



August 16, 2010

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary of Transportation  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

As a healthcare insurer and provider, Kaiser Permanente advocates for policy and environmental changes that promote the health of our communities. We are writing in support of the *Southeast Corridor Project: Connecting Communities* grant proposal under the TIGER II program (Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery II). Kaiser Permanente was a strong supporter of the TIGER I proposal and we continue to support projects that integrate public transportation with growth management plans and policies that improve the physical, mental, and social health of all people in our communities as well as preserve the natural environments that surround us.

Alternative modes of transportation have significant benefits to the health of the population. By promoting more active lifestyles with increased walking, biking, and public transportation, we will help prevent obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other chronic conditions. This will improve the quality of life for countless people and save millions of dollars in health care costs. At the same time, increasing the share of trips made by foot and bicycle will help offset the share of greenhouse gas emissions attributed to the transportation sector.

The *Southeast Corridor Project* is an important demonstration that moving people and freight are not mutually exclusive goals. In fact, when the needs of both are deliberately considered they can be mutually enhancing. The vitality of the communities served by this project is a function of both effective and active transportation options for people and freight, the creation and maintenance of jobs, and enhancing the industrial, educational, and scientific character of one of the key geographic areas of this project, the OMSI district.

Given the difficult economy in which we find ourselves, Kaiser Permanente strongly supports the *Southeast Corridor Project* as good for the economy, health and livability of our community.

Sincerely,

Philip Wu, MD  
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Clinical Pediatric Lead, Weight Management Initiative  
Kaiser Permanente Northwest Region

Molly J Haynes, MPH, RD  
Community Project Coordinator  
Kaiser Permanente Northwest Region