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October 11, 2011

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

RE: Downtown Los Angeles Streetcar Application – TIGER 2011 Grant Application

Honorable Secretary LaHood:

The Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council (“DLANC”) submits this letter of support for the application by the City of Los Angeles for a grant for the Downtown Los Angeles Streetcar through the U.S. Department of Transportation’s 2011 “Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery” Discretionary Grant program. DLANC has consistently supported the proposed Streetcar as a key project for both the improvement of mobility within Downtown Los Angeles, and to enhance several on-going economic development efforts aimed at the revitalization of the central city, including the City’s Bringing Back Broadway Initiative.

DLANC believes the L.A. Streetcar will be critical to continuing the redevelopment of Downtown Los Angeles that has occurred over the last decade, adding new residents and attracting a wide variety of businesses to the urban core. This renaissance continues to transform Downtown Los Angeles into a true urban center with many cultural, civic and entertainment destinations, as well as being Southern California’s primary employment center. Although this revitalization has involved major investments by both the public and private sectors, there have been no similar improvements in transit infrastructure.

The proposed Streetcar is the only project designed to address the permanent need for a circulator service within Downtown Los Angeles. Combined with improved regional transit options, the Streetcar will serve as a “last mile” solution to connect workers, residents and visitors from high-speed rail, light rail and bus transit lines to Downtown’s cultural, entertainment, civic and workplace destinations and institutions without the use of a single occupancy vehicle.

The extensive public outreach conducted to date for the Downtown L.A. Streetcar demonstrates the high level of interest and support for a new circulator system. The strong support for the Downtown L.A. Streetcar is not only a function of the high demand for new transportation options triggered by urban revitalization, but also by a recognition that the Streetcar is a sustainable, pedestrian-friendly system that has been demonstrated to promote walkability and active sidewalks as well as an efficient means of transportation. The Streetcar will also improve the mobility of the large population of Downtown users without access to a car, including seniors, persons with disabilities, and the residents of the many affordable housing options within Downtown.

Finally, the Downtown L.A. Streetcar can enhance the continuing economic development efforts in our urban center. The proposed Streetcar route will provide access to numerous development opportunity sites within Downtown, including vacant and under-utilized historic properties located in two National Historic Districts. DLANC believes the Project will enhance the pedestrian and transit experience along historic Broadway and improve antiquated infrastructure along one of the City's oldest historic corridors. These public realm improvements will encourage the use of transit, biking and walking, by providing user-friendly accessibility and enhanced transit and pedestrian experience.

Moreover, increased transit, bicycle and pedestrian use promoted by the Streetcar will help the City of Los Angeles achieve compliance with air quality and climate change goals by reducing vehicle trips and emissions from automobiles, especially as Downtown continues to attract new residents, workers and visitors.

We strongly encourage the Department of Transportation to prioritize this Project as critical to the revitalization of Downtown, and approve the 2011 TIGER grant application from the City of Los Angeles.

Thank you.

Very truly yours,



Patricia Berman
DLANC President

Very truly yours,



Shiraz D. Tangri
DLANC Planning & Land Use Committee Co-Chair

CC: Los Angeles City Councilmember José Huizar (Council District 14)
Jessica Wethington McLean, Executive Director (Bringing Back Broadway)