

February 8, 2019

Secretary Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re:Support for the Apple Capital Loop INFRA Grant

Dear Secretary Chao:

As the leader of the major healthcare delivery system in North Central Washington, headquartered in Wenatchee, I am writing to urge support for the City of Wenatchee's application for the Apple Capital Loop INFRA grant. At Confluence Health we believe this grant, if provided, will help with the work needed to improve our transportation infrastructure and significantly support the further growth and development of our region for years to come.

The Wenatchee Valley is located in North Central Washington State. This is a predominantly rural area, very near the geographic center of the State, comprised of river valleys surrounded by ridges and mountains, the vast majority of which is either State or Federal owned land. Located 150 miles east of Seattle, and 170 miles west of Spokane, Wenatchee is at the crossroads of highways going to those cities as well as north to Canada, and south to South Central Washington and Oregon. The City of Wenatchee serves as a key transportation hub regionally, and with its agricultural products nationally.

The Apple Capital Loop project is the best alternative developed following years of community discussion and planning by many stakeholders and members of the regional community. Land that is easily developed is limited due to the river valley geography and finding the best location for this transportation improvement effort was difficult and required compromise on all sides. The overarching goals of this project were to find a solution that would reliably improve traffic safety, individual and freight mobility, and provide congestion relief for the citizens and businesses of North Central Washington. Transportation is a fundamental piece of the infrastructure of any region/community.

This INFRA grant will be combined with more than \$100 million of other local public and private funding to complete the Apple Capital Loop. It will leverage more than \$200 million of investments by our agricultural sector in production, storage and transportation of perishable products that are consumed nationally and internationally.

Thank you for your consideration of this application. If you have additional questions I can help answer, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Rutherford', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Rutherford MD
CEO Confluence Health