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April 11, 2016

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy
ATTN: FASTLANE Selection Committee
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: US 85 (Colorado) FASTLANE Grant Application Support

Dear Selection Committee:

Weld County was integral in creation of the Highway 85 Coalition in 2009. Weld County has also been working with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR), regional planning agencies, and neighboring communities to improve US 85. The Coalition fully supports the Centennial Highway (US 85) Betterments Improvement Project FASTLANE application to provide much needed improvements to US 85, specifically focused on enhancing the highway operations and the railroad (UPRR) operations to improve freight movement, mobility and accessibility.


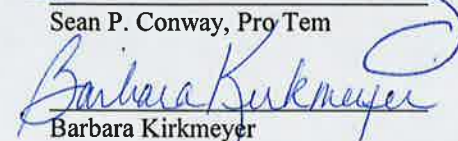
The US 85 corridor is a transportation backbone serving numerous communities and industries which rely heavily upon the highway and railway to deliver goods and resources. Improvements will support the economic vitality of the region, accommodate the movement of freight commodities associated with the energy (renewable energy, as well as fossil fuel resources) and the agriculture sectors, as well as the everyday travel of workers, residents, and visitors.


Northern Colorado is one of the fastest growing areas in the nation and the fastest in Colorado. Overall corridor usage on US 85 has doubled since the 1990's, causing a host of operational and safety issues which interfere with the movement of goods and people; another doubling in usage is projected by 2035. These increases will continue to exacerbate the challenging issues faced today. The operational issues of this corridor, caused by the minimal distance between the highway and railroad, has negatively impacted the corridor's safety, capacity, and emissions with respect to the movement of freight through the region.

CDOT's FASTLANE application for The Centennial Highway (US 85) Betterments Improvement Project will positively impact our region's future. We are financially committed to assisting CDOT with implementing improvements on the Centennial Highway (US 85). Please help us implement the Significant Freight and Highway Projects by improving the condition and performance of these important highway and freight corridors!

Very truly yours,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


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cc: Don Warden