



The Northern Flyer Alliance

Mayor Michael Dever
City Hall
900 New Hampshire
Lawrence, KS 660444

June 18, 2008

Dear Mayor Dever,

The Northern Flyer Alliance strongly supports the proposal for a transfer of ownership of the Burlington Northern-Santa Fe railroad station to the City of Lawrence. As you are aware there is a major effort to bring additional passenger rail service to the State with Lawrence being a major stop on a new expansion route. Lawrence will enjoy direct and intangible benefits that will accrue from the variety of arriving travelers arriving at the City's doorstep.

Direct ownership will provide a level of control over the development of this corner of the community. The experience of other communities with new rail service and city owned stations has been universally positive. Evidence for this can be seen in "before and after" images of many stations across the region.

If a railroad has difficulty maintaining the condition of property, the surrounding area generally suffers. When a property deteriorates to a point of condemnation the community loses an asset, and redevelopment of the adjacent neighborhood can often be a challenge. When owned by a community, stations often transform into something of a cultural center as Kansas City's Union Station has become in recent years.

Your station is unique. Its original architecture and general structural integrity distinguish this station as an important example of modern design, worthy of recognition and appropriate for special preservation. We encourage the Lawrence City council to endorse the proposal and move deliberately to acquire the property and benefits the City will enjoy from ownership.

Respectfully,

Mark Corrison
Kansas City Director
Northern Flyer Alliance

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**CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
LAWRENCE, KS**

STATE OF KANSAS

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TOPEKA
HOUSE OF

REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
MEMBER: JUDICIARY
TAXATION
DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS POLICY CHAIR

June 16, 2008

Mayor Michael Dever and Members of the Lawrence City Commission
City Hall
6 East 6th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044

Dear Mayor Dever and Members of the Commission:

I understand that the Commission is going to be discussing the possibility of taking ownership of the Amtrak Depot located at 7th and New Jersey. As you know, the Depot has been neglected for many, many years and is badly in need in renovation. I believe this landmark is worthy of preservation and I would encourage the Commission to give your utmost consideration to taking ownership of the Depot and providing a means by where the Depot could be restored.

Many of my constituents in East Lawrence want to see the Depot preserved and restored. There is a very eager group of citizens that stand ready to work with the City on this project and are prepared to do whatever is necessary to prevent further deterioration of this structure.

Train depots are a unique part of many communities. We have seen with the Union Pacific depot in North Lawrence the great value of preserving these structures. I believe that restoration of the Amtrak Depot will benefit the citizens of Lawrence for many years to come.

I hope you will give due consideration to this request and that you do what is possible to preserve this great landmark in East Lawrence.

Very truly yours:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul T. Davis", written over a horizontal line.

Paul T. Davis
State Representative
46th District

cc: Carey Maynard-Moody

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LAWRENCE, KS



*meaning brought back or revisited

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**CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
LAWRENCE, KS**

June 19, 2008

Dear Mayor Dever and City Commissioners:

Depot Redux is a new organization working to insure the continued viability of the Santa Fe Depot at 413 East 7th St. We think it is important to retain the Depot as an inviting and convenient gateway to Lawrence for Amtrak passengers.

An important element contributing to the appeal of train travel is access to historically and architecturally significant depots. Our Amtrak depot has particular importance in representing the last period of depot building by U.S. passenger railroads. It is a very fine and extremely well preserved example of "modern" depot architecture of the 1950s.

Unfortunately, the depot has been neglected by its present owner, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad. Their current level of maintenance does not preserve the historic integrity of this landmark building. Listing the building on the State and National Registers of Historic Places will pave the way for funding to preserve and restore the building, and insure that work is done consistent with preservation standards. BNSF is opposed to listing the building while they retain ownership.

We have received communication from BNSF that they will consider donating the depot to the City of Lawrence. We ask that the City work with BNSF to facilitate transfer of ownership of the Depot to the City. Negotiations regarding current and future leasing arrangements with both Amtrak and BNSF should also take place.

The 2002 Conditions Report of the depot prepared for the city indicates that the building is basically sound. Therefore, repairs and renovation could take place in a phased manner. For example, the first phase could be the repair of the roof, estimated to cost about \$40,000.

Currently Depot Redux is in the process of seeking more complete restoration estimates. We hope to have more information to present when you consider the matter at the June 24 City Commission meeting.

We understand the city's current financial constraints, but we want to caution you that BNSF managers responsible for this offer to the city are approaching retirement. When the management changes, an offer to donate the depot may not be available to the City. Therefore it is important that we act now.

By becoming the owner of the Santa Fe Depot, the 1956 building may be listed on both the State Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The State Historic Preservation Office has expressed willingness to expedite this listing process. Once listed, the structure is eligible for various historic preservation grants and other transportation grants, and a 30% tax credit on appropriate repairs and renovations. These tax credits can then be sold to brokers. Once the city assumes ownership of the BNSF depot, the project will qualify for several sources of funding similar to those used for the renovation of the Union Pacific depot in North Lawrence.

