



BENTON-FRANKLIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

1622 Terminal Dr. • Richland, WA 99354
<http://bfcog.us>

Ph: (509)943-9185
Fax: (509)943-6756

October 10, 2017

The Honorable Matt Watkins, Mayor of Pasco
Pasco City Hall
525 N. Third Avenue
Pasco, WA 99301

Re: City of Pasco, Lewis Street Overcrossing

Dear Mayor Watkins,

The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCG), as Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Transportation Management Area (TMA) for the Kennewick-Pasco-Richland Urbanized Area is writing in support of the application submitted for the 2017 Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant by the City of Pasco for the Lewis Street Overcrossing Project.

The Lewis Street Overcrossing project is consistent with the Goals and Objects of the 2017 BFCG Metropolitan/Regional Transportation Plan and also identified as a project of regional significance.

Lewis Street connects the east and west regions of Pasco bisected by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) yard. Built in 1937, the 79-year-old underpass fails to meet current design standards and is in serious need of reconstruction. As the primary link across the BNSF yard south of Interstate 182, Lewis Street is vital to connecting and enhancing all aspects of the Pasco community. An overcrossing to replace this undercrossing is partially funded and would provide a critical link for all transportation modes, including a safe connection for bicycles and pedestrians and benefit industrial growth in Pasco.

The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments Board has recognized and prioritized the value of this project by directing limited regional Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds to the project. We were pleased that the Washington State legislature made a \$15 million investment toward the project's construction when it passed the strategic Connecting Washington package in 2015.

Unfortunately, fully funding a vital improvement like the Lewis Street Overcrossing is far beyond the capacity of our programs.

The City of Pasco is working hard to assemble the remaining needed funds to begin construction in 2019, but needs help to do so. I urge your careful consideration of the City's funding request and your partnership with the City and Washington State to complete this important project.

Sincerely,

Bob Koch, Board President
Benton-Franklin Council of Governments