

May 12, 2020

Attn: Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Franklin Boulevard Opportunity Zone Corridor BUILD Application

Secretary Chao:

Please consider our highest support for an important, collaborative effort and award a portion of this year's available Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Grant funds to Eugene's and Springfield's *Franklin Boulevard Opportunity Zone Corridor* project.

As leading real estate, design, development, forest management and construction industry experts, our collective knowledge brings trusted and reputable names to some of the region's most iconic projects—completed and planned redevelopment along Franklin Boulevard as examples. Our strong roots in the industries we represent bring over 30 years of work in the Eugene-Springfield area, with some of us going on a century of improving lives in fundamental ways and counting. What we also have in common is our shared commitment to bring the vision for the Franklin corridor to life. The envisioned transformation of Franklin is a truly innovative, multi-modal arterial.

Our project portfolio informs the unique lens we bring to the list of many supporters of the project, as we represent a range of public, private, and non-profit sector interests. Our work along the Franklin corridor is no exception. We have worked with Springfield to advance the community's vision for Glenwood, with Eugene for the transformation of Franklin Boulevard in their jurisdiction, and with many interested property owners and developers. Along the way, some of us managed the overall plan for riverfront redevelopment, some of us expressed interest in development sites, some of us brought financial and due diligence expertise to the table, some of us brought site plans and land use entitlements seamlessly through the approval process, and some of us brought the award-winning design through construction for Phase 1.

The completed Phase 1 improvements to Franklin demonstrate the project's proven success. Along with the involvement of our companies as key team members, the City of Springfield managed the project in a cost-effective and timely manner to complete it under budget and ahead of schedule. Eugene's status as a Certified Local Public Agency through the Oregon Department of Transportation provides the needed confidence that this project will see on-time and innovative means of delivery. Our continued interest in progress along Franklin speaks to the project's anticipated success.

Continued reconstruction is an essential ingredient to the recipe for revitalization. The ability for this project to minimize frontage improvement costs for new development in a way that increases the speed and predictability of permit timelines will drive the already-growing redevelopment energy. Beyond the immediate improvements to be made possible through BUILD funding, transforming Franklin will improve our residents' everyday lives by strengthening our economy through design that attracts, excites, and endures. Franklin creates a high level of access to businesses and redevelopment areas along the riverfront. The project's concept can be applied to urban arterials throughout the United States as an example of addressing the wide-ranging benefits of the BUILD program's goals and the application criteria.

The long-awaited improvements will alleviate the burdens of commuting by reducing transportation costs and by implementing a design that supports greater safety, efficiency, and access. Achieving these outcomes means eliminating: obstacles, unsafe exposure to high-speed vehicles, and

blight—all of which contribute to a high-stress environment. As with all communities throughout the United States, COVID-19 caused a major hit to our local economy and the well-being of our community. A BUILD award could not be timelier as we work to recover. Nearly 30% of our region's residents are housing cost burdened in an extremely tight housing market where median home prices increased 130% over the last 10 years. This project is critical for making a range of denser housing options viable, including affordable housing . These options can set the stage for better health given Franklin's location along two designated Opportunity Zones and anchored by two more.

We hope you will find our longstanding, positive experiences working in the Eugene-Springfield area proves testament to the far-reaching, mutual benefits this project will bring to many for years to come. Thank you for considering this joint agency request for BUILD funding.

Sincerely,

Darcy Phillips, Executive Director
Cornerstone Community Housing



Jacob Fox, Executive Director
Homes for Good Housing Agency



Larry Gilbert, Principal
Cameron McCarthy Landscape Architecture & Planning



Emily Reiman, CEO
DevNW



Richard Satre, Principal
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