



October 6, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

SUBJECT: Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program Application FY-22 | C/O Faith Hall, Grant Lead

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

We thank you for your dedication to investing in our country's infrastructure. I am writing this letter on behalf of the Policy Board for the Central Lane Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to convey our strong support for the City of Eugene's Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program fiscal year 2022 grant application for the capital construction project of a new bicycle-pedestrian bridge. This new bridge will be constructed over the Randy Papé Beltline Highway and connect the River Road and Santa Clara communities in Eugene.

The River Road and Santa Clara communities are socially divided by the Beltline highway. Thus, the construction of a bicycle-pedestrian bridge will enable people to utilize more active transportation options to school, work, shopping, and other destinations. The bridge will also serve as a shared-use path and connect half of the North Eugene High School service area – the highest underserved population of Eugene School District 4J's four traditional high schools – to the school itself.

Supporting the City of Eugene's commitment to Safe Routes to School and Vision Zero, this bridge will eliminate the need to traverse several of Eugene's most dangerous intersections and advance road user safety, particularly for students walking or biking, that have to cross a highway interchange to get to school by furnishing access to safer neighborhood streets. We believe in safe access to roadways, especially for the student population, as they are integral to the community and the economic resilience of any economy. A significant barrier to community connectivity between Santa Clara and River Road will be eradicated by constructing this bridge which includes barriers to safe mobility, access, and economic development resulting from the high speeds and grade separations on the Beltline highway.

In conclusion, we are confident that this grant will help eliminate the obstacles to safe mobility, access, and economic development — while *Reconnecting Communities* between Santa Clara & River Road.

Please join us in supporting the City of Eugene's vision and affirmation of advancing transportation equity, climate justice, and creating safe and active streets for all by supporting its grant application.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Randy Groves
Metropolitan Policy Committee, Chair
Eugene City Councilor, Ward 8