



August 23, 2010

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

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Texas Department of Transportation's (TXDOT) application for Tiger II discretionary funds to support the Tower 55 Multimodal Improvement Project. When complete, the project will help speed the flow of freight helping U.S. companies remain competitive in domestic and overseas markets.

Waterfront Coalition represents manufacturers, retailers and agricultural exporters and importers as well as transportation providers moving international commerce through America's blue water ports and along the surface transportation network. Our members rely on freight rail services to deliver this commerce needed to replenish store shelves and factory floors here in the U.S. and guarantee that our exporters meet the demands of foreign markets. Waterfront Coalition members have an interest in making sure that the freight rail network operates safely, efficiently and in an environmentally responsible manner

Tower 55, in Fort Worth, TX, is a critically important freight and passenger rail gateway located along a key transportation trade corridor connecting the United States, Mexico and Canada. It has also become one of the most congested rail chokepoints in the nation's supply chain. Eleven major freight and passenger rail lines from across the country converge at Tower 55 into a single, four way at-grade intersection. More than 100 passenger and freight trains must travel through the intersection on peak days, with over 200 million tons of freight moving between North American markets each year.

As proposed by TXDOT, and in partnership with BNSF Railway, Union Pacific Railroad, Amtrak, the City of Fort Worth, the North Central Texas Council of Governments, and the Fort Worth Transit Authority, the Tower 55 project will simultaneously address a number of key challenges for the local community, state and surrounding region. It will greatly enhance rail and motorist transportation flows through and around the intersection, improvements which will be felt up and down the affected trade corridors; address community safety and livability

P O R T M O D . O R G

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concerns; and promote national goals of energy savings and environmental conservation. The project epitomizes a successful public private partnership, taking a carefully studied approach to achieve the shared long term objectives of all stakeholders in this investment.

TXDOT has made Tower 55 the highest priority infrastructure funding project in the state and we strongly encourage your careful consideration of the pending Tiger II grant application. With its potential for immediate job creation and long term economic, energy, environmental and safety benefits, we believe the project is well positioned to compete in for federal funding.

I strongly urge your favorable consideration of the Tower 55 Multimodal Improvement Project application for TIGER II Discretionary Grant funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin Lanier", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robin Lanier  
Executive Director