



May 9, 2025

TO: Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez,

My name is Nansi Lopez, and I am the Policy Director at Centro Cultural. I am writing on behalf of Centro Cultural to express strong support for \$50 million in state bonding for the Tualatin Valley (TV) Highway Bus Rapid Transit Project.

Centro Cultural is the oldest and longest-serving Latino culturally specific organization in the state of Oregon. It empowers Latino families and diverse communities by removing barriers, fostering well-being, and building power to achieve economic prosperity. Centro centers the experiences of those most impacted in our communities in everything we do, with a commitment to reducing barriers at every level of our work.

Centro Cultural supports the request for \$50 million in state bonding for the Tualatin Valley (TV) Highway Bus Rapid Transit Project. This project will provide essential safety and transit service improvements to an area that has experienced years of disinvestment. **NOW** is the time to support this investment in TV HWY.

TV Highway is a major arterial road in Washington County that connects schools, shopping centers, and a variety of businesses, both small and large. It carries significant traffic, including motor vehicles and transit trips from TriMet. This road serves as an essential connector for communities such as Beaverton, Aloha, Hillsboro, Cornelius, and Forest Grove.

The TV Highway corridor is home to some of the region's and the state's most racially and ethnically diverse communities, many of whom do not have access to a car. TV Highway is served by the second-highest ridership line in the entire TriMet system (Line 57). The fatal crash rate of TV Highway is twice the regional average, and more than half of the fatal crashes between 2017-2021 involved pedestrians.

Since 2022, The TV HWY Steering Committee has met to develop a community-led project that aims to use public funds efficiently for safety and transit improvements. Concurrently, the TV Highway Equity Coalition, led by Unite Oregon, was established to inform the planning process and promote the adoption of the Equitable Development



Strategy. Organizations such as Centro Cultural, Adelante Mujeres, and APANO have contributed to both the Steering Committee and the Equitable Development Strategy, ensuring that we uplift the voices of our most marginalized and vulnerable communities, who are not represented in decision-making processes. Centro's role in this process has been to center the voices of those who use the corridor. We've shared the stories of community members who have voiced their safety concerns and proposed solutions for enhancing the TV HWY corridor. Our comprehensive tour of the entire corridor, including a walk-through, has given us a direct experience of the existing dangers and areas that need improvement.

This project would bring Frequent Express bus service to TV Highway, giving riders a reliable, fast, and comfortable ride with buses arriving every 12 minutes. The project includes covered bus shelters, better lighting, and real-time arrival information at all stations. Every bus station will be paired with a crossing, and four major intersections will be rebuilt entirely for pedestrian and driver safety.

The local governments of Metro, TriMet, Washington County, and the Cities of Beaverton, Hillsboro, Forest Grove, and Cornelius are at the table to provide \$100M to TV Highway, 1/3 of the total cost of \$300M. The state's investment of \$50M will close the gap required to leverage \$150M in federal dollars. TV Highway would see drastically improved travel conditions, delay, and safety for all travelers along a major transportation connector in Washington County.

Local governments are committed to contributing 67% of the state and local match required for the federal Capital Investment Grants (CIG) program. There is strong partnership between the local governments and the community on this project to improve a state highway in dire need of investment – we need the state's help to bring TV Highway to the finish line.

Please support \$50 million in state bonding for the Tualatin Valley (TV) Highway Bus Rapid Transit Project. The communities of the TV HWY Corridor need you to show up in strong support of this request - it's long overdue.

Sincerely,

Nansi López | *Policy Director, Centro Cultural*