



August 14, 2023

PROTECT Program  
Office of Acquisition and Grants Management  
Federal Highway Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE.  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Grant Review Team:

I am writing on behalf of the Lane Council of Governments Board of Directors to express full support of the Central Lane MPO's (CLMPO) *Resilient Lane* proposal to the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Program. As a council of governments our membership includes Lane County, every city in Lane County, six school districts, several special districts (water, electric, fire, for example), a transit district, a community college, a port, and more. Each member stands to benefit from this proposal. Our region, in Oregon's Willamette Valley, is already experiencing the impacts of destructive natural hazards, including flooding, wildfires, erosion, and heat domes. We are continually bracing for the next event and know an earthquake and resultant tsunami along the Cascadia Subduction Zone could be imminent.

Our Cascades West Economic Development District has identified infrastructure resilience as a priority in our adopted Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The business community has been an invaluable partner in disaster response and can be equally valuable in prevention and adaptation. The *Resilient Lane* project is critical for countywide coordination and equity. The proposal addresses existing gaps through a coordinated countywide effort to assess and address vulnerabilities while centering the interplay and dependencies between an urban MPO area and a vast rural county spanning from the Cascades Mountains to the Pacific Ocean and is roughly the size of the state of Connecticut.

*Resilient Lane* is about relationships and trust. The project includes significant community engagement as well as intentional outreach with Tribal governments to elevate Tribal priorities. The ultimate goal is a data driven, community forward planning process to ensure the whole of Lane County is in a position to better respond when natural hazards strike, and establish a surface transportation network reflective of identified needs and benefits.

The scale of *Resilient Lane* is necessary given the scale of vulnerability in our landscape and is not feasible without PROTECT program funding. We urge your approval of this important proposed planning project.

Respectfully,

Heather Buch, LCOG Board Chair