May 28, 2013

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

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

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of the Urban Land Institute Northwest (ULI Northwest), I am writing in strong support of the University of Washington’s application for funding through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grant program to finance construction of the Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector.

ULI Northwest is a nonprofit research institution with more than 800 members in Washington State and Oregon. Our mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI Northwest carries forth that mission by serving the Northwest’s public and private sectors with pragmatic land use expertise and education.

ULI often collaborates with the University of Washington, utilizing the expertise of world-class faculty and resources as educational and programmatic support for our members. We share a commonality of interest in the planning and development of property and transportation facilities that serve the community.

With respect to the Burke-Gilman Trail project, ULI considers this an important component of the regional transportation infrastructure. It is particularly important at this time because of work currently underway to bring a new light rail system into the University District, and the replacement of the SR 520 floating bridge, both of which promise to increase use of the aging Burke-Gilman Trail.

As a region, we recognize that supporting and prioritizing viable, alternative modes of transportation (such as walking and cycling) is a critical component of sustainable land use planning. This is particularly true for a project such as this, considering the direct impacts as well as the opportunity for enhanced coordination of transportation facilities serving the University and the region.

For all of these reasons, we urge your consideration of this application.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

Kerry Nicholson
Chair, ULI Northwest

Cc: Senator Patty Murray, Senator Maria Cantwell, Governor Jay Inslee, Cong. Jim McDermott