



## Metro | *Making a great place*

April 23, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

As the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Portland, Oregon, metropolitan region, we are pleased to submit a 2014 TIGER planning grant linking the Powell-Division and Southwest Corridors into the “Access to Opportunity” Corridor with fellow project parties, the Oregon Department of Transportation and TriMet. This grant will help bring the benefits of high capacity transit (HCT) to some of the most diverse and underserved communities in the Portland region. It will support the success of the next generation of residents by increasing access to key educational and employment opportunity areas in our region, and capturing the economic, social and environmental value of HCT investments in the communities it serves.

The Southwest Corridor and Powell-Division projects are 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.

Leveraging \$1.28 million in local planning commitments, the Access to Opportunity Corridor project will build community partnerships and deliver development strategies around the five key nodes. This expansive HCT corridor will provide new transportation options for underserved communities and reduce congestion along some of the region’s fastest growing employment areas. The project crosses Washington and Multnomah Counties, and focuses on the cities of Gresham, Portland and Tigard. It crosses Oregon’s 1st and 3rd Congressional Districts, and touches on the commuter-shed of the 5th District.

The specific benefits this work would have for our region include:

- Building on previous federal, state and local multi-modal transportation investments to continue to maintain and enhance transportation networks and facilities;
- Leveraging other public and private investment to increase economic competitiveness and growth;
- Connecting the region’s largest high schools, community colleges, universities, and employers to each other to ensure equitable access to educational and workforce opportunities;

- Investing further in multi-modal transportation systems to mitigate environmental impacts and lower GHG emissions;
- Helping establish consensus around safety components and system upgrades of the proposed HCT corridor for users;
- Engaging diverse community groups through innovative planning processes and development agreements; and
- Developing strong partnerships with local, institutional, private, regional and state organizations and agencies to ensure implementation of projects throughout the five nodes.

Our region understands the highly competitive nature of this grant program and has worked hard to align our planning needs with our key partners to develop a proposal that reflects our shared regional priorities. The Access to Opportunity Corridor projects will focus resources to better connect transit, education and employment to support our region's economic recovery for the next generation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Tom Hughes  
Metro Council President



Shirley Craddick,  
Metro Councilor, District 1



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Metro Councilor, District 2



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