



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
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March 15, 2023

Amit Bose,
Administrator - Federal Railroad Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority's Corridor ID Program application for reinstating North Coast Hiawatha Passenger Rail Service (Project)

Dear Administrator Bose:

On behalf of the City of Yakima, I write to support the Big Sky Passenger Rail Authority (BSPRA) in its application for the Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program for re-instating service on Amtrak's North Coast Hiawatha's (NCH) Chicago to Seattle route (Project).

The BSPRA has been working closely with FRA and Amtrak since its Board Retreat in Lewistown, Montana in September of 2021 and the 2022 Greater Northwest Passenger Rail Summit in Billings, Montana last August. This has created momentum with Amtrak and FRA related to this Project. The Corridor ID Program is not just another USDOT grant program. It is the gateway to the creation of a pipeline of passenger rail projects across the United States.

In developing this Corridor, the Authority proposes to work with the FRA, states along the corridor, tribal and local governments, Metropolitan planning organizations, Amtrak, hosts railroads, and other interested parties in detailing local routing, service plans and service options. Local needs and conditions across the corridor will be considered along with historical rail passenger service patterns.

The project is also an example of meeting USDOT goals by improving safety for rail passengers, reducing greenhouse gases, and supporting the economic vitality of rural communities that will be served by the North Coast Hiawatha. The service will provide an all-weather mobility choice to thousands of Americans who lack access to the nation's commercial air travel network.

The City of Yakima looks forward to working with the BSPRA and other states and communities along the North Coast Hiawatha Corridor as a member of any intergovernmental Advisory Committee or by providing technical assistance as next steps (service development planning, NEPA, etc.) take place.

Thank you for your consideration of this important project and please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert Harrison
City Manager

cc: Yakima City Council