



August 12, 2010

TIGER II/Community Challenge Grants Evaluation Team

Dear Sirs and Madams:

The Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee strongly endorses the TIGER II/Community Challenge Planning Grant application for “*The Franklin Corridor Partnership: Complete Neighborhoods, Complete Streets*”. The Cities of Eugene and Springfield, Lane Transit District, and the Oregon Department of Transportation are partnering on this grant application to implement elements of the Walnut Station Mixed Use Center plan in Eugene and the Glenwood Refinement Plan/Franklin Boulevard Study in Springfield. This project will create vibrant, pedestrian friendly mixed use neighborhoods within an existing transit corridor with great redevelopment potential. Franklin Boulevard, an outdated state highway located in the center of this metropolitan area, hosts the region’s first segment of a world-class bus rapid transit system, the “EmX” line. Conversion of Franklin Boulevard to a complete multi-modal transportation system is a core component of these projects’ success.

The Franklin Corridor Partnership would fund the necessary NEPA analysis and design for conversion of Franklin Boulevard to a multiway boulevard, which will improve transportation choices by expanding the capacity of the existing EmX Bus Rapid Transit and pedestrian, bicycle, and other alternative modes of transportation within and through the area. The Community Challenge Grant ensures that affordable housing will be part of the mix as these neighborhoods grow. Together, these grants provide the opportunity to implement an innovative, attractive, and inclusive mixed use transit corridor that supports sustainable development for the two cities, resulting in reduced vehicle miles traveled, increased economic competitiveness, and new value through housing choices in both communities.

These projects are excellent examples of integrated land use and transportation planning and regional partnerships. Support of this grant would provide an opportunity to leverage the considerable state, and local investments already made in these projects in the way of state grant funding, local government support and approval of the visionary plans. We are in full support of this grant request.

Sincerely,

Alan Zelenka, Chair
Metropolitan Policy Committee

CENTRAL LANE METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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