



February 2, 2010

CITY HALL

1110 West Capitol Avenue
West Sacramento, CA 95691

City Council
City Manager
City Clerk
Human Resources
(916) 617-4500

Building
(916) 617-4683

Public Works &
Community Development
Planning
Engineering
(916) 617-4645

Finance
(916) 617-4575

Housing &
Community Investment
(916) 617-4555

Information Technology
(916) 617-4520

Parks & Recreation
(916) 617-4620

Redevelopment
Economic Development
(916) 617-4535

Refuse & Recycling
(916) 617-4590

Utility Billing
(916) 617-4589

FIRE

2040 Lake Washington Boulevard
West Sacramento, CA 95691

Administration
(916) 617-4600

POLICE

550 Jefferson Boulevard
West Sacramento, CA 95605

Administration
(916) 617-4900

Code Enforcement
(916) 617-4925

PUBLIC WORKS

1951 South River Road
West Sacramento, CA 95691
(916) 617-4850

Mr. Peter Rogoff, Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration
East Building
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Mr. Leslie Rogers, Regional Administrator
FTA Region IX
201 Mission Street
Suite 1650
San Francisco, CA 94105-1839

RE: Downtown/Riverfront Streetcar
Urban Circulator Grant Application

Dear Mr. Rogoff and Mr. Rogers:

We serve on Downtown/Riverfront Streetcar Policy Steering Committee and on the city council of West Sacramento. We are writing to urge your approval of the Urban Circulator Grant application for this project, to communicate to you how important streetcar is to this community and to the region, and to give you our commitment that the city's efforts and resources will be dedicated to successfully completing the project.

To indicate how much this means to West Sacramento, in November 2008, the voters in this community overwhelmingly approved a sales tax measure to support streetcar operations and flood protection improvements. Residents were convinced of the necessity and value of streetcar and put their faith in its eventual arrival, even though preliminary engineering and environmental review were still in progress. The voters of West Sacramento recognized how important streetcar is to achieving our vision; that's reflected in the council's priorities, placing streetcar development at the top of the list along with flood protection.

Although a relatively small city of 45,000, we are a major employment center with 40,000 jobs. We also have a high percentage of residents living in poverty, are designated as an enterprise zone, and are currently experiencing unemployment rates in excess of 15%. We are a community of relatively affordable housing that has been hard hit by the foreclosure crisis. But we are making great progress toward and remain committed to working together to redevelop our riverfront as a model of smart growth,

applying innovative land use and transportation planning techniques to building a dense, mixed use urban center.

Key to that vision is attracting major employers to new office buildings. We already have two major office buildings in the Washington Specific Plan/Raley's Landing area, but hope to attract more there and in the Bridge District. The State Department of General Services published the Sacramento Region State Office Planning Study in December 2008, and projected the need for 7.8 million square feet of office space in the Sacramento region in the near and mid-term. The West Sacramento riverfront areas were identified as prime locations for future state office buildings because they met the criteria of having existing and planned transit stations and transit oriented land use and development plans, and are located close to the State Capitol building and the existing concentration of state offices.

The study specifically recognized that potential state office sites must have rail links and connections to the regional transportation network in order to be viable. The Washington Specific Plan area and Bridge District (formerly known as the Triangle Specific Plan Area) along with sites in downtown Sacramento and the Railyards redevelopment area were identified as the primary opportunity areas for the next ten years. The selection of each of these areas was based on the prospect for a network of rail transportation available for circulation to and within the urban core.

The Office Planning Study report notes that "favorable conditions for future State office facility in the dense core of the (Bridge District) include parcel size, development potential, and transit access." The report notes that the specific plans and the Sacramento Riverfront Master Plan "seek to create this area as a center of regional importance with mixed-use development, significant infrastructure improvements, and better connections to the riverfront and Sacramento." One of those connections is streetcar. This is why we have required new office and mixed-use development proximate to the streetcar route to contribute to its development.

The Bridge District is planned for up to 7 million square feet of office, hotel, retail and commercial uses and 5,000 housing units; the Washington area, including Raley's Landing, could accommodate an additional 1.2 million square feet of office and 850 housing units, plus hotel and retail. The adjacent Downtown/Civic Center is developing with civic amenities like a community theatre and library and college. It already has a full range of daily services like supermarkets and drugstores, and is planned for additional walkable residential development.


Development of these riverfront neighborhoods is key not just to this community's vision of a mixed use, walk and bike friendly, modern urban core. It's also integral to the Riverfront Master Plan, jointly adopted by the cities of West Sacramento and Sacramento. And it is central to the Blueprint strategy for the entire region. West Sacramento has been recognized as the model of the Blueprint plan, actively pursuing the ideals embodied in the plan.

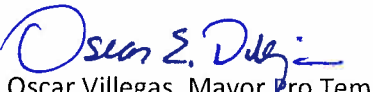
Both the State of California and our metropolitan planning organization are committed to a sustainable development strategy that directs a large proportion of the region's population and jobs growth to our city and the urban core for which the first phases of streetcar will serve as a transit spine. Together, the state and region are directing nearly \$30 million in 2010-11 for priority infrastructure projects within a half-mile of the planned streetcar line so support our collective vision.

This is the model community, in the model region. If you are hoping that the Urban Circulator Grant and the Livability Initiative serve as a platform, and provide shining examples of how urban development can achieve a sustainable future, this is the place to put your investment.

The proposed project is just the beginning of a bigger network, but it has to start somewhere. This is the place for great beginnings. We urge your support of the grant application.

Sincerely,


Christopher Cabaldon, Mayor
City of West Sacramento


Oscar Villegas, Mayor Pro Tem
City of West Sacramento

Link to State Office Planning Study Summary of Findings:

<http://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dgs/pio/SOPS/Ch4.pdf>

Testimony before the US Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee on "Public Transportation: a Core Climate Solution."

http://banking.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.LiveStream&Hearing_id=5469b84c-73cb-4087-a1f5-57c49f21ae82