*The City of \*\*\*\*\**

*Office of the Mayor and City Council*

**\*\*\*A PROCLAMATION\*\*\***

WHEREAS Northeast Oregon has a proud railroad heritage (as the successor to the legendary Oregon Trail) dating back to completion of the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company and Oregon Short Line route (now Union Pacific) in 1884;

WHEREAS the Union Pacific line through Eastern Oregon hosted America’s first diesel-powered streamlined passenger train (the City of Portland) in 1935;

WHEREAS all Union Pacific passenger service to Eastern Oregon was discontinued with the advent of Amtrak in 1971;

WHEREAS Amtrak reinstated rail passenger service on the Union Pacific route through Eastern Oregon in 1977, but discontinued it in 1997;

WHEREAS Greyhound operated four intercity buses daily along Interstate 84 through Eastern Oregon at the time Amtrak service was discontinued, but now only one remains;

WHEREAS intercity bus service in the United States and Canada is trending toward fewer routes in rural areas with fewer intermediate stops or elimination altogether;

WHEREAS only one community (Pendleton) in the 450 miles between Portland and Boise has scheduled air service;

WHEREAS 50 percent of the up to 14,000 vehicles daily on Interstate 84 through Eastern Oregon can be heavy trucks;

WHEREAS ice, snow, fog, and blowing dust cause up to 60% percent of accidents along Interstate 84 in Eastern Oregon;

WHEREAS Interstate 84 in Eastern Oregon has long segments without available gas, food, lodging, and cell phone coverage further diminishing safety;

WHEREAS Interstate 84 through Eastern Oregon incorporates a route with steep grades, much curvature, and passing through narrow canyons;

WHEREAS despite its challenging weather, topography, and geography, no better alternate highway route to Interstate 84 across Eastern Oregon exists;

WHEREAS existing Amtrak long-distance passenger trains remain popular in Oregon as evidenced by Oregon’s Empire Builder and Coast Starlight trains ranking first and second respectively in overall ridership in fiscal year 2019;

WHEREAS the population of the Boise, Idaho metro area has increased by over 60% and the Portland, Oregon metro area has increased by over 30% since the discontinuance of Amtrak service between the two cities in 1997;

WHEREAS specialized medical, retail, and service industries continue to be more focused in larger metro areas requiring additional transportation access from more rural areas;

WHEREAS passenger trains are proven to be safer, more comfortable, and more fuel-efficient than automobiles;

WHEREAS the Union Pacific route through Eastern Oregon traverses a scenic and varied landscape where a passenger train would provide quality access to icons of Oregon tourism, such as Hell’s Canyon, the National Oregon Trail Interpretive Center, the Blue Mountains, the Columbia River Gorge, and Multnomah Falls;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I \*\*\*\*\*, Mayor of \*\*\*\*, do extend my appreciation to the contribution railroads have made to our great city, and urge our state and federal elected officials to actively pursue the reinstatement of rail passenger service to Eastern Oregon through \*\*\*\* to bolster our economy, increase travel options for our citizens, and enhance our quality of life.**

**Proclaimed in \*\*\*\* this \*\*\*\* day of \*\*\*\* in the year two thousand and twenty.**

(signature)