May 31, 2013

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

RE: UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON BURKE-GILMAN MULTI-MODAL CONNECTOR TIGER V APPLICATION

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of the Wedgwood neighborhood in Northeast Seattle, the Wedgwood Community Council (WCC) is pleased to unanimously support the University of Washington’s Burke-Gilman Multi-Modal Connector Tiger V Application. The Burke-Gilman Trail is located to the south and east of our neighborhood and is the most heavily used trail in Washington State.

According to statistics provided by the University of Washington (UW) on the UW in Seattle Neighborhoods website\(^1\), Northeast Seattle boasts 1,530 UW employees and 13,779 UW alumni living in Northeast Seattle. There are an additional 1,539 UW employees and 8,854 UW alumni living in North Seattle, which is also served by the Burke-Gilman Trail. In the last 10 years, UW faculty bike trips have more than tripled, student and staff bike trips have nearly doubled, and faculty and student walking trips have grown by 25 percent. The Burke-Gilman Trail has become relied upon by those in our neighborhood who commutes to work, connects to local and regional transit, visits local parks, commutes to UW sports event, and recreate.

There is also no frequent transit service to our neighborhood at present, as measured as bus routes with service every 15 minute or less\(^2\). Single occupant vehicle travel appears to be the primary mode for travel for many in our neighborhood as a result. While the UW Burke-Gilman Multi-Modal Connector project does not improve frequent transit service directly, it would create improved access to the Sound Transit’s University Link Light Rail Station and the new State Route 520 Bridge over Lake Washington, which includes a new dedicated bike lane.

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Given the trail’s regional importance as well as its importance to our neighborhood and those who use it, we strongly support the UW Burke-Gilman Multi-Modal Connector project for the following reasons:

- The project would greatly improve the trail facility itself to accommodate the increased use it has experienced over the last decade as well as improve the safety of its users.
- The project would provide improved access to local and regional transportation infrastructure, such as the Sound Transit University Light Rail Station and the new SR 520 Bridge.

It is for these reasons, among many others, that we urge the U.S. Department of Transportation to consider the University of Washington’s Burke-Gilman Trail Multi-Modal Connector project.

Respectfully,

Per Johnson
Wedgwood Community Council
President

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