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April 11, 2016

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

Re: City of Seattle – South Lander Street Grade Separation FAST Grant Application

Dear Secretary Foxx,

On behalf of the Port of Seattle, I am writing in support of the City of Seattle's application for federal FAST grant funding to complete the South Lander Street Grade Separation Project. For years, the Port of Seattle has recognized the importance of improved east-west connectivity that this project would bring to the Greater Duwamish Manufacturing/Industrial Center (MIC). In general, we believe that improved transportation in the area can help retain and attract industrial and maritime businesses that support good family-wage jobs – a top priority for the Port. The project's importance is further reflected in its prioritization in every study of freight access in the Duwamish, including the 1998 and subsequently updated Freight Action Strategy (FAST Corridor), the joint Port of Seattle/City of Seattle Industrial Areas Freight Access Program, the Washington Department of Transportation State Freight Plan and the City of Seattle Freight Master Plan.

The South Lander Street Overpass site is within one mile of seven marine terminal and rail yard gates serving the Port. The 110 crossing gate closures that take place on Lander each day due to rail traffic and operations are a serious impediment to the growth of manufacturing, maritime and freight facilities. The impacts of rail traffic on the SODO street network will only get worse as Amtrak expands its facilities, as general purpose and freight vehicle travel volumes increase. Lander Street poses significant safety concerns due to the 500 track violations that occur at the Lander crossing on a typical day.

Based on our work on the Freight Access Program and other analyses, we believe the Lander project will increase safety and reduce truck delay, congestion and emissions from idling for the more than 10 thousand daily vehicle crossings. The project will provide a reliable crossing of BNSF tracks at an important east-west crossing where the street is now closed for over four and a half hours each day due to the crossing of three thousand rail cars. It will also alleviate congestion on routes leading to and from I-90 and I-5, ensure reliable access for public safety and emergency responders and improve overall freight network resiliency in the Duwamish MIC. More specifically, building an overpass at Lander Street will provide a relief valve for South Holgate Street (designated as a significant part of our Heavy Haul Network).

The Port of Seattle has long been on the record in support of the South Lander Grade Separation Project. With leadership from Seattle Mayor Ed Murray and the City Council, and with a City commitment of more than \$20 million of voter approved funds, along with new local, state and federal partnership opportunities emerging this past year, we believe delivery of this project is finally in sight.

We thank you for your consideration of the City's request for federal FAST grant funding for this important project. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can answer any questions or provide additional input.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Theodore J. Fick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'T' and a long, horizontal flourish at the end.

Theodore J. Fick  
Chief Executive Officer

Cc:  
Northwest Seaport Alliance Managing Members  
Senator Maria Cantwell  
Senator Patty Murray  
Governor Jay Inslee  
Representative Jim McDermott