



**THE CITY OF
OKLAHOMA CITY**

Mayor David Holt

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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 Oklahoma City, 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. We urge that the I-35 corridor from Ft. Worth, TX to Newton be included in the Corridor Development Plan. This extension is a long-held economic development and transportation objective, which would re-connect numerous Oklahoma and Kansas communities north to the national network via the Southwest Chief at Newton.

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

This is a historic moment, given the unprecedented funding levels included in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. We feel strongly that this is the time to restore this vital passenger rail service. Oklahoma City has grown to become the 20th largest city in the nation in 2022, and is one of just 14 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, having the ability to better connect urban, suburban and rural Kansas and Oklahoma is critically important.

Thank you for your consideration of a Corridor Designation from Fort Worth, Texas to Newton, Kansas, through Oklahoma City.

Sincerely,

David Holt
Mayor