

May 25, 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:

The Eugene and Springfield Chambers of Commerce and ONWARD Eugene know that the wellbeing of a community depends largely on its economic health. As such we want to express our strong support for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant funding request submitted jointly by the Cities of Eugene and Springfield for the Franklin Boulevard Project.

The Franklin corridor is anchored at both its east and west ends by areas of persistent poverty and blighted urban renewal districts along the corridor. Improvements to the Franklin Boulevard corridor are vital to supporting redevelopment opportunities in these areas of economic need. Though the roadway is an unattractive, outdated former State highway, redevelopment of private commercial property is emerging along the corridor led by property owners and developers who are investing in our collective vision for the future of the corridor. These investments are critical in supporting economic development efforts that will enhance and improve our communities and provide additional employment opportunities for our workforce.

Franklin Boulevard presents a key economic opportunity for the Lane County region as it is centrally located between downtown Eugene and downtown Springfield. The Cities of Eugene and Springfield have laid the groundwork to give businesses a lead on preliminary site planning with completed design and construction for greater certainty in timing their investments, identifying compatible employment sites, and reducing development timelines. This regional project will leverage both public and private investment to increase economic competitiveness, generate jobs, and contribute to the tangible aspects of a much better quality of life for our communities by addressing neglected areas and investing in transportation infrastructure that allows people to commute efficiently and safely. In total, our region has already invested \$15.5 million and has identified over \$9.4 million in match funds. RAISE funding would enable the construction of the next phase of this project. We urge you to give this regional partnership and jointly prepared application your full support.

Sincerely,



Brittany Quick-Warner
President and CEO
Eugene Area Chamber of Commerce



Vonnie Mikkelson
President and CEO
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce



Matt Sayre
Managing Director
ONWARD Eugene

