



Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations
5600 E. 8th Ave., Spokane Valley, WA 99212-0220

September 27, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) Program Application to the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Please consider this letter of support from The Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations for the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) grant application from the Spokane Transit Authority, City of Spokane, and City of Spokane Valley.

We are a residential, chemical dependency treatment facility for minor-aged teenagers located on 8th Avenue, just east of Havana Street. While our services are open and available to all adolescents, our primary focus is on the Native American population. The Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations is a consortium effort started by the Colville Confederated Tribes, The Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Kalispel Tribe, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, the Nez Perce Tribe, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla. Our contribution to the greater Spokane region strengthens families, empowers communities, and ultimately saves lives.

Similarly, the proposed project represents a consortium effort by three local agencies to help correct the past and foster a positive change for our community's future. The proposed multimodal improvements help mitigate the impacts of transportation infrastructure by increasing access and opportunity: new sidewalks, bike facilities, bus stops, and improved street crossings all promote an active, safe, healthy, and connected community.

The Healing Lodge takes pride in its people, its goal, and community. This partnership project supports our goal to help individuals become their best selves. We hope you give this project the utmost consideration and urge you to deliver the much-needed grant funds.

Respectfully,

Angelena Campobasso, MURP, MPA
Business Operations Director
(*Colville Confederated Tribal Member*)
The Healing Lodge of the Seven Nations
5600 East 8th Ave
Spokane Valley, WA 99212

Desk: (509)795.8388

Email: angelenac@healinglodge.org

MARIA CANTWELL
WASHINGTON



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

November 10, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C., 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing in support of the Spokane Transit Authority's application to the 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program. The Spokane Transit Authority is seeking funding for the construction of multimodal transportation facilities to reconnect the East Central Neighborhood with the rest of Spokane.

The City of Spokane is located in Eastern Washington and is the second largest city in Washington state with over 225,000 residents. Historically, the East Central neighborhood has been one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Spokane, welcoming many working-class immigrants since the late 1800s. However, in the 1950s, the construction of I-90 in Spokane physically separated the city's East Central and South Spokane neighborhoods from the rest of the Spokane, exacerbating existing economic inequities. Because of an underdevelopment of transportation methods, East Central and South Spokane residents have also been deprived of accessible east-west access in South Spokane.

If successful in this grant application, the Spokane Transit Authority, in conjunction with the Cities of Spokane and Spokane Valley, will use this funding to address these problems. First, Spokane Transit Authority will build a nearly five-mile multimodal route serving 5th Avenue, Harston Avenue, and 8th Avenue. This route will connect Liberty and Edgecliff parks and allow easier transportation east-west. To remedy the physical barriers separating North and South Spokane, Spokane Transit Authority will construct three pedestrian bridges over I-90, allowing ease of movement between North and South Spokane. This new ease of movement will better connect residents to jobs, parks, education, healthcare, and other essential services that historically have not been available.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of the Spokane Transit Authority's application to the 2023 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Grant Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maria Cantwell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4704

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET
HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR,
AND PENSIONS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

October 5, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write in support of an application submitted by Spokane Transit in collaboration with the Cities of Spokane and Spokane Valley for the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods (RCN) program*. The Cities are seeking RCN funding to support the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) Project.

The East Central and West Spokane Valley neighborhoods have long been impacted by Interstate 90 (I-90) and the lack of investment in multimodal infrastructure. As a result, the neighborhoods lack an interconnected multimodal network that provides residents access to essential public services, parks, businesses, places of worship, and other community resources.

The LEIA project will modify an existing five mile corridor to increase accessibility, improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, and connect two of the region's parks: Liberty and Edgecliff. North-South connections along the corridor will connect to WSDOT's North Spokane Corridor and three pedestrian bridges over I-90, reconnecting neighborhoods currently cut off by the freeway barrier.

The LEIA project would rectify many lingering impacts of I-90 on surrounding communities by making significant multimodal investments to improve safety and increase access across the greater Spokane region.

