



September 2, 2009

To: Metropolitan Policy Committee

From: Paul Thompson

Subject: 5.f: Letters of Support for Eugene & Springfield TIGER Grant Applications

Action Recommended: Review draft letters of support and approve for submittal.

Background

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, or Stimulus Act) provided \$1.5 billion in discretionary competitive grants for surface transportation projects across all modes. The U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT) named this the TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Grant program. U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said TIGER grants will “promote greater mobility, a cleaner environment and more-livable communities.”

Eligible projects include highway or bridge work normally funded under programs like the Surface Transportation Program; public transportation projects, such as those funded by the New Starts or Small Starts program; passenger and freight rail infrastructure projects; and port infrastructure projects.

Eligible TIGER grantees include state, local, tribal and territorial government entities, such as transit agencies, port authorities and multijurisdictional coalitions. Award amounts will range from a minimum of \$20 million to a maximum of \$300 million, though US DOT may waive the minimum threshold in the case of small projects.

Discussion

Within the Central Lane MPO area, both the City of Springfield and the City of Eugene are preparing TIGER Grant applications. As part of the application packet, both Cities are requesting letters of support from the MPO Policy Board, or MPC.

City of Eugene TIGER Grant Project

The transportation project for which the City of Eugene, jointly with the Oregon Department of Transportation, is seeking TIGER grant funding will enhance ODOT’s currently planned/funded project (improvement of the existing HWY 99 bridge at Roosevelt Boulevard) by reconstructing HWY 99 from Garfield Street to Roosevelt Boulevard and enhancing multi-modal safety and access to and from adjacent properties by adding driveways, sidewalks, and ADA ramps. Other improvements to vehicular traffic movement and safety will include adding a second left-hand turn lane from Hwy 99 onto Roosevelt and upgrading traffic signal controllers and software which will in turn reduce greenhouse gas emissions from otherwise idling vehicles. Energy-efficient street lights

will also be installed along the project route and the existing traffic communication system will be significantly upgraded by the installation of fiber optic cable.

In addition to these HWY 99 improvements, the City of Eugene intends to locally fund the resurfacing of W. 5th Avenue from HWY 99 to Bailey Hill Road and request TIGER grant funding to further enhance this important transportation route between the W. 11th Avenue and HWY 99 street corridors by adding sidewalks and street lighting, providing stormwater quality treatment, and installing a roundabout that will accommodate industrial truck traffic at the intersection of W. 5th Avenue and Seneca Road.

City of Springfield TIGER Grant Project

The City of Springfield, jointly with the Lane Transit District and the Oregon Department of Transportation, are seeking a TIGER grant for improvements to Franklin Boulevard in the Glenwood area of Springfield. This project would address Franklin Boulevard's lack of sidewalks, bike lanes, and stormwater system, and add transit lanes for Lane Transit District's EmX (bus rapid transit) service. In addition, the project would create a multi-way boulevard, an innovative concept that allows for convenient movement of through traffic while also creating a high level of access to adjacent businesses and a safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle environment.

Attachment 1 provides an overview of the TIGER Grant program. Attachments 2 and 3 provide draft letters of support for the two grant applications. Staff from both cities will be available at the MPC meeting to answer questions regarding the projects and applications.

Recommended Action

Approve letters of support.

Attachments

1. TIGER Grant Fact Sheet
2. Draft City of Eugene Letter of Support
3. Draft City of Springfield Letter of Support