



Civic Committee  
COMMERCIAL CLUB OF CHICAGO

December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago. The Civic Committee is a non-profit organization comprised of the chief executives of the Chicago region's major employers and civic institutions. Our mission is to make the Chicago region a great place for everyone to live, work, and conduct business.

A quarter of all U.S. freight rail traffic originates, terminates, or passes through the Chicago area, and this volume is expected to more than double by 2040. Freight rail traffic has been, and will continue to be, clogged in Chicago, which will hurt our country's international competitiveness if we do nothing. We must act decisively as a region and nation to ensure that the freight rail growth enhances, rather than impairs, our economy and quality of life. The 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP) is a grouping of four major improvements that make up the most complex portion of the overall Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program, which is the most important investment decision that we can make toward this end.

The Civic Committee is fully supportive of IDOT's application for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. The 75<sup>th</sup> Steet CIP, through the CREATE program, aims to enhance the safety, accessibility, quality of life, and visual appeal of the community while enhancing local transportation systems for people walking, bicycling, taking transit, and driving. The project supports broader economic growth, and neighboring communities will also benefit from cleaner air, reduced railroad delays, and improved development opportunities.

Our support for this application is part of the Civic Committee's commitment to ensuring that our region and our nation's freight rail system provide strong support to our nation's economy. The majority of our members are senior business leaders with national and/or international businesses. They fully understand that 75th Street CIP is critical for the ongoing business operations of their respective firms. The Civic Committee appreciates your dedication to improving our national rail network and looks forward to working with you to support programs like the 75<sup>th</sup> Steet CIP and CREATE that help us move products across the U.S. efficiently and cost-effectively.

Sincerely,

Derek Douglas  
President  
Civic Committee and Commercial Club of Chicago