

April 16, 2014

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

Dear Secretary Foxx:

On behalf of the City of Gresham, I am pleased to express the city's support for 2014 TIGER grant funding for the Powell-Division and Southwest Corridor "Access to Opportunity Project". This project will provide critical information about how Gresham and the entire metropolitan region can become a national leader in linking education opportunities and workforce training by providing easy, effective, and equitable access to these services.

The "Access to Opportunity Project" is significant to our metropolitan region and will focus resources on five important places and the educational institutions that define them: the Mt. Hood Community College area; the Portland Community College Jade District; the region's Innovation Quadrant; the Portland Community College Sylvania neighborhood area; and the Tigard Triangle.

In Gresham, Mount Hood Community College is a critical educational, recreational, and community destination. Our residents want to better connect campus to where we live, and that priority was expressed during the East Metro Connections Plan adopted in 2012.

Together, the Powell-Division and Southwest corridors create a single connection between the east and west sides of the metro region and reach many neighborhoods characterized by higher poverty rates and more ethnic diversity than in other parts of the region. The Powell-Division corridor within Gresham runs through an area that hosts industrial, commercial and retail jobs and a high density of residential units.

With this grant, our region will undertake detailed planning in the five key nodes named above, aligning land use, local transportation choices, and development plans. The results will enable the educational institutions and others to anticipate and capture the economic, social and environmental value of planned regional high capacity transit investments. In addition, we 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 Powell-Division and Southwest Corridor *Access to Opportunity Project* would help bring the benefits of high capacity transit to 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.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Shane T. Bemis
Mayor