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21 March 2022

Statement in Support of Ada County Highway District
Access to Opportunity Project, Garden City
2022 RAISE Transportation Planning Grant

Secretary Peter Paul M. Buttigieg
Office of the US Secretary of Transportation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing give support to your favorable consideration of the ACHD Access to Opportunity project. As you are aware, the Treasure Valley of Idaho is experiencing extraordinary growth which puts strains on all systems and resources, including transportation and housing. As an affordable housing advocate and builder in Idaho with NeighborWorks Boise, I can affirm that the two are inextricably bound.

This RAISE grant would address issues of equity in establishing safe pathways of travel to/over/through the Historically Disadvantaged Communities where we work and live within Garden City, Idaho. These growth stresses mean projects further out from the urban centers will further strain existing infrastructure. Making our existing urban landscape more accessible to disadvantaged communities will benefit all as we make the built environment more conducive to walking, biking, and public transportation. As those options become more attractive and available, more concentrated development in the city core becomes more desirable as well, conserving resources of land, water, and infrastructure while reducing dependency on passenger vehicles, improving air quality as well as providing cost savings to residents.

The Active transportation projects proposed by ACHD remove barriers for people who walk and ride bicycles and help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Benefits to people who walk include providing sidewalks and safe, enhanced pedestrian crossings where they currently do not exist, creating connections to transit routes, and bringing older sidewalks and crossings up to Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Benefits for people who ride bikes include providing safe, low-stress, enhanced bike lanes, and connections to transit routes and recreation. These projects were selected for their benefits, which include providing disadvantaged communities access to jobs, healthcare, education, transit, food, recreation, and the Boise River Greenbelt transportation network. In addition,



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these projects will explore private partnerships, environmentally friendly stormwater solutions, and innovative designs.

ACHD needs these federal RAISE funds to make upgrades to deteriorating systems, improve safety and accessibility and to make this important urban center more user friendly to residents who live there. Those essential upgrades will improve the lives of those who live and work in the area and in neighboring areas with far reaching impact as we strategically develop this rapidly growing urban center.

Sincerely,

Buddy L. Compher, CEO
NeighborWorks Boise



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