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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2602
August 12, 2009

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<http://www.senate.gov/~baucus>

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

Dear Mr. LaHood:

I am honored to have the opportunity to express my strong support to Yellowstone County as they apply for funding under the TIGER grant program.

Main Street in the Billings Heights is often blocked by emergencies, thus causing safety and health concerns for the Billings Heights and other Yellowstone County residents. If funded, Yellowstone County would complete the Bench Blvd. Main Street Underpass project.

The Main Street Underpass would enhance safety and health concerns, the underpass would also reduce traffic congestion and the carbon footprint, benefiting the traveling public as well as other transportation users. In addition, the underpass would create jobs, promote business growth, and sustain jobs. The Main Street Underpass project is shovel-ready and can be constructed by February 2012. The underpass would use a design laid-out by the Montana Department of Transportation.

Again, this project carries with it my full support, and I hope you will consider their application favorably. Please feel free to contact my office if I can provide any additional information. I also would greatly appreciate it if you kept my office informed about the status of this request.

With best personal regards, I am

Sincerely,



BILLINGS
(406) 657-6790

BOZEMAN
(406) 586-6104

BUTTE
(406) 782-8700

GREAT FALLS
(406) 761-1574

HELENA
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United States Senate

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August 19, 2009

Yellowstone Public Works Department
c/o Mike Black, Civil Engineer
PO Box 35024
Billings, MT 59107-5024

Dear Mike:

It is with great pleasure that I write in support of the Yellowstone County Commission's request for a TIGER Grant for the Bench Boulevard/Main Street Underpass project.

The project is shovel-ready. It will enhance safety and address serious health concerns for the Billings Heights and other Yellowstone County residents when Main Street is blocked by emergencies.

The project can be built by the February 2012 deadline. It will benefit residents, the public, and MetraPark (a multi-use complex that hosts concerts, fairs, meetings). Most importantly, this project will create jobs and boost the economy of Yellowstone County and all of Montana.

I encourage you to fund this worthy project. And please don't hesitate to contact my office with further questions.

Respectfully,



Jon Tester
United States Senator

cc: Jim Lynch, MDT Director, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001

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MISSOULA
(406) 728-3003

Denny Rehberg
State of Montana

Appropriations Committee
Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education
Energy and Water Development
Foreign Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

August 18, 2009

U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20590

To Whom It May Concern:

It's a privilege to express my support for the Bench Boulevard project, a multijurisdictional initiative of the Montana Department of Transportation, Yellowstone County and the City of Billings. In order to complete Bench Boulevard, the involved parties have submitted a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant application before the Department of Transportation.

I understand that the project's first phase includes construction of a new road and bridge over Alkali Creek; however, funding constraints have limited efforts to construct the underpass at Main Street. The requested funds will facilitate completion of both the underpass and the larger project, easing traffic congestion along Main Street and providing better access to the City of Billings.

Transportation plays an important role in Montana's economy and infrastructure, and this project helps ensure Yellowstone County's transportation corridors are adequately funded. Thank you for considering their funding request, and please don't hesitate to contact my office with any further questions.

Sincerely,



Denny Rehberg
Member of Congress

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CITY OF BILLINGS

RON TUSSING, MAYOR

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BILLINGS, MONTANA 59103
(406) 657-8296
FAX (406) 657-8390



August 18, 2009

Director Jim Lynch
Montana Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001

RE: City of Billings Letter of Support for the TIGER Grant for Bench Blvd., Billings, Montana

Dear Director Lynch:

Please consider this a formal letter of support for the grant application referenced above. This grant will provide necessary funding for the second phase of the Bench Boulevard project. Today, all traffic must travel on Main Street that carries over 46,000 vehicles per day. This project is a critical leg of the transportation system connecting the Billings Heights area and Yellowstone County areas with the downtown, central and western areas of Billings providing relief to the traffic congestion on Main Street. This project is the result of a multi-jurisdictional cooperative effort between Montana Department of Transportation, Yellowstone County and the City Of Billings.

Phase one of the Bench Blvd. project will construct a new road and a bridge over Alkali Creek, but funding constraints did not allow design and construction of the very important underpass at Main Street. This TIGER grant will provide funding to complete this underpass and complete the project. Thank you in advance for your consideration of this grant application for this very important project for the Billings, Montana area.

Sincerely,

Mayor Ron Tussing

cc: Stefan Streeter, MDT Billings District Administrator
Rod Nelson, MDT Billings District
Yellowstone County Commissioners
Mike Black, Yellowstone County

Billings Pride
City-wide

Yellowstone County



COMMISSIONERS
(406) 256-2701
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P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107-5000
commission@co.yellowstone.mt.gov

August 7, 2009

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

**Re: Letter of Support – TIGER Grant Application for the Bench Blvd. Main Street Underpass
Yellowstone County – Billings, Montana**

Dear Mr. LaHood,

The Board of Yellowstone County Commissioners requests that the Bench Blvd. Main Street Underpass project be awarded funding under the TIGER Grant program for the following reasons:

- Project is shovel ready – environmental documents completed (Category Exclusion)
- Project will enhance safety and address the serious health concerns for the Billings Heights and other Yellowstone County residents (Shepherd, Huntley, Worden, Custer, etc.) when Main Street is blocked by emergencies
- Project can be constructed by the February 2012 deadline (design / build approach)
- Project will benefit multi-jurisdictions (Yellowstone County, City of Billings, neighboring communities etc.), residents, traveling public, as well as other transportation users
- Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) has used the design / build approach on various previous projects (like the National Award Winning Beartooth Highway Pass Emergency Repair Project completed in 2005)
- Project will reduce traffic congestion and thus reduce the carbon footprint
- Project will create jobs, promote business growth, and sustain jobs
- Project will benefit MetraPark (a large regional entertainment complex – providing concerts, State Fair, etc.) by solving the crippling ingress / egress issues associated with MetraPark events

Thank you for the TIGER Grant Program. We look forward to receiving funding from this source to enable projects like the Bench Blvd. Main Street Underpass to proceed at a time that will greatly benefit Montana and its local economies.

Sincerely,

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
YELLOWSTONE COUNTY, MONTANA


Bill Kennedy, Chair


John Ostlund, Member


James E. Reno, Member

BOCC/mb

cc: Jim Lynch, MDT Director, PO Box 201001, Helena, MT 59620-1001

TIGER Grant Application - Yellowstone County Support Letter