www.grantedc.com

October 16, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Support of TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 Grant for Connell Rail Interchange infrastructure improvement project

Dear Secretary Elaine Chao:

I am writing on behalf of Grant County EDC in strong support of a TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 Grant for the Connell Rail Interchange infrastructure improvement project.

The Connell Rail interchange in Eastern Washington where the Columbia Basin Railroad line intersects with the BNSF Railway's busy Lakeside Subdivision line, which runs between Spokane, WA and Pasco, WA. The Columbia Basin Railroad Line goes through the heart of the Columbia Basin in eastern Washington and serves Moses Lake, Wheeler, Schrag, Warden, Bruce, Othello and Connell in Grant, Adams and Franklin Counties.

Over the past several years, a significant amount of economic development has been occurring in communities on the Columbia Basin Railroad Line, especially in Grant and Adams Counties. Consequently, the Columbia Basin Railroad line has become one of the busiest short lines in Washington State, hauling over 10,000 carloads annually of various agricultural, industrial commodities and other cargo for 60 active rail shippers in the Columbia Basin, which employ nearly 7,000 people in Grant and Adams Counties.

The Connell Rail Interchange was built nearly 100 years ago and the configuration of the interchange is outdated and inefficient. As a result, the Connell Rail Interchange needs to be upgraded and improved to accommodate the tremendous growth in rail cargo that is flowing to and through Connell.

The Connell Rail Interchange also sits on the Northern Corridor Rail Line, which is a key strategic freight transportation corridor that spans the northern US between the Pacific Northwest and the Midwest. The Corridor unifies the population centers of the Midwest and Pacific Northwest, and is a critical logistics channel for goods produced or consumed in the Northern Tier.

Without a new and improved rail interchange at Connell, the existing conditions there will create a choke/pinch point which could adversely impact rail velocity on the Northern Corridor and hinder economic growth in several communities in the Columbia Basin.

In conclusion and for the above-mentioned reasons, Columbia Basin Railroad urges USDOT to approve the City of Connell's TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 grant application to improve and upgrade the Connell Rail interchange.

Thank you for your consideration for this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brant Mayo", is written over a circular stamp or seal.

Brant Mayo
Executive Director
Grant County EDC
6594 Patton Boulevard NE
Moses Lake, WA 98837



The City of Othello

500 East Main

OTHELLO, WASHINGTON 99344

Telephone (509) 488-5686
Fax (509) 488-0102

October 19, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Chao Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation 1200 New Jersey Ave., S.E. Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Letter of Support for City of Connell
TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY17/18 Grant Application
Connell Rail Interchange

Dear Secretary Chao,

The City of Othello strongly supports the City of Connell's application for the TIGER 2017 and INFRA FY 17/18 grants for the Connell Rail Interchange. This project will support the construction of modern rail infrastructure; which in turn will promote expanded business opportunity and economic development for our region. Our communities will greatly benefit from this public infrastructure support.

The City of Othello has a large component of industrial businesses which require rail use. We also have had interest from firms looking to locate but needing improved rail service in the area. Public/Private partnerships are paramount to successful communities, and to this project.

The Connell Rail Interchange is a collaborative effort which will:

- Improve freight mobility
- Retain and expand economic development
- Become a strategic investment for our region

For these reasons, we request that the Department of Transportation support the Connell Rail Interchange.

Thank you,

Shawn R. Logan, Mayor
City of Othello