

June 21, 2021

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

RE: Franklin Boulevard RAISE Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We are writing to you on behalf of a coalition of agencies, organizations, non-profits, and advocacy groups whose core missions are to tackle the pressing issues of climate change while enhancing environmental justice so that we can create a healthy world that is livable, joyful, and just. We strongly urge you to award Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant funds to Springfield's and Eugene's, with support from the Lane Transit District's, joint application for the Franklin Boulevard corridor. This project is critical to act on real investments in climate- and energy-smart infrastructure for a sustainable environment.

The Franklin Boulevard project is innovative in a time where bold designs are needed in order to mitigate climate change. It redesigns an outdated state highway built to move cars quickly through a connector route. This project replaces the outdated transportation design into a multi-modal boulevard that focuses on people and place. The corridor is the primary east-west route that connects the hearts of Eugene and Springfield to the Cascade Mountains and the Pacific Coast, including many smaller rural cities and towns. The corridor features the region's busiest bus rapid transit (EmX) route, providing access to jobs and educational opportunities, and connectivity to rural communities and underserved populations. Complimentary to Lane Transit District's goal to convert their fleet to 100% zero emission by 2035, investments in the corridor will facilitate more inclusive and equitable access to opportunities and services while preventing and alleviating many of the negative impacts automobile-centric transportation design inflicts on the environment.

Whether they are walking, biking, using transit, or driving, everyone will benefit from this enhanced experience that will also reduce energy consumption and reduce vehicle emissions. The project also increases the efficiency and frequency of service provided by the EmX by creating two dedicated guideways where there is currently one. The current configuration creates a transit bottleneck that limits the EmX's capacity. Making transit more efficient will not only increase ridership and transition people out of cars, but with fleet electrification and transition to zero-emission buses, the benefits and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions is multiplied.

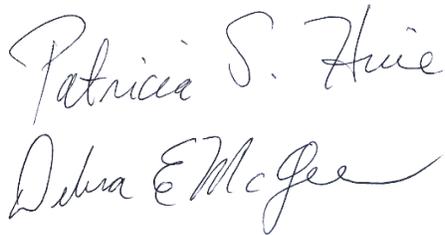
Further, the project constructs separated facilities for people walking, biking, and using assisted mobility or micromobility devices. Together, these key components of the needed and anticipated redesign will create a transportation network that is safe, efficient, accessible, and comfortable for people using modes of transportation other than the car. Doing so will support goals established in the City of Eugene's Transportation System Plan and Climate Action Plan – to improve transportation choices for all

in our region, encourage increased use of active and sustainable modes of transportation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and overall air and noise pollution that occur due to fossil fuel use.

The project also protects one of our region's most treasured natural assets – the Willamette River. By using stormwater treatment options, the project will ensure that the river, along with other local waterways and wetlands, remain healthy components of our ecosystem, both locally and globally.

Together, we continue to emphasize our strong support for this much-needed investment in this central part of our region. We believe this project is integral to our shared vision of a world that is healthy, happy, and resilient. Please consider this important and collaborative transportation project and award this RAISE grant to our community.

Sincerely,



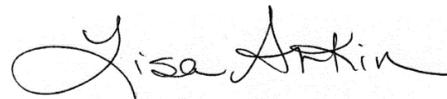
Patty Hine & Deb McGee, Founders  
350 Eugene



Carolyn Stein, Executive Director  
BRING Recycling



Steven Dietrich, Agency Director  
Lane Regional Air Protection Agency

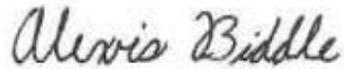


Lisa Arkin, Executive Director  
Beyond Toxics





Ryan Kounovsky, Chair  
Many Rivers Group, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club



Alexis Biddle, Great Communities Program  
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