



King County

Department of Transportation
Metro Transit Division
General Manager's Office
201 S. Jackson Street
KSC-TR-0415
Seattle, WA 98104-3856

October 14, 2011

Ray LaHood
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: TIGER III Discretionary Grants

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of King County Metro Transit, I am writing to support the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) application for TIGER discretionary grant funds for the Montlake Triangle Project in Seattle, Washington.

Over the past several years, the State of Washington, King County Metro, Sound Transit, the City of Seattle, and the University of Washington (UW) have partnered together to develop a vision for the triangle-shaped area known as the Montlake Triangle to become a future multimodal center. The center is a key regional transit destination with connections to the University of Washington campus and medical center, local and regional bus service, and regional bicycle and pedestrian trails. When the University Link light rail station opens in 2016, a direct connection to downtown Seattle will also be provided.

This project improves critical transit infrastructure that enhances connections between transit service, the UW Link light rail station and the University of Washington campus. Metro and Sound Transit operate 14 bus routes in the project area. Nearly 2,500 people get on and 2,000 people get off buses at the Montlake Triangle every day. The project will provide additional bus bays for bus layover, passing wire capability for King County Metro's electric trolley buses, and enhanced passenger waiting areas at bus stops. These improvements, coupled with better circulation between light rail, buses, bicycles and pedestrians, will provide connections to more places throughout the county and the region.

The Montlake Triangle Project integrates several agency projects in the triangle area focused on accommodating safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle movements, fast and reliable transit service, and enhanced connections between local bus routes, bus rapid transit and light rail service.

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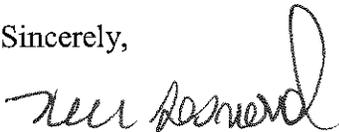
The grant meets the objectives set forth in the criteria in the following ways:

- Includes grade-separation for pedestrians and vehicles, and improves safety and efficiency for pedestrians, bicyclists and motor vehicles traveling on SR 520 and SR 513 (Montlake Boulevard).
- Improves transit access through better bus stop locations.
- Enhances access to light rail and supports more efficient flow of people between the critical employment areas of downtown Seattle and downtown Bellevue, and between the University of Washington and employers (e.g. the Microsoft campus), enhancing the economic competitiveness of the region, the state and the nation.
- Provides a multimodal center with enhanced connections for non-motorized commuters between many destinations and modes; improves access and increases non-motorized travel, enhancing our region's sustainability.
- Demonstrates strong partnerships during the development of this concept, encourages cross-agency collaboration and creates efficiencies for several public projects in the Montlake Triangle area.

The Montlake Triangle Project represents the culmination of years of close coordination and complex multi-agency partnering to create a truly integrated multimodal center. The Puget Sound region is growing rapidly and this new center will serve thousands of people each day. I strongly support the Montlake Triangle project and its benefits for transit users, local and regional drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians and encourage the United States Department of Transportation to award this grant.

We look forward to continuing to coordinate with our partners as the project moves forward.

Sincerely,



Kevin Desmond
General Manager
Metro Transit Division