



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

September 15, 2009

Mr. Joel Szabat  
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Szabat:

Please accept the University of Oregon's endorsement and support for the City of Springfield's funding request through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant process to redesign and reconstruct Franklin Boulevard in Glenwood. The multi-way boulevard aspects of the project, along with dedicated EmX (bus rapid transit) lanes between the downtowns of Eugene and Springfield, and important bicycle and pedestrian facilities are long needed improvements that will have a dramatic impact on travel choices and the quality of Glenwood and surrounding neighborhoods.

Franklin Boulevard is the main east-west roadway connecting Springfield and Eugene, providing access to the University of Oregon, and connecting both downtowns to Interstate 5. Despite its central location in the urban area and the fact that it provides a critical transportation link between Eugene and Springfield, the roadway in some areas lacks such basic amenities as sidewalks, bike lanes, street trees, and a functional storm water system. It also lacks the level of transit amenities found along other sections of Lane Transit District's initial EmX line.

GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

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The citizens of this community deserve better, and the university believes that the Franklin Boulevard Project is the right answer to these problems. University faculty, staff and students access this corridor on a daily basis. The boulevard is essential to the economic life of the Eugene-Springfield area and the improvements will complement the economic development that is now occurring on the west end of the boulevard where the university is spending hundreds of millions of dollars on construction projects that are taking shape to become a new gateway to the University of Oregon. The improvements to this transportation corridor will have a significant positive impact on the operation and success of these new facilities.

The Franklin Boulevard Project will generate construction jobs in the short term and create additional economic development opportunities that will provide jobs in the future. Since it will drastically improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities, the project will encourage the use of alternative transportation modes, thereby addressing local, state and national goals to reduce carbon emissions and dependency on foreign oil.

Please support the Franklin Boulevard Project.

Sincerely,



Greg Rikhoff  
Director of Community Relations  
University of Oregon