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September 8th, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am pleased to write today in support of the City of Tacoma's application to the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program. This funding, if awarded, will help increase safety, enhance mobility options, and work toward environmental justice in structurally disadvantaged communities. Based on the guidance from the local community, the Tacoma, WA I-5 Crossings Study will identify improvements necessary for people to safely travel, provide opportunities for placemaking and to increase the tree canopy, and support new housing and economic opportunities throughout the region.

Located in the South Puget Sound region of Washington state, Tacoma sits along the Interstate 5 corridor, which runs north-south, connecting major cities like Seattle, Portland, and Los Angeles. I-5 divides Tacoma, creating a barrier of access for residents, in particular those who cannot or choose not to drive. Access to downtown Tacoma, the Port of Tacoma, schools, hospitals, and other everyday destinations is greatly impacted for locals without their own vehicle.

The City of Tacoma's Tacoma, WA I-5 Crossings Study aims to serve as a guide for Tacoma to design and build projects that make it easier and safer for people to travel around the region. By evaluating existing crossings, identifying opportunities to enhance non-motorized facilities on those crossings, and potentially increase the number of crossings, the City of Tacoma will be able to make the streets and sidewalks of Tacoma safe and accessible for all those who walk, roll, or ride transit.

I look forward to the tremendous positive impact that the Tacoma, WA I-5 Crossings Study will have on the region. That is why I am pleased to offer my support for the City of Tacoma's application to the Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program, and I urge your full and fair consideration of their proposal. Should you have any questions, please contact Emma Abraham in my Tacoma Office at (253) 272-3515 or Emma.Abraham@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Derek Kilmer



Member of Congress