



May 1, 2020

Honorable Elaine Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Franklin Boulevard Opportunity Zone Corridor BUILD Application

Dear Ms. Secretary:

The Cities of Eugene and Springfield, Oregon are working in tandem to improve the Franklin Boulevard corridor and request your consideration of our joint application for grant funding through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) program. We envision transforming a blighted district along a former State highway that's unsafe for pedestrians and bicyclists into a vibrant, multi-modal corridor that is safe for all people, including those who walk, bike, roll, take the bus and drive.

Franklin Boulevard is the meeting point between our cities as well as the University of Oregon, including the \$1B Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact. Redevelopment of private commercial property is already emerging along the corridor, led by property owners and developers investing in our collective future. This project will leverage their private investment with public funds to increase economic competitiveness, generate jobs, and contribute to a better quality of life for our communities.

A reconstructed Franklin Boulevard will act as a linchpin for the thoughtful redevelopment of the four Opportunity Zones located either directly along or in close proximity to the corridor. This project will enable dramatic improvements to intersections and bus rapid transit facilities, fills sidewalk and bicycle facility network gaps, allowing for the safe and efficient movement of goods and people while also creating a high level of access to adjacent businesses for residents and visitors. It will generate a large number of construction jobs in the short-term and catalyzes economic growth in the long-term.

From our Cascade mountain range of central Oregon to our coastal communities on the Pacific Ocean, the route is a major east-west corridor that provides a direct connection to jobs, education, services, and recreation in the region, which is why our region has already invested \$15.5 million and has identified over 30% in non-federal state and local matching funds. BUILD funding would facilitate the construction of the next phase of this transformative project.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I ask for your full support of our project.

Sincerely,

Mayor Lucy Vinis