

June 6, 2022

Peter Schwartz
Chief Project Engineering and Planning Division
Federal Rail Administration

Re: Docket No. FRA-2022-0031
Corridor Identification and Development Program
Hiawatha Extension, Milwaukee to Madison

The City of Madison, in partnership with the Cities of Watertown and Pewaukee, as eligible entities are expressing our interest in incorporating the Hiawatha Extension from Milwaukee to Madison in FRA's Corridor Identification and Development Program. This extension builds on Amtrak's highly successful Hiawatha Line from Chicago to Milwaukee. It is incorporated in state and regional passenger rail plans, and previous NEPA and current location studies provide a higher level of readiness.

The extension of passenger rail service from Milwaukee to Madison is recommended in several regional plans:

- FRA's Midwest Regional Plan (October 2021) recommends extension of passenger rail from Milwaukee to Madison, with significant markets critical to the operational viability of the Core Express Corridor between Chicago and Minneapolis.
- Amtrak's Connects US (June 2021) recommends the extension of the Hiawatha passenger rail from Milwaukee to Madison, with a subsequent extension onto Minneapolis.
- WisDOT's Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030 (March 2014) recommends extending passenger rail from Milwaukee to Madison. It is likely this recommendation will be carried forward in the 2050 Rail Plan currently being prepared.

The passenger rail corridor from Milwaukee to Madison has been well studied. An environmental assessment for high speed rail (Project ID 0385-10-11) using this corridor along with design drawings was prepared in 2011, providing a good baseline understanding of infrastructure needs. Additionally, the City of Madison is performing a passenger rail station location study providing key information needed for pre-NEPA activities.

All three communities along this corridor that would be served by the Hiawatha Extension strongly advocate for incorporating the project in the Corridor Identification and Development program. We strongly believe that this corridor satisfies the Selection Criteria outlined in the Federal Register Notice. We are also jointly excited to the benefits that passenger rail will bring our communities and the residents of Dane, Jefferson, and Waukesha Counties.

Sincerely

Satya Rhodes-Conway
Mayor, Madison, Wisconsin
Cc:

Emily McFarland
Mayor, Watertown, WI

Steve Bierce
Mayor, Pewaukee, WI