



**SALLIE ALCORN**  
Houston City Council Member  
At-Large, Position 5

May 8, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I support the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program FY 2023-2024 capital grant application for the Griggs Road, Long Drive, and Mykawa Road Grade Separation Project. This project will grade separate four current at-grade rail crossings at the intersection of Griggs Road, Long Drive, and Mykawa Road with Union Pacific Railroad (DOT#755627X and DOT#755628E) and BNSF Railway (DOT#023215N and DOT#023214G) in Houston, Texas.

This application is an outgrowth of a completed Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) funded preliminary engineering report and represents a collaborative approach between the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), the City of Houston, the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), the Greater Southeast Management District, and other public and private partners. The preliminary engineering effort leveraged extensive interagency coordination alongside a robust public involvement effort to shape a locally preferred and railroad supported outcome that accommodates all modes of transportation, improves safety, reduces congestion, reduces emissions, and reconnects the Greater OST, South Union, and Gulfgate Neighborhoods.

The project will provide significant benefits including, but not limited to:

- Enhancing safety and mobility for all road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and transit users, by grade-separating the intersection with the railroads
- Boosting operational efficiency for the Union Pacific and BNSF rail lines
- Contributing to long-term environmental benefits by optimizing traffic flow and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions resulting from vehicle idling

In an effort to address complex grade separation projects of this nature, the Houston Area Rail Transformation ("THE HART") was developed in similar vein to Chicago's CREATE program. THE HART is a collaboration between regional governing entities, railroad consortiums, and port interests to coordinate projects and investments that improve safer freight movement in the Greater Southeast Houston region.

Griggs, Long, and Mykawa has long been an impediment to public safety, traffic congestion, and connectivity for the disadvantaged community it lies within. In 2016, the intersection was identified by the FRA as one of the top 15 intersections where 10 or more incidents had occurred in the previous decade. More recently, the intersection has inhibited METRO's plans to extend their METRORail Purple Line beyond its current terminus at the Palm Center Transit Center.

The FRA has urged state partners to join in taking additional actions to improve crossing safety. FRA's partners in the Houston-region have heard the call and have pooled their resources to develop this project and shepherd this application effort.

Thank you for your consideration. I support this valuable project and hope it will receive the funding and resources needed to advance this effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sallie Alcorn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Sallie Alcorn