



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

LONG RANGE PLANNING DIVISION

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October 13, 2009

Mr. Jeff Welch, Director
Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization
400 Main Street
Suite 403, City/County Building
Knoxville, TN 37902

Dear Mr. Welch:

This letter is to confirm the Long Range Planning Division's support of the TPO proposal to conduct an analysis of transit opportunities at the regional and corridor level, including a grant contract for the \$135,049 that was requested.

The proposed activities clearly build on our previous partnership to develop the capacity for scenario planning in the Knoxville region. As noted in the proposal, the success of transit depends greatly on the region's land use policies. This initiative should provide an excellent opportunity to apply the scenario planning tools that have been developed.

This is also an opportune time for the TPO region to identify the corridors that can be "transit-ready" in the next 10 years. Although both the state and its metropolitan areas had great use for the funds recently made available through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, it became clear that Tennessee is better prepared to take advantage of new funding for highways than for capital investments in transit. There are indications that national transportation policy may be shifting toward a focus on transit as a more sustainable means of travel. To benefit from increased funding, our metropolitan areas will need to be ready with corridor plans that have already considered possible alignments, technology, and costs.

Regards,

Jeanne Stevens, AICP
Director

CC: Ed Cole, Chief, Environment & Planning Bureau
Angela Midgett, MPO Program Manager