May 23, 2013

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20490

RE: University of Washington Burke-Gilman Trail TIGER V Application

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I am pleased to write in support of the University of Washington’s application for the U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER grant program. Funding from this grant will be dedicated to the Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector.

The Burke-Gilman Train is a regional treasure. It is a major recreation, transportation and nature corridor and the most heavily-used train in Washington State. However, in recent year, the trail’s growing popularity has led to overcrowding and conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Additional development, including a new light rail station, is anticipated to dramatically increase trail demand.

With the Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector the University of Washington is planning for the region’s active transportation future. New light rail stations, high-density residential living, and expansions of the bicycle and pedestrian networks continue to transport the region and encourage walking and bicycling. The connector complements these efforts by creating a world-class transportation, recreation, and nature corridor in the heart of the regions.

Commuter Seattle, whose mission it is to reduce drive-alone commute trips into Downtown Seattle, also recognizes the importance of the Burke-Gilman Train Multi-Modal Connector to those who use the connector to get across Seattle and into Downtown. Seattle has one of the highest rates of bike commuting in the nation and the Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-modal Connector will satisfy growing demand for this trail as a major nexus connecting suburban and urban bike commuters to Downtown.

I am pleased to support the University of Washington’s Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector, and would strongly urge the U.S. Department of Transportation’s consideration of their application.

Sincerely,

Jamie Cheney
Executive Director

CC:
Senator Patty Murray
Senator Maria Cantwell
Governor Jan Inslee
Congressman Jim McDermott
President Michael K. Young, University of Washington