

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 5, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary, Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

As the U.S. Senators representing the great state of Idaho, we are pleased to express our support for the City of Ponderay's Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) planning proposal for the Lakeshore Connection Planning Project.

Located between the rugged Selkirk Mountains and picturesque Lake Pend Oreille in the Northern Idaho Panhandle, the City of Ponderay and neighboring communities of Kootenai and Sandpoint are poised to become major outdoor recreation destinations and regional economic engines. Regrettably, poor safety and connectivity along the lakefront and a lack of regional coordination on land use and transportation along the State Highway 200 (SH-200) corridor represent barriers to activating a multimodal network with the capacity to support the burgeoning local population and growing tourism industry. Additionally, the lack of a safe pedestrian connection to the lakefront causes residents and visitors to cross the Montana Rail Links tracks, where more than twenty trains per day travel between 20 and 60 miles per hour (mph).

The Lakeshore Connection Planning Project will address many of the safety and mobility challenges caused by this gap in non-motorized transportation infrastructure between the community and the lakefront. The City's pending application for BUILD funding will be utilized to design and engineer a multimodal link that will provide safe, direct access from Ponderay to the existing Pend d'Oreille Bay Trail via a new complete street link to a shared-use railroad undercrossing with frontage road upgrades. The project will also include preliminary design for upgrades to the local intersection and adjoining segment of SH-200 to help establish a multimodal network that balances needs.

Supported by the greater community through a \$350,000 local match, this project will help realize a decades-long community vision for safe trail connections for recreation and commuting among Sandpoint, Ponderay, and Kootenai. We appreciate your serious consideration and are happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



Mike Crapo
U.S. Senator



James E. Risch
U.S. Senator