



CITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

May 23, 2022

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

RE: Letter of Support for CREATE Program WA1 Project 2022 INFRA Grant Application

Dear Administrator Bose:

As Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT), I write to express my strong support for INFRA 2022 grant program funding for the CREATE Program's Ogden Junction (WA1) project application. This application is being submitted by the Illinois Department of Transportation on behalf of all the CREATE partners, including all the Class I railroads serving Chicago, the State of Illinois, the County of Cook, and the City of Chicago. As detailed in the application, the CREATE partners are committed to a strong non-federal match of over 50% of the project costs.

The CREATE Program has so far invested more than \$1.2 billion in rail infrastructure improvements to make rail traffic more efficient in the Chicago region and reduce interference with commuter and passenger rail and motor vehicle traffic. The \$170 million Ogden Junction (WA1) project will be the first CREATE investment on the West Side of Chicago and will address one of the most important remaining chokepoints in the regional railroad network—one that affects the movement of freight and community connectivity alike. The Ogden Junction (WA1) project entails rebuilding 16 railroad structures that run along Rockwell Street, from Fulton Street on the north to 16th Street on the south, including repair of the streets and sidewalks below the bridges.

Because these railroad structures date to the 1800s and nearly half will be at the end of their useful life by 2030 this project is timely and important. Track configuration, bridge condition, and signaling control systems on the corridor cause trains to run very slowly, and the related idling of waiting trains contributes to air pollution. This project will address these concerns and reduce delays by renewing the bridges and modernizing signaling systems. This will particularly benefit residents of Chicago's West Side, improving environmental justice and racial equity.

CDOT strongly supports the INFRA 2022 grant application for funding to support the CREATE Program's Ogden Junction (WA1) project. Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gia Biagi".

Gia Biagi
Commissioner

May 23, 2022

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write to express the Association of American Railroads' strong support for the Illinois Department of Transportation's application for grant funding for the Ogden Junction project (defined as "WA1") under the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) program. This application was submitted on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) partners, including the Class I railroads, the State of Illinois, Cook County, and the City of Chicago. This project will entail the rebuilding of 16 railroad bridges that run along Rockwell Street on Chicago's west side and the repair of the viaducts below those bridges.

The Ogden Junction project will be the first investment on the west side of Chicago and, once completed, will bring this critical infrastructure into an enhanced state of good repair, improving lighting, drainage, and pedestrian and vehicle access between the west and east sides of Chicago. Additionally, this project will improve air quality, further development for an economically challenged part of the city, and bring meaningful employment and skill training to its residents. This project will also improve freight and traffic mobility, reducing bottlenecks and avoiding delays, and retain a freight corridor that is designated as critical for national defense logistics.

The CREATE program has invested more than \$1.2 billion to meet its goals of improving rail and highway operations in the Chicago metropolitan area and reducing the environmental impacts of rail operations, and this project will only further those efforts. Furthermore, this project will help to ensure the continued centrality of Chicago and Illinois to the nation's freight and passenger rail systems, and the importance of the project to the State could not be further exemplified than by the Congressional delegation's strong support of this grant application.

That same level of commitment has also been shown by the CREATE partners through their non-Federal match of over 50 percent of project costs.

The Association of American Railroads fully supports this application and looks forward to working with the Department to successfully complete this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ian Jefferies', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Ian Jefferies