April 3, 2019

C-TRAN
8700 NE Vancouver Mall Dr.
Vancouver, WA 98662

Dear C-TRAN Board of Directors,

As executive director of Southwest Washington Accountable Community of Health (SWACH) and the Healthy Living Collaborative (HLC), I am writing to urge C-TRAN to maintain its service on bus route 39.

Route 39 is a crucial transportation line for residents of Vancouver’s Rose Village neighborhood. Rose Village’s nearly 5,500 residents represent a marginalized and often underserved population: 24% live below the poverty line, 50% spend more than a third of their income on rent, only 17% of adults have a bachelor’s degree. The area is relatively diverse, with one in three residents identifying themselves as a person of color. Rose Village is also home to many seniors and individuals experiencing disability or chronic disease.

These community members rely on route 39 to access a wide variety of essential services. The route provides affordable, safe and ADA-compliant transportation to everything from healthcare services and schools, to healthy foods. That includes PeaceHealth Family Medicine, CVAB, the VA, The Free Clinic, Jim Parsley Community Center, Boys and Girls Club and the post office.

We’re particularly aware of the potential impacts of closing route 39 through our work with the Rose Village Community Health Worker (CHW) Team. The Rose Village team consists of current and former Rose Village residents who work directly with their neighbors to address the consequences of multi-generational racial, economic, social and health inequities. These CHWs bring invaluable firsthand insight about how this proposal will impact individuals at the neighborhood level. This issue is of the utmost concern to the CHWs.

Furthermore, we have serious concerns about a process that appears to prioritize the Vancouver waterfront’s high-end developers, restaurateurs and customers over communities like Rose Village, for whom reliable public transportation is an essential social determinant of health. C-TRAN must not abandon the neighborhoods that rely most on its services in order to offer new services targeted primarily at the city’s middle and upper-class citizens and tourists.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration in maintaining service on route 39.

Barbe West
Executive Director, SWACH & HLC
barbe.west@southwestach.org | 360-515-8252
www.southwestach.org