

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
BANKING, HOUSING,
AND URBAN AFFAIRS
BUDGET
ENVIRONMENT AND
PUBLIC WORKS

June 5, 2015

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I write to express my strong support for the City of Springfield's application for a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) VII grant for their Franklin Boulevard Complete Street Reconstruction Project.

Franklin Boulevard is the major east-west corridor connecting the cities of Eugene and Springfield through the underdeveloped area of Glenwood. As a primary route for travelling to and from the University of Oregon, it represents a significant growth opportunity for the region but faces many hurdles. Federally funded Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) serves the area, but it currently depends on an interim configuration until the corridor's final improvements are made. The lack of sidewalks, bike lanes, and a functional storm water system along an orphaned five-lane highway makes the area dangerous and difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists.

A reconstructed Franklin Boulevard will act as a linchpin for the thoughtful redevelopment of Glenwood's commercial and residential areas. The project will improve transportation efficiency with an innovative multi-way boulevard that maintains two through lanes of vehicle travel in each direction, adds protected bike lanes, wider sidewalks, roundabout intersections, access lanes on select blocks, new permanent BRT stations, green water quality treatment, landscaping, and a right of way for future light rail or fixed guide-way transit.

The Franklin Boulevard Complete Street Reconstruction Project improvements will provide better access to new and existing businesses as well as safe and convenient travel options for pedestrians and bicyclists. In addition to generating a large number of construction jobs in the short-term and catalyzing economic growth in the long-term, this project will increase the region's livability while reducing carbon emissions and the nation's dependency on foreign oil.

The goals of the project meet the requirements of the TIGER program to fund high-impact transportation investments that increase transportation choices and access to transportation services, promote economic competitiveness and improve the condition of existing transportation facilities.

Thank you for your full and fair review of the City of Springfield's TIGER VII grant application. If you have questions do not hesitate to contact Dan Whelan in my Eugene field office at 541-564-6750.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jeffrey A. Merkley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator