

AMTRAK

1 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20001
Email: stephen.gardner@amtrak.com Tel 202.906.3963

Stephen J. Gardner
Chief Executive Officer

August 18, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: FY23/FY24 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) Application:
75th Street Corridor Improvement Program, Part 2, Segment Project (IL)**

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), I am writing to express our support for the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT's) **75th Street Corridor Improvement Program, Part 2, Segment A Project** (Project) final design and construction application submitted on behalf of the CREATE partnership and Association of American Railroads under the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) FY23/FY24 Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG): National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) grant program. The Project is located in Chicago, Illinois.

Amtrak's local match contribution commitment is \$10,000,000, provide through federal annual grant funds that Amtrak receives each year (i.e., other federal funds).

The 75th Street Corridor Improvement Program (CIP) is the largest portfolio of projects within the 70-project, multi-billion dollar CREATE program in Chicago. CREATE is designed to reduce freight and passenger rail bottlenecks throughout the Chicago land area. The first part of the CIP is now in construction. The second part will include a flyover that will permit Metra's SouthWest Service to move off the 75th Street corridor and onto Metra's Rock Island Line into LaSalle Street Station instead of the current Norfolk-Southern route into Union Station. This in turn frees up slots at Chicago Union Station that Amtrak can use for expanded Midwest and, potentially, long distance services. In addition, the 75th Street CIP as a whole directly benefits Amtrak's Long Distance *Cardinal* service, which operates through the 75th Street corridor today.

This initial set of 75th Street, Part 2 projects includes the reconstruction of 12 bridges, made up of 86 separate structures, as well as the retirement of two additional bridges, along the 1-1/2 mile 75th Street corridor. The flyover described above cannot be built until this bridgework is complete, so this is a critical first segment of Part 2.

The advancement of this project will not only improve the state's transportation infrastructure, but also contribute to the economic competitiveness of the corridor.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen J. Gardner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "S".

Stephen J. Gardner
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Jason Osborn, Director, Office of Intermodal Project Implementation, IDOT,
jason.osborn@illinois.gov
Bill Thompson, Chief Engineer, Association of American Railroads, wthompson@aar.org