



January 31, 2019

RE: Washington County Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund Discretionary Grant Application

Dear STIF Selection Committee Members:

On behalf of the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce, I am expressing our strong support for Washington County's application for Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund (STIF) Discretionary Grant to fund community transit and demand response system technology capital improvements. The funds will be used to purchase equipment and software to enhance safety and customer experience for community transit, which includes the four community connector shuttles (WestLink, GroveLink, North Hillsboro and Tualatin shuttles), and demand response services serving urban and rural Washington County.

Transit is a critical component of Washington County's transportation system. In response to regional demand for last-mile and flexible transit services in both residential and employment areas, Ride Connection has rapidly expanded the availability of Community Connector services in Washington County. Added STIF and National Transit Database (NTD) reporting requirements has created a need for updating data collection and reporting systems to reduce administrative costs and streamline processes. The way customers, schedulers and drivers interact with technology is also rapidly evolving. New opportunities to utilize technology to improve the customer experience, create operating efficiencies and increase accessibility through effective coordination and data exchange are now more important than ever.

This project improves and expands service to vulnerable populations, including low income riders, older adults and people with disabilities. The development of technologies that support the connectivity of riders that are riding multiple services will make customers more likely to use the service. This will allow more individuals access to employment sites within Banks, North Plains, Hillsboro, Forest Grove and Tualatin. Additionally, without the last mile/first mile connectors, transportation disadvantaged populations would not be able to get to work as readily. Improving the efficiency, delivery and accessibility of transit will help reduce automobile trips and congestion, provide travel options and curb greenhouse gas and other emissions.

I respectfully request that you give Washington County's application the fullest consideration.

Sincerely,

Deanna Palm  
President

cc: Andrew Singelakis, Director of Land Use & Transportation