



Administration Department

Steve Taylor, City Manager



203 S. Pacific Avenue, PO Box 819 Kelso, WA 98626

December 12, 2016

Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx,

I am writing to express my support for the Industrial Rail Corridor (IRC) FASTLANE project submitted by the Port of Longview in Washington State. Located in a rural, economically distressed area of Washington, with nearly 8 percent unemployment, supporting and expanding the Port of Longview's operations is an integral part of the region's economic strategy. This project will create additional employment opportunities for Kelso's residents, enhance the volume of freight traffic through the region, and decrease the amount of potentially dangerous at-grade rail crossings in the community.

The success of Kelso's economy is tied directly to the development and expansion of business opportunities along the Industrial Rail Corridor and the resulting increase in the number of family-wage jobs.

The Port's IRC project consists of relocating the original IRC north to accommodate additional through tracks and sidings with clear lengths of 8,500 feet and greater. This increased rail access will provide optimal staging for current customers and future tenants on redeveloped, underutilized berths.

Furthermore, these improvements set the stage for the future Barlow Point Terminals programmed for redevelopment over the next five years. I hope you will strongly consider selecting this project to receive funding through the FASTLANE program.

Sincerely,

Steve Taylor, City Manager
203 S. Pacific Ave.
Kelso, WA 98626
(360) 577-3301