Thank you for your consideration of Spokane Transit's application. Please contact Bree Rabourn in my Seattle office at 206-553-0724 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Patty Murray
United States Senator

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

October 17, 2023

COUNTIES:

ADAMS
ASOTIN
COLUMBIA
FERRY
FRANKLIN
GARFIELD
LINCOLN
PEND OREILLE
SPOKANE
STEVENS
WALLA WALLA
WHITMAN

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

RE: Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhood Access Grant Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

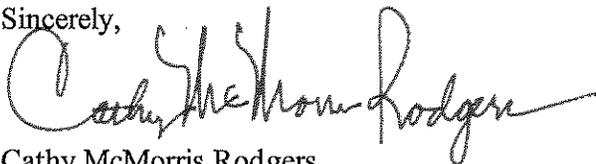
I am writing to request full and fair consideration of the Spokane Transit Authority's (STA) application for a Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhood Access Program grant to fund the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements for Accessibility project (LEIA).

The LEIA project is a partnership between the STA, the City of Spokane, and the City of Spokane Valley and proposes construction of sidewalks, bicycle facilities, crosswalks, lighting, traffic signals and transit stops in the East Central community. According to the applicant, the construction of Interstate 90 (I-90) in the 1950s introduced negative impacts on this historic neighborhood including increased traffic on the remaining north-south streets, removal of the original Liberty Park, and sub-standard pedestrian infrastructure.

The East Central neighborhood is a historically disadvantaged neighborhood located across four miles of city streets between Liberty and Edgecliff Parks. This project will help re-establish continuous and safe transportation routes throughout the neighborhood and create connectivity to jobs, schools, community gathering spaces, and neighborhood services. It will also help bring renewed cultural vibrancy to the community for all visitors and residents of Spokane to enjoy.

Thank you for your full and fair consideration of this application. If you have any questions, please contact Kristina Sabestinas in my Spokane office at kristina.sabestinas@mail.house.gov or 509-353-2374.

Sincerely,



Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Member of Congress

9/26/2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) Program Application to the
Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Please consider this letter of support from the Carl Maxey Center for the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) grant application from the Spokane Transit Authority, City of Spokane, and City of Spokane Valley. The Carl Maxey Center is a Black-led and Black-centered non-profit, based in East Central Spokane that strives to expand the educational, economic, and cultural opportunities in Spokane. The CMC advocates on the behalf of Spokane's African American/Black community members. The collaborative effort represented by this grant application represents a generational opportunity to reconnect communities impacted by construction of Interstate 90 (I-90) in Spokane and Spokane Valley. Construction of I-90 ruptured north-south community connectivity due construction impacts as well as the scale of the facility, including retaining walls, high-speed frontage roads and extended access ramps. The freeway displaced residences, businesses, gathering places and a premier public park. I-90 disrupted daily travel patterns of residents to businesses, places of worship, schools, community services, and parks. This disruption accelerated disinvestment in the East Central and Edgecliff neighborhoods, which represented the highest concentration of immigrants and African American Communities in Spokane.

Through the resilience of dedicated local business owners, neighborhood leaders and community organizations, including the Carl Maxey Center, these neighborhoods maintained a foundation of social and political cohesion. By supporting this grant, the Neighborhood Access & Equity program can advance the promise offered by the East Central and Edgecliff neighborhoods.

Respectfully,

Shari

Shari Williams-Clarke, PhD

Executive Director
The Carl Maxey Center
3114 E. 5th Avenue Spokane, WA 99202
(509) 319-5234
drshari@carlmaxeycenter.org

September 27, 2023

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

Re: Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) Program Application to the
Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) supports the Spokane Transit Authority's request for the 2023 *Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program - Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements for Accessibility (LEIA) Project*.

Acknowledging the construction of the Interstate 90 in Spokane, Washington during the late 1950's resulted in the physical, social, and economical bifurcation of historically marginalized, underserved, diverse, working-class communities, WSDOT supports efforts to prioritize multimodal transportation equity solutions in disadvantage communities, specifically communities surrounding the interstate and US 395 North Spokane Corridor, currently under construction. WSDOT supports coordinated transportation improvements that aim to improve multimodal accessibility to daily needs such as jobs, education, healthcare, food, and recreation. Elements of the proposed LEIA project will align with and advance current and planned WSDOT transportation efforts to restore north-south connectivity across the interstate.

