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

May 23rd, 2013

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

Dear Secretary LaHood,

I am writing in support of the University of Washington's grant application to repair and enhance the Burke Gilman trail. I connect with the trail in several capacities:

- First, as a cyclist and walker who works downtown and as an adjunct lecturer at the University, the trail provides me with a valuable connection that is safer than riding on surface streets, and often faster than driving or taking the bus.
- As a lecturer and researcher that focuses on urban economics, I recognize that these investments are critical to our regional mobility. Every person who cycles "takes a car off the street"—thereby effectively increasing the capacity of our regional network.
- As a real estate developer with a project on the trail near Fremont, we find that tenants value the connectivity of the trail for their employees to get to work and that their employees are more motivated to ride or walk to this location. This in turn improves the health of their employees, and reduces their parking requirements, effectively making their office space more affordable and their businesses more economically productive.

On a personal note, I think that in urban planning discussions, bike and walking trails are often treated as an airy-fairy nice-to-have pretty-ifying urban element. Not all bike trails are the same. Urban trails—like the Burke—that provide strong connectivity between compact and residential neighborhoods go much further. They are a building block of a safe and productive urban economy.

I sincerely hope that you will fund this grant proposal.

Best regards,

A-P Hurd  
Vice President Development  
Touchstone

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