



May 19, 2021

Attn: Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary of Transportation  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Franklin Boulevard Project RAISE Application

Secretary Buttigieg:

On behalf of the University of Oregon's (UO's) student body and organizations, we, the Associated Students of the University of Oregon (ASUO) express our support for the rebuilding of the Franklin Boulevard Corridor and the RAISE 2021 Application submitted by the cities of Eugene, Springfield, and the Lane Transit District. Funding overdue changes to Franklin Boulevard will directly support RAISE 2021 program goals by increasing safety for members of the student and community bodies, investing in local equity and our futures in a sustainable way, and greatly improving our lives each day.

The safety and wellbeing of students and the community are key priorities of the Franklin Boulevard project. The corridor, a former state highway that bisects the UO campus, is an unsafe environment for any person traveling along or across it. Construction of traffic-calming features, such as roundabouts and crossing refuges, will greatly improve the safety of those who need to cross Franklin Boulevard to access classes and campus destinations such as on and off-campus housing, student amenities, and the Phil and Penny Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact.

The student organizations of the UO understand that *safe, accessible, affordable, and reliable* transportation to and around campus is a key factor to long term student success. In 2019, 51% of UO students commuted to campus by foot, 16% by bike and 7% used the EmX bus rapid transit system. Currently, Franklin Boulevard lacks accessible and continuous sidewalks, bikeways are practically nonexistent, and the EmX experiences bottlenecks where bi-directional service must use a single track. Continuous and fully separated sidewalks and bicycle facilities, coupled with the creation of two dedicated tracks for EmX, will enable more people to take advantage of Franklin Boulevard as a major connecting thoroughfare with more climate-smart options.

The transformation of Franklin Boulevard will create greater equity within the campus and Eugene-Springfield communities by increasing transportation options, reducing the burden of commuting, and improving connectivity to education, jobs, healthcare, and other essential services. The project will connect the campus to the region at large, strengthening the University's and the greater communities' identities as drivers of inclusion, sustainability, and equity. For these reasons, the ASUO extends our enthusiastic support for the Franklin Boulevard project and implore the USDOT to award Eugene, Springfield, and the Lane Transit District RAISE 2021 funding for Franklin Boulevard.

**ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON (ASUO) SENATE**

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Sincerely,

Associated Students of the University of Oregon Senate

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*Claire O'Connor*

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Claire O'Connor,  
ASUO Senate President

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