Investment in accessible multi-modal connectivity in neighborhoods divided by Interstate 90, particularly East Central is an important way to provide restorative outcomes that will benefit the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Roger Millar, PE, FASCE, AICP
Secretary of Transportation



East Central Neighborhood Council

2202 E Sprague Ave, Suite 1, Spokane, WA 99202

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary, US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

20 September 2023

Re: Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) Program Application to the
Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Please consider this letter of support from the East Central Neighborhood Council for the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) grant application from the Spokane Transit Authority, City of Spokane, and City of Spokane Valley. The East Central Neighborhood Council is a citizen-led volunteer group of people who live, work, and do business in the neighborhood, and advocates on the behalf of our community members. The collaborative effort represented by this grant application represents a generational opportunity to reconnect communities impacted by construction of Interstate 90 (I-90) in Spokane and Spokane Valley.

Construction of I-90 divided north-south community connectivity due construction impacts as well as the scale of the facility, including retaining walls, high-speed frontage roads and extended access ramps. The freeway displaced residences, businesses, gathering places and a premier public park.

Through the resilience of dedicated local business owners, neighborhood leaders and community organizations, including the East Central Neighborhood Council, these neighborhoods maintained a foundation of social and political cohesion. By supporting this grant, the Neighborhood Access & Equity program can restore the promise offered by the East Central and Edgecliff neighborhoods.

The City of Spokane has committed to partnering with our Neighborhood Council throughout the subsequent planning and design processes, and we look forward to engaging with this effort.

Respectfully,

Doug Trudeau
Chairman
East Central Neighborhood Council

September 22, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590

Re: Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) Application to the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

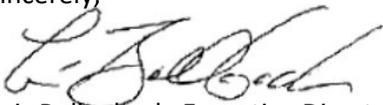
The Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Spokane County, Washington. SRTC is pleased to express our unanimous support for the application submitted by Spokane Transit Authority to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program for the **Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements for Accessibility (LEIA) Project**. This project is consistent with the goals and guiding principles of SRTC's Horizon 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and will be added to our Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) immediately if funding is made available.

The Spokane Transit Authority is partnering with the Cities of Spokane and Spokane Valley to construct multimodal transportation facilities that will reconnect one of our region's most divided, disadvantaged, and overburdened communities and improve access to jobs, groceries, parks, education, healthcare, and other everyday services. East Central is one of the oldest and most diverse neighborhoods in greater Spokane and has been recognized in the Equity Planning Framework activities of SRTC. The neighborhood's decline began after the first World War when the Federal Housing Administration's "redlining" practices isolated and depressed the community. Then, in the 1950s, the Federal Highways Administration's building of Interstate 90 further divided the remaining sense of community and belonging. Since then, Interstate 90 has served as a barrier to residential neighborhoods along 5th and 8th Avenues between Liberty Park and Edgecliff Park. People have also been limited in their east-west access on the south side of the interstate because of under-developed transportation facilities that primarily focus on motorized vehicles.

The LEIA Project will deliver the safe and accessible connectivity that has been historically limited in this community. The project will provide close to 5 miles of an accessible, equitable, and continuous multimodal route serving 5th Ave., Hartson Ave., and 8th Ave. while connecting two regional parks: Liberty and Edgecliff. North-south connections from the LEIA project will connect to WSDOT's North Spokane Corridor and its three pedestrian bridges over Interstate 90, reconnecting the neighborhoods over the freeway barrier and supporting improved access to small local businesses. The proposed improvements will benefit the neighborhood by providing: sidewalks, paths and bicycle facilities; safe street crossings and intersection controls; lighting and improved access to transit.

SRTC appreciates your consideration of the LEIA project to address issues of equity in the East Central Community.

