May 22, 2013

The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Re: University of Washington Burke-Gilman Multi-Modal Connector TIGER V Application

I am pleased to write in support of the University of Washington’s application for the U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER grant program. The grant would provide the last missing piece of critical funding to the Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector. The significance of this project cannot be overstated given the popular use of this trail as a connector to the new University Light Rail station and the surrounding businesses and neighborhoods. The Burke-Gilman Trail is truly a multi-modal corridor for pedestrians and bicyclists who use it every day as an alternative to being in a car. It is a community treasure that serves many residents both recreationally and as a commuter route. I believe it is exactly the type of program that the TIGER grant should fund given the impact it will have and the broad support from the community.

The Seattle Housing Authority supports this project because it provides a positive benefit to our low-income residents who live in the community where this project is located. We have three properties (Blakely Manor, University House, and University West) serving nearly 300 residents living in proximity of the Burke-Gilman trail. In fact, Blakely Manor is located next to the Burke-Gilman trail and is home to 87 low-income seniors and disabled adults. Our residents walk or use the bus as their primary modes of transportation. This high density neighborhood is a high opportunity area with parks, shopping, and other amenities that public housing residents can take advantage of without a car. Moreover, the Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector project will further enhance the connection to mass transit with the opening of light rail and encourage more residents to use public transportation.

Our residents depend on having a reliable public transportation system. As the largest provider of low-income housing assistance in Seattle to more than 29,500 people (a third 10,274 are seniors), I believe this project is part of the transformation to build a world-class transportation system. The Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector project will ensure that this major recreation, transportation, and nature corridor will be safely available to even more people, since demand will increase with the opening of the nearby light rail stations.

Commissioners
Nora Gibson Chair Doug Morrison Vice Chair
Aser Ashkir John Littel Juan Martinez Kollin Min Deborah Thiele

Executive Director
Andrew Lofton
The Honorable Raymond H. LaHood  
May 22, 2013  
Page 2

I am pleased to support the University of Washington’s Burke-Gilman Multi-Modal Connector, and strongly urge the U.S. Department of Transportation’s consideration of their application. If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Chen, SHA’s Policy and Program Manager, at (206) 615-3486 or mchen@seattlehousing.org. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Andrew Loon  
Executive Director

cc: The Hon. Patty Murray, U.S. Senate  
    The Hon. Maria Cantwell, U.S. Senate  
    The Hon. Jim McDermott, U.S. House of Representatives  
    The Hon. Jay Inslee, Governor, State of Washington  
    Michael K. Young, President, University of Washington