This facility, unlike the UP depot, is an active and vital part of the transportation infrastructure for Douglas County residents and visitors. This depot served nearly 4,000 Amtrak passengers last year, and ridership has greatly increased in the first half of 2008. It is expected that Amtrak's feasibility study for an expanded *HEARTLAND FLYER* service will show promise. It is further expected that our state government will authorize its share of funding for this passenger rail expansion between Kansas City, Oklahoma City and Dallas. Your resolution No. 6758 signed Feb. 26, 2008 supported the Northern Flyer Alliance's campaign to expand the *Heartland Flyer* through Lawrence. This resolution attests to your support for passenger rail serving Lawrence. The *Heartland Flyer* expansion, if it includes daytime trains, is projected to more than double the current level of ridership using the Lawrence depot. The depot needs to stand ready for this expansion.

Investing in train travel is also an investment in the environment. Per capita emissions of CO₂ are almost 35% less in rail travel than in car travel, and 50% less than in air travel.

CARBON EMISSIONS (per passenger mile)	
Rail	.21 kg
Car	.35kg
Air	.48 kg

Emissions factors based on calculations from the World Resources Institute (WRI) and Carbonfund.org. Calculations assume single-occupant car and the added impact of high-altitude emissions for air.

The Lawrence Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement and the Mayor's Climate Protection Task Force suggest the City government's support for its citizens' access to regional transportation

systems that are part of the solution to global warming. Passenger rail, with all associated facilities and infrastructure, is just that option citizens are clamoring for.

Investment in a community's transportation infrastructure is a governmental responsibility which enhances the local and regional economy. A convenient, comfortable and safe depot that is also a beautiful, historic building boosts local tourism in the cities that have supported these projects. With Amtrak's free hop off/hop on option for passengers on the Southwest Chief, the spending of riders designating Lawrence as one of several destinations would benefit our local economy.

Depot Redux will continue to work with other civic groups and with the City of Lawrence to return the Santa Fe Depot to its former status as a first class passenger rail facility, while highlighting its architectural and historic significance. We believe that it can be a key element in increasing the appeal of rail as a travel option for the citizens of Lawrence and the surrounding communities in Douglas County.

Please direct staff to pursue ownership transfer of the BNSF depot at 413 E 7th Street to the City of Lawrence for the purpose of maintenance and restoration of the historic building. Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter of importance to the community now and in the future.

Sincerely,

Carey Maynard-Moody, Chair
Depot Redux

785-842-6517
careymm@sunflower.com

Dear City Commissioners and Mayor Dever,

June 18, 2008

On behalf of Lawrence Modern I urge the City of Lawrence to seek ownership of the passenger rail station at 413 East 7th Street in East Lawrence. I understand this will be considered on the agenda of the City Commission on June 24, 2008.

The group Depot Redux has worked hard to bring the current owner, BNSF to the point where they are now willing to donate the facility, if the City is willing to accept ownership. BNSF has not always been so generous in the past. Should the current BNSF administration change, this offer may disappear. This should create a sense of priority if not urgency to the City to begin work with the current owner seeking ownership transfer.


This is a rare opportunity for our community to take responsibility for a structure that is one of the most important mid century public buildings remaining in Lawrence. Additionally, this depot is still used. Indeed, almost 4,000 visitors and Lawrence residents used the depot last year. It is the first structure people see when they step into Lawrence from the train.

There is no doubt rail travel will continue to increase and with City ownership, the building can be registered on the State and National Historic Registry. The depot's restoration will then qualify to receive funding from the state and federal preservation programs, and federal transportation programs. Tax credits will also help fund preservation work.

Lawrence Modern, Depot Redux and other civic organizations are anxious to help support this restoration so that the city can put the depot to the highest and best use beyond serving rail passengers. With such preservation, this will be a "gem" like our Depot across the river in North Lawrence.

Let's seize the moment!

Sincerely,



Tom Harper

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**CITY MANAGERS OFFICE
LAWRENCE, KS**

2142 Owens Lane
Lawrence, KS 66046

June 16, 2008

City Hall
Attn: Dave Corliss
(for distribution to City Commissioners)
6 East 6th St.
Lawrence, KS 66044

Letter of Support for Acquisition of BNSF Depot

Dear City Commissioner:

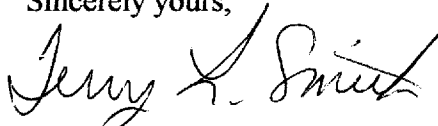
We moved to Lawrence from Santa Fe about three years ago. We chose Lawrence over many other possible locations due to the progressive attitudes of its citizenry, the availability of public transportation (T, Amtrak), its bicycle-friendly nature, and abundance of cultural opportunities.

Many of our early visits to Lawrence were by Amtrak, and the BNSF Depot. Some of these visits were for house-hunting and eventual purchase. We were glad to have the facilities at the Depot for our arrivals and departures, and took advantage of its proximity to downtown. (We did also note its limited open hours; during those days of living out of overnight bags, we resorted to other public facilities at the swimming pool and downtown hotels.) We have continued to use the Depot for Amtrak trips now that we live here.

From our perspective, the BNSF Depot is essential to meet the future transportation needs of Lawrence. We are hopeful that an addition Amtrak train will soon provide service to destinations in Oklahoma and Texas. We ask that you support the city's acceptance of the BNSF offer of the Depot, in order to best insure that the city can control the use of this important property.

While using the Depot, we could not help but notice that the 50's modern design of the building has been quite well preserved, and we hope that the city would also make use of the special architectural nature of the building. The desirable features of the space may suggest additional public uses, to complement the facilities required for train service.

Sincerely yours,


Terry L. Smith


Ivan George Smith

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