



August 6, 2010

Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Southeast Corridor Project: Connecting Communities TIGER II Grant Proposal

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of the Metro Council, I am writing to express the Council's strong support for the *Southeast Corridor Project: Connecting Communities* TIGER II grant proposal. This regional proposal builds on the tremendous success of the Clinton Bike Boulevard in the City of Portland, which has 2,500 bike trips a day, future investments of the Portland-Milwaukie Light Rail (PMLR) Project, and the Trolley Trail in the City of Milwaukie. Implementation of the *Southeast Corridor Project* will dramatically improve access and create more vibrant and livable communities by providing safer bicycle and pedestrian connections through an important, vital industrial corridor. These modest investments also will improve freight operations within the Southeast Region by reducing travel times, and in turn reducing the sector's impact on the climate.

One local study estimated that the Portland region spends \$1.1 billion fewer dollars on transportation costs than other cities its size as a result of the fewer miles traveled by car. This project supports this trend by enhancing transportation choices. When people have the option to drive less it keeps dollars circulating in the local economy instead of going to foreign oil. We support this strategy because we see it working. This project will further support Portland's burgeoning green economy by attracting entrepreneurs interested in the amenities and access the Southeast Corridor will offer.

Improved integration of freight, bike, pedestrian and transit modes address several critical livability issues in our communities. By creating bicycle and pedestrian options, this project will provide cost-effective solutions to global warming and reduce greenhouse gas emissions as called for in Portland's Climate Action Plan. These connections also will reduce auto congestion and ease the movement of freight into and out of the Central Eastside Industrial District and the Brooklyn Rail Yards—two key employment generators.

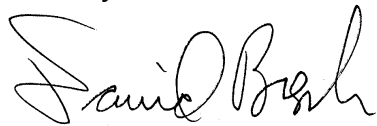
In addition to the livability benefits of these connections, they also serve to increase healthy choices and help residents reduce their family's budget for transportation and parking. As a component of a 20-minute neighborhood, active transportation alternatives will help our neighborhoods become healthier as people make routine trips to schools, parks, commercial areas and employment by foot or bike. In 2009 the Center for Disease Control issued a report with recommendations for creating a healthier America¹. These recommendations included enhancing infrastructure that supports bicycling and walking, improving access to public transportation, and enhancing personal and traffic safety where persons are or could be

physically active. We are excited that the *Southeast Corridor Project* addresses these recommendations and will help our region to achieve healthier communities.

For the Portland region transportation is not just about how we get from point to point, but how those points are connected and how we choose to get there. The Southeast Corridor Project recognizes that sustainable connections create livable neighborhoods and healthy communities. The Metro Council believes this project will transform the area and provide safe access to the river and transit.

With this important opportunity to strengthen the region's livability, the Metro Council strongly encourages you to fund the *Southeast Corridor Project*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Bragdon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" and last name "Bragdon" clearly distinguishable.

David Bragdon,
Metro Council President