



COUNTY OF LAKE

Board of Supervisors

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September 19, 2023

RE: Reconnecting Communities Program – SR 53 improvements

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is written in support of the City of Clearlake's application for funding under the Reconnecting Communities Highways to Boulevards program. A project to develop safe and sustainable crossing opportunities across State Route (SR) 53 is important for the community as a means of overcoming historical barriers to access for residents of this rural and disadvantaged area.

The intention of the project will be to "reconnect" portions of the City that have been separated as a result of the existing highway. The need for safe crossings has been made clear from a history of collisions involving pedestrians or bicyclists attempting to access residential, commercial, and/or institutional services located on either side of SR 53. These include a number of key destinations located along the east side of the corridor, such as:

- One of the City's largest residential developments ("The Avenues");
- a Walmart shopping center;
- an Adventist Health hospital facility;
- several fast food dining establishment;
- the County courthouse;
- a complex of school facilities (middle school, high school, junior college);
- and the fully funded and soon-to-be constructed regional transit center,

-while much of the remainder of the City's housing, commercial/civic/recreational regions, and schools are situated on the west. The need for improved crossings is supported by a history of collision data and general safety concerns stressed by the community over the years.

While it is understood that the full scope of the project is yet to be determined and will ultimately be the product of an extensive community engagement process, the County of Lake fully supports the application and strongly encourages Caltrans to fund this important effort to provide better, safer and multi-modal access opportunities for members of the Clearlake community.

Respectively,

Jessica Pyska, Chair
Lake County Board of Supervisors