

April 16, 2014

Office of Infrastructure Finance and Innovation
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington D.C. 20590

RE: *TIGER Letter of Support: Gorst Transportation Corridor Planning Study*

Dear Sir or Madam,

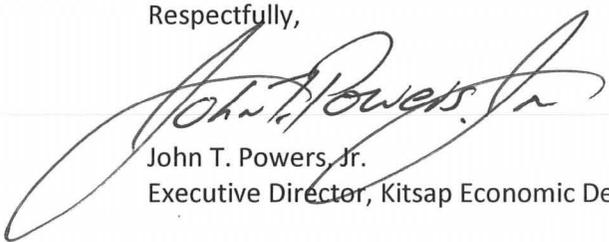
I am writing to support the City of Bremerton's TIGER grant application for corridor transportation planning in the Gorst area of Kitsap County, Washington. Traffic in the Gorst area is exceeding the capacity of the system during the morning and evening commutes, causing significant travel delays for workers and visitors. This critical transportation corridor links Mason and Kitsap Counties with I-5, and is at the junction of SR-16 and SR-3. Kitsap County is home to over one-third of the region's defense workforce with more 30,000 civilian and active duty employees, as well as 2,500+ defense contract workers, with a \$6.1B economic impact.

In addition to linking the cities within Kitsap County to Mason and Pierce counties, the Gorst corridor provides access to the many installations of Naval Base Kitsap, home to the 30,000 workers noted above. Closely adjacent to the west, SR-3 serves the South Kitsap Industrial Area (SKIA), one of only eight designated Manufacturing/Industrial Centers in the Central Puget Sound region. This important regional designation is conferred by the Puget Sound Regional Council. SKIA is expected to be home to 10,000 additional jobs within the next 20 years. The Gorst Corridor also serves as the route for the majority of Kitsap companies to send their products overseas through the Port of Tacoma.

This planning effort is strongly supported by the State of Washington as well as local jurisdictions, evidenced by a \$500,000 planning effort, funded by the State of Washington to improve the SR-3/SR-304 interchange serving Naval Base Kitsap. Further, several local agencies (Kitsap Transit; City of Port Orchard; City of Bremerton; Port of Bremerton; Kitsap County) and the Washington State Department of Transportation recently collaborated to provide the necessary grant match on a \$454,000 federal study of the Gorst corridor. In total, this partnership provided \$54,000 to ensure the study effort could go forward.

This TIGER planning grant will take the output of the study efforts listed above, and complete an Interchange Justification Report, providing the foundational basis for the final NEPA work. This next step in improving Kitsap's link to our Manufacturing/Industrial Center, rail access and deep port access is vital to our community's economic development growth and future.

Respectfully,



John T. Powers, Jr.
Executive Director, Kitsap Economic Development Alliance