



November 30, 2020

Bill Moad, Chairman
Idaho Transportation Board
3311 W. State Street
P.O Box 7129
Boise, ID 83707-1129

RE: Linder Road Overpass of Interstate 84

Dear Chair Moad:

As the population and transportation needs in Idaho and particularly the Treasure Valley grow, we want to thank you for your continued partnership and collaboration in solving Ada County's transportation needs. With Meridian serving as a central connection in the County, citizens continue to request more road improvements allowing more efficient north-south and east-west travel within the County for all users. Construction of an I-84 overpass at Linder Road will address significant transportation infrastructure needs in Ada County.

The County has added over 19,000 new dwelling units in the last three years. Meridian, itself, has added over 8,000 new dwelling units averaging a year-over year growth rate of about 7.2 percent. The City has also added over 3.4 million square feet of commercial space in the last three years. As Meridian and the County continue to grow, the transportation network will require expansion. It's no surprise that a recent survey conducted of Meridian residents showed that nearly 70% rated a Linder Road overpass as a high priority in the community.

Linder Road overpass represents one of three overpasses identified as a priority for the unfunded state system in the long-range plan, Communities in Motion 2040 2.0. Of those three projects, Linder Rd is the only one with no existing overpass. Additionally, the Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho (COMPASS) has provided preliminary modeling information and Ada County Highway District (ACHD) has done a preliminary evaluation for widening of Linder Road from Franklin over the Interstate to Overland Road.

As regional partners, we request that Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) Board consider this project for inclusion on the current Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) so that additional resources can be allocated for this project.

An extension of Linder Road over I-84 would provide greatly improved connectivity between north and south Meridian and afford another route for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians within the area. Moreover, by providing this connection it will alleviate growing congestion at the Ten Mile and Meridian Road Interchanges as vehicles are able to use this alternate route.

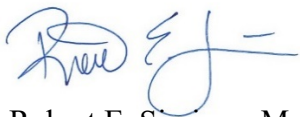
This will become critical in the coming years as Amazon and Federal Express are both building significant distributions centers on Franklin Road in Meridian between Linder and Ten Mile Roads, adjacent to the West Ada School District bus facility and Republic Services Meridian location with a transfer station. Amazon and Federal Express alone are projected to add over 1,700 vehicle trips per day onto the existing system.

This overpass would also alleviate existing barriers to efficient movement of people, goods, and services; requiring excessive out of direction travel and signal delays for local trips, reducing emergency response reliability and services levels, and creating unnecessary trips on adjacent I-84 interchanges. Regionally, this bridge would fill the last gap in the Linder Road corridor and would be the longest unbroken north-south arterial in Ada County. Unquestionably, a huge boost for commerce and travel interconnectivity.

Of note, we have shared our thoughts on this issue with the leadership at both Ada County and ACHD and as you can see by our jointly signed letter, that they support our effort in starting this conversation.

Thank you for your consideration of our request to include the Linder Road Overpass into the current STIP for planning, funding, and construction of this regionally important bridge is critical. We look forward to continuing this discussion and answer any questions you might have.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Simison, Mayor
City of Meridian



Kendra Kenyon, Chair
Ada County Commission



Mary May, President
Ada County Highway
District Commission

Cc: ITD Board
Ada County Commissioners
Ada County Highway District Commissioners
City of Meridian Councilmembers
Brian Ness, Idaho Transportation Department Director
Steve Rutherford, Ada County Chief Operating Officer
Bruce Wong, Ada County Highway District Director
Caleb Hood, City of Meridian Planning Manager