

Responsible  
Growth  
Management  
Coalition, Inc.



September 4, 2009

P.O. Box 1826  
Fort Myers, Florida 33902

Mike Flanders, Chairman & Don Scott, Staff - Lee MPO  
1926 Victoria Avenue  
Fort Myers, FL 33901

Dear Chairman Flanders & Mr. Scott: RE:TIGER Grant application for Rail

As you are aware, for over two years the Responsible Growth Management Coalition (RGMC) has been asking for Light Rail and other forms of public transit to be added to our network of services for our Lee County population.

The first of many letters on this topic was sent to the MPO's of both Lee and Collier Counties on 11/8/07 (copy attached). On 12/24/07, a letter was sent to Stan Cann at the Bartow District One office of Florida DOT in which RGMC stressed "the need to include a study of the cost of Light Rail Passenger Service in the current plans" for the area. In a follow-up letter on 3/28/08 to Stan Cann, RGMC suggested the establishment of "a TRI-COUNTY Transit Authority to enter into a co-venture agreement with the national Greyhound Corp. to link busses" to local County bus hubs in Charlotte, Collier & Lee Counties.

Therefore, RGMC is pleased to submit this letter in support of the MPO's TIGER Grant to purchase the Right of Way and Real Estate of the CSX Railroad. Only if this can be placed into the public domain, can the future of public transit be assured in SouthWest Florida. I also attach a current article from AAA's "Going Places" called "Hitting the Roads" regarding comments from our current national Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. RGMC was particularly impressed with two of the Answers from Sec. LaHood on page 47 in which he says that trains have "to do with the opportunities for people who want to ride their bike to work, or walk to work, or take light rail to work, or take a bus." He goes on to say that for us to get Americans to use mass