



# The City of **NORMAN**

201 W. Gray St  
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

Office of the City Manager

Phone: (405) 366-5402

July 14, 2022

The Honorable Amit Bose, Administrator  
c/o Peter Schwartz, Chief, Project Engineering and Transportation Planning Division  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Amtrak Heartland Flyer Extension-Corridor Identification Designation Docket Number  
FRA -2022-0031

Dear Administrator Bose:

On behalf of the City of Norman, whose Council has approved a resolution to this effect, I would like to express our emphatic support for re-connecting passenger rail service between Oklahoma City, OK and Newton, KS and ensure the I-35 corridor from Ft. Worth, TX to Newton is included in the Corridor Development Plan. This extension is a long-held economic development and transportation objective to re-connect numerous Oklahoma and Kansas communities north to the national network via the Southwest Chief at Newton, Kansas.

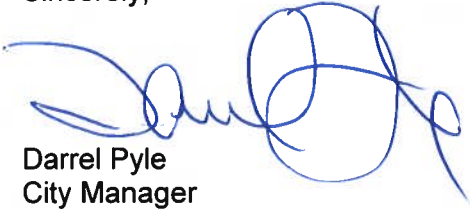
The long-awaited, full re-connection of this corridor in America's Heartland would provide increased transportation choices and economic opportunity for rural and urban residents and businesses alike. With its long-term value of enhancing economic growth within the I-35 Corridor megaregion, and near-term benefit for improving the Amtrak National system, this Corridor Designation is the first step in this vital 400-mile re-connection.

Restoring the Heartland Flyer between Texas and Kansas is also an important means of fully connecting the nation's fastest-growing economic development corridor located along Interstate 35 (Laredo, TX – Kansas City, MO) boasting over 40 million population, 10 million jobs, and a 28 percent growth rate. Currently, the gap in rail service between Oklahoma City and Newton must be addressed to ensure we take advantage of the opportunity to enhance our links with this enormous and growing economic megaregion.

We believe this is a historic moment, given the unprecedented funding levels included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, to make the case for restoring passenger rail service. Norman has grown to be the 215<sup>th</sup> largest city in the nation and the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest in Oklahoma. Other Cities along the proposed extension have also grown, with Wichita now the 48<sup>th</sup> largest city in the nation and Oklahoma City the 20<sup>th</sup> and is one of the six cities in the nation to have grown by more than 100,000 residents in the last decade. This level of growth justifies increased transportation options. Moreover, as a region with many rural areas and regional cities, we believe having the ability to better connect urban, suburban and rural Kansas and Oklahoma is critically important. Many of these communities would benefit from the re-development of train depots and downtown areas, and the option for residents to use passenger rail to travel for business, work, pleasure, and to medical appointments.

Therefore, we respectfully request Designated Corridor identification from Fort Worth, Texas to Newton, Kansas, through Norman.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Darrel Pyle', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

Darrel Pyle  
City Manager

Cc: Governor Kevin Stitt, Oklahoma  
Secretary of Transportation Tim Gatz, Oklahoma  
Government Affairs Senior Manager – South, Todd Stennis, Amtrak  
Northern Flyer Alliance, Inc.