



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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The **Greater Wichita Partnership and Downtown Wichita** together are pleased to offer support for the Kansas Department of Transportation, Oklahoma Department of Transportation, and Texas Department of Transportation's joint application for the **Heartland Flyer Extension** to be accepted into the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program.

The **Greater Wichita Partnership** serves as the economic development organization for 10 counties in the south-central Kansas region. Our mission is to align resources and focus the business community on common strategies that fast-forward economic growth.

Last year we engaged the global data and research firm Deloitte to work with community leaders on a talent roadmap, identifying strategies toward a region that embraces its global diversity and is prepared for the future. Among those priorities is to ensure passenger rail connectivity "to enable ease of access for future talent and business."

At the same time, connectivity to the I-35 corridor mega-region is also a strategy for our local university, Wichita State University, for student recruitment, which supports our local and state talent and workforce needs as well as our overall economy.

Expansion of the Heartland Flyer would support diversity of travel options for all ages, while accelerating our region's ability to connect more than a half million people who live, work and play in south-central Kansas to the rest of the country.

For **Downtown Wichita**, a main appeal of expanding the rail service is to bring the vibrancy of a train station back to the heart of our city. Much has been done to revitalize and invigorate our downtown – and much more is on the horizon.

Having a stop that allows passengers to enjoy the hustle and bustle of a growing city as they embark or terminate their travels is an incredible opportunity for Amtrak, as well as the region it will serve.

For these reasons and many more, the Partnership and Downtown Wichita are pleased to offer our support for the joint application for the Heartland Flyer Extension to be accepted into the U.S. DOT's Federal Railroad Administration's Corridor Identification and Development program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. J. H.", followed by a period.