



Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon

April 21, 2014

Secretary Anthony Foxx
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

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Dear Secretary Foxx:

The Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) expresses our support for 2014 TIGER grant funding for the Southwest Corridor and Powell-Division Opportunity Crescent projects. These projects would focus resources on five important neighborhood centers and the educational institutions that define them, including the Portland Community College and Jade District node.

APANO is community based organization that manages the Jade District Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative (NPI) zone for the City of Portland. The Jade District was designated by the Portland Development Commission (PDC) as a NPI urban renewal area in 2011 and is particularly known for its strong Asian cultural influence in terms of the small businesses located there. The NPI is a public/private partnership that aims to transform underserved commercial districts in east Portland into engines of economic and community development through tax increment financing (TIF) without displacing the communities that currently reside there. This program reflects the city's new model for urban redevelopment and offers an opportunity for equitable and community-driven economic growth.

The Jade District is among the most diverse and economically challenged areas in the city and is home to Oregon's most diverse census tract. We are quickly becoming Portland's new international district with a high concentration of Asian Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Slavic communities. The local school in our district is roughly 72% communities of color and 86% free and reduced lunch. In our work, APANO is taking a more holistic view of economic development by working to build the human capital of the Jade District through developing interconnected communities and improving access to clean air, safe transportation, and living wage jobs through the power of community organizing.

We feel strongly that APANO's values align strongly with Metro's desire to better engage with our constituent communities. With this grant, our partnership will better be able to engage diverse communities in a culturally appropriate manner. This will help Portland Community College and our other neighborhood stakeholders anticipate and capture the economic, social and environmental value of planned regional high capacity transit investments. In addition, this process will also develop place-based agreements that identify responsibilities for implementation of the plans. The agreements will focus on such issues as development patterns, housing affordability, safety improvements, infrastructure funding, job training, hiring, and ongoing participation and communication.

A 2014 TIGER grant for the Southwest Corridor and Powell-Division Opportunity Crescent projects would



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help bring the benefits of high capacity transit to our neighborhood and the entire Portland metropolitan region and support the success of the next generation of residents by increased access to educational opportunity areas in our region. In particular, this TIGER grant would allow us to better engage the diverse population that resides in our particular node and has been historically underrepresented in similar planning processes.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Duncan Hwang
Jade District Program Director