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August 11, 2009

Mr. Ray LaHood, Secretary of Transportation
c/o TIGER Discretionary Grants Program Manager
via email at: TIGERGrants@dot.gov
U.S. Department of Transportation
Washington, DC

RE: Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery
(TIGER) grant application for Ports to Plains Coalition/MOTRAN Alliance.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Lubbock Metropolitan Planning Organization and its Policy Board are pleased to send this letter of support for the above referenced TIGER grant application on behalf of the Ports to Plains Coalition/MOTRAN Alliance.

The partnership of the Ports to Plains Coalition and the MOTRAN Alliance propose to widen State 349 between Lamesa, Texas and Midland, Texas. This sixty mile stretch of State 349 is an overlapping stretch of the Ports to Plains Corridor and the La Entrada al Pacifico Corridor sponsored by the MOTRAN Alliance. The project contemplates a full four-lane divided connection between the three largest metropolitan areas in the region – Amarillo, Lubbock and Midland-Odessa.

The partnership, both representing national high priority corridor designations in their own right, will provide linkages to Mexico and Canada and other major east-west routes across the United States, thus enhancing the overall trade potential with Mexico and Canada, not to say the least about enhancing intrastate trade in Texas and interstate trade in the United States.

This major partnership project clearly demonstrates that it has the potential to deliver programmatic results (contributes to the economic competitiveness of America, contributes to the livability in communities across the nation by enhancing user mobility through the creation of a more convenient transportation facility), economic stimulus (demonstrating strong collaboration among a broad range of participants to construct sixty miles of roadway), and achieve long-term public benefits (reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, enhance modal connectivity and reduce congestion, improve energy efficiency), as stipulated by the grant guidelines.

I trust you will agree that this highway widening project proposed by the partnership of the Ports to Plains Coalition and the MOTRAN Alliance meets all the program guidelines and is a candidate for priority consideration.

Sincerely,

John Leonard, III, Chairman
Transportation Policy Committee
Lubbock Metropolitan Planning Organization