



March 16, 2024

The Honorable Derek Kilmer
United States House of Representatives
2059 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-4706

Dear Representative Kilmer,

The Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO) is pleased to submit this letter in support of the city of Port Townsend's **SR 20/Mill Road Gateway Roundabout** funding request. Port Townsend, in partnership with Jefferson County and WSDOT, are working together to address outstanding safety and congestion issues resulting from outdated infrastructure decisions made decades ago.

PRTPO recognizes the collaboration and partnership between local and state agencies in their pursuit of this project. This is a gateway between urban Port Townsend and rural Jefferson County. SR 20 serves the Port Townsend Ferry and is designated by the state legislature as Highway of Statewide Significance. The Olympic Discovery Trail, the crown jewel in this region's regional trail system, intersects SR 20 in this vicinity. This is also an important service corridor for Jefferson Transit. Nearly every transit trip begins or ends with a pedestrian trip; lack of safe pedestrian facilities creates a barrier for those who need transit the most. PRTPO supports the efforts of local and state agencies to retrofit and repurpose old infrastructure built for a different era into vibrant multimodal corridors where walking, biking, and transit opportunities flourish as the community grows over time.

This funding will be used to complete the design, environmental process, and right-of-way acquisition needed to realign several close and intersecting facilities with a roundabout. Modern roundabouts increase operational efficiency and business access for vehicles while greatly enhancing safety for all modes of travel. Speed reduction is built right into their design. This not only improves safety for everyone but also slows traffic to a more appropriate speed for an urban setting, an important feature for walkable streets. And in a highly rural region where extended power outages are common, the ability of a roundabout to function effectively and efficiently, no matter what, is an additional advantage. Finally, this project has direct benefits for freight mobility and economic growth by eliminating turning conflicts and improving operational flows for trucks serving the paper mill, the Port of Port Townsend and Boat Building Center, as well as the growing industrial center. Completion of this work will leave the project partnership well-poised to pursue implementation grants by providing them with a compelling, construction-ready project.

This project advances core aims of PRTPO's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) with its multimodal focus on safe and efficient mobility for all and ever-increasing alignment between transportation, land use, and economic objectives. PRTPO commits to moving this project expeditiously into the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) upon notice of funding award so the city can obligate funds and begin work as soon as the funds are available.

On behalf of PRTPO and our regional partners, I urge your support for this important project.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin".

Lindsey Schromen-Wawrin
Chair, Peninsula Regional Transportation Planning Organization