Sincerely,



Lois Bollenback, Executive Director
Spokane Regional Transportation Council

SRTC MEMBER AGENCIES

City of Airway Heights | City of Cheney | City of Deer Park | City of Medical Lake | City of Millwood | City of Spokane | City of Spokane Valley
Kalispel Tribe of Indians | Spokane County | Spokane Transit Authority | Spokane Tribe of Indians | Town of Fairfield | Town of Latah
Town of Rockford | Town of Spangle | Town of Waverly | Washington State Dept of Transportation | Washington State Transportation Commission



September 20, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) Program Application to the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing on behalf of the Spokane Public Library to express our enthusiastic support for the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) grant application submitted jointly by the Spokane Transit Authority, City of Spokane, and City of Spokane Valley to the Neighborhood Access & Equity program. We firmly believe that this grant aligns seamlessly with the mission of the Spokane Public Library and the betterment of our community.

The proposed Liberty to Edgecliff accessibility improvements hold profound significance for the East Central Neighborhood, particularly the Liberty Park Library. Situated within Liberty Park and in close proximity to the heart of the project corridor, our library serves as a pivotal hub and communal space for the neighborhood's residents. The enhancements slated for crosswalks, sidewalks, and connectivity directly underpin our library's mission to be a central gathering point and a catalyst for community engagement.

The new Liberty Park Library is an extension of Spokane Public Library's enduring commitment to the East Central Neighborhood. Previously located adjacent to the East Central Community Center on 5th Avenue, our new facility offers an array of amenities, including free meeting spaces, a children's playspace, a curated art collection, and a serene reading room. It is a space designed to cater to the diverse needs and interests of our community members.

This grant application represents a rare opportunity to reunite the East Central Neighborhood, which was fractured by the construction of I-90. This historic division disrupted a close-knit working-class community, displacing homes, businesses, gathering places, and a cherished public park. Thanks to the tenacity of dedicated community members, including the Spokane Public Library, our neighborhood has maintained a strong foundation of social and political cohesion. We are now poised to seize this grant opportunity to heal and rejuvenate our community.

In closing, we want to express our gratitude for considering this joint application and our unwavering support for the proposed efforts. The Spokane Public Library eagerly anticipates actively participating as a community member in the planning and execution of these vital projects. Together, we can create a more accessible, cohesive, and vibrant East Central Neighborhood that aligns perfectly with our library's mission to serve as a beacon of learning, connection, and community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Andrew Chanse", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Andrew Chanse
Executive Director
Spokane Public Library
906 West Main Avenue
Spokane, WA 99201
achanse@spokanelibrary.org

Superintendent's Office
200 North Bernard Street
Spokane, WA 99201-0282

phone (509) 354-7364
fax (509) 354-5994
www.spokaneschools.org



September 26, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing in support of the application submitted by Spokane Transit Authority to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Program for the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements for Accessibility (LEIA) Project.

Spokane Transit Authority is partnering with the Cities of Spokane and Spokane Valley to construct multimodal transportation facilities that will reconnect one of our region's most divided, disadvantaged, and overburdened communities and improve access to jobs, groceries, parks, education, healthcare, and other everyday services.

East Central is one of the oldest and most diverse neighborhoods in greater Spokane. Starting in the late 1800s, working-class immigrants lived and grew their families, businesses, and communities here. The neighborhood's decline began after the first World War when the Federal Housing Administration's "redlining" practices isolated and depressed the community. Then, in the 1950s, the Federal Highways Administration's building of Interstate 90 further divided the remaining sense of community and belonging. Since then, Interstate 90 has served as a barrier to the extensive residential neighborhoods along 5th and 8th Avenues between Liberty Park and Edgecliff Park. People have been limited in their east-west access on the south side of the interstate because of under-developed transportation facilities that primarily focus on vehicles. Further, residents have been limited in their north-south access because of the physical barrier created by the freeway.

The transportation barriers in the neighborhood have long been a factor for our students and families. Spokane Public Schools has multiple schools in the vicinity of I-90, including the Libby Center and Scott Elementary School. Unsafe arterial crossings, missing sidewalks, and limited bicycle facilities reduce accessibility of our existing schools. The principals who lead our five elementary schools that serve the neighborhood along I-90 have all expressed strong interest in improving accessibility and safety to benefit everyone.

