

JOHN SLIGHT

Mayor

April 20, 2009

The Honorable Tom Latham
United States House of Representatives
2217 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
Attention: Doug Bobbit, Policy Advisor

Dear Congressman Latham:

As Mayor of Boone, Iowa, I am writing on behalf of the City Council and citizens we represent to offer our support of a project that is vital to the economic development, improvement of public safety and general transportation efficiency of freight traffic in Boone, Iowa.

The entire project consists of constructing a new road from Mamie Eisenhower Ave. to Industrial Park Road. One segment of this improvement consists of constructing and overpass/grade separation across the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) switchyard as I've described further in this letter. It is that segment that we are seeking funding through this application.

A dangerous, harmful and inefficient traffic situation is hindering the operation of ten companies in Boone, Iowa, including Fareway Inc. – Iowa's twelfth largest employer. Currently over 4,200 vehicles – many of which are large semi trucks – navigate an at-grade crossing which is subject to long wait times when trains are present. Delays at this crossing have cost Fareway over \$53,000. in labor and fuel for years 2006-2008. The UPRR supports this project as a means of closing the existing at-grade crossing, which delays their operations and to eliminate train/vehicle conflict concerns.

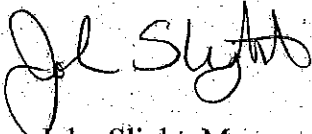
The extension of Roger Snedden Drive and construction of a grade separation to traverse the UPRR switchyard will facilitate planned expansion by the railroad and ease backups that occur daily when large trucks attempt to reach/leave an industrial area of the city. The introduction of dedicated turn lanes, updated signage and pedestrian conveyances will enhance overall safety. Reducing the emissions of idling large trucks will also improve the environmental hazards of this current configuration. This important project will also open 500 acres of prime industrial land for development immediately. There have been several opportunities for the public to discuss their views, and there is broad community support for this project. Four Public Hearings have already been held in conjunction with this project: 1. Location/Feasibility Study 2. Comprehensive Plan Update Approval 3. Classification of this Road Extension 4. Engineering Contract. A minimum of at least two more public hearings will be held during the preliminary design (Phase I) now being done.



As you know this project has benefitted from federal funds in the past and is eligible for Federal Aid Highway Assistance as a "collector" road. In Fiscal Year 2008, \$490,000 was awarded through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2008 (P.L. 110-161). Union Pacific Railroad has shown interest in committing funds to this project and State of Iowa resources are being explored through the Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program, Revitalize Iowa's Sound Economy, Urban State Traffic Engineering Program, and Surface Transportation Program. In addition to these possible funding sources, local funds will also be committed to this project to meet the local 20% match required.

Thank you for your continued support of this important project. Please feel free to contact me if I can assist in your consideration of this important project.

Sincerely,



John Slight, Mayor