March 12, 2012

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

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of the Puget Sound Regional Council, I am writing to express my support for Mountlake Terrace’s application for Tiger IV grant funding for the city’s Main Street Reconstruction Project.

This project will reconstruct a strategically important arterial, 56th Avenue West, that is critical to the city’s planned redevelopment of its downtown core and to the regional competitiveness of the region. A new transit center is adjacent to the project area, and is an important factor to the safe and efficient movement of the regional workforce to employment, particularly the Boeing manufacturing plant just north of Mountlake Terrace.

The Main Street Reconstruction Project will revitalize an economically distressed area in the community, and encourage transit-oriented development adjacent to the transit center, which is located along Interstate 5. The project can be immediately bid, putting the money to work quickly. By increasing accessibility to public transportation, this project will also increase the ability of Mountlake Terrace area residents to find and commute to work in the larger metro areas, contributing to regional economic recovery and competitiveness.

Project improvements include widening sidewalks, adding bike lanes, updating ADA facilities, and installing energy efficient pedestrian and street lighting. Installation of hydronic piping underground for a future Energy Conservation District would also occur. The eventual creation of 1,400 long-term jobs and 800 mixed-use multifamily housing units is the top priority for the city.

The project is consistent with the region’s long-range metropolitan transportation plan, Transportation 2040. If selected for funding, PSRC will work with Mountlake Terrace to readily amend the new funding into the Regional Transportation Improvement Program and State Transportation Improvement Program.

Sincerely,

Bob Drewel, Executive Director
Puget Sound Regional Council