The LEIA Project will finally deliver the accessible connectivity that has been historically roadblocked for this community. The project delivers almost five miles of an accessible, equitable, and continuous multimodal route serving 5th Ave., Hartson Ave., and 8th Ave. while connecting two regional parks: Liberty and Edgecliff. North-south connections from the LEIA project will connect to WSDOT's North Spokane

Corridor and its three pedestrian bridges over Interstate 90, reconnecting the neighborhoods over the freeway barrier. The proposed improvements will benefit all users.

I respectfully request that you give full and fair consideration to the LEIA Project. This multi-agency collaboration will reconnect these historic neighborhoods and diverse communities along Interstate 90 by building safe and continuous routes for people of all ages and abilities to safely walk, bike, and roll to transit stops and adjacent community destinations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Adam Swinyard', written in a cursive style.

Adam Swinyard
Superintendent
Spokane Public Schools



September 27, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) Program Application to the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Spokane Conservation District supports the request for funds for the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements to Accessibility (LEIA) grant application from the Spokane Transit Authority, City of Spokane, and City of Spokane Valley.

Spokane Conservation District's mission is *To help protect, conserve, and enhance natural resources. To promote the sustainable use of natural resources within Spokane County.* In 2025, Spokane Conservation District plans to open the region's first permanent farmer's market. The centrally located market is located on a 2-lane street without sidewalks, without bike lanes, and only served by an unimproved transit stop (designated only by a posted bus stop sign). The proposed new sidewalks, bike facilities, bus stops, and improved street crossings all promote an active, safe, healthy, and connected community. Collectively, the addition of our farmer's market looks to support our Liberty to Edgecliff neighborhoods' effort to restore a sense of community.

This partnership project supports a connected community; something that has historically not been available to our neighborhoods. Please join the Spokane Conservation District to help offset the immense burden caused by vehicle-centric infrastructure. Together, we can restore access to everyone and improve the health, safety, and prosperity of our people. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Vicki C. Carter

Spokane Conservation District



September 22, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce, I am writing to express our strong support for the Spokane Transit Authority's (STA) application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Reconnecting Communities & Neighborhoods Program for the Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements for Accessibility Project.

The Liberty to Edgecliff Improvements for Accessibility (LEIA) Project, a collaborative effort between Spokane Transit Authority and the Cities of Spokane and Spokane Valley, aims to address the division, disadvantage, and overburdening experienced by communities along STA's Route 94. The project is poised to make a profound impact by investing in capital construction, significantly enhancing access to essential services such as employment opportunities, groceries, recreational facilities, education, and healthcare.

Specifically, the LEIA project will provide safer, improved access to critical community assets like the Seven Nations Healing Lodge, Liberty Park Library, Scott Elementary, and the future site of Spokane's year-round Farmer's Market.

The communities most central to this application, the Edgecliff Neighborhood in the City of Spokane Valley and the East Central Neighborhood in the City of Spokane, bear the weight of persistent poverty and historical disenfranchisement, as evidenced by their census tracts. The LEIA Project represents a vital step toward removing barriers to economic development for these communities and their residents.

Central to this Chamber's full support of this application is the fact that the LEIA Project will deliver almost 5 miles of an accessible, equitable, and uninterrupted multimodal route that parallels Sprague Ave, and connects to the thriving commercial corridor where the Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce is located.

We respectfully request your full and fair consideration of the LEIA Project. This multi-agency collaboration is poised to reconnect the burdened neighborhoods south of Interstate 90 by establishing safe and continuous routes that facilitate interaction with the community for people of all ages and abilities. With the support of the USDOT, the delivery of new, equitable, and accessible infrastructure will undoubtedly foster growth and prosperity for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Lance Beck'.

Lance Beck
President and CEO

10808 E. Sprague Ave. | Spokane Valley, WA 99206
(509) 924-4994 | info@spokanevalleychamber.org
www.spokanevalleychamber.org

Genuine

Inclusive

Friendly

Credible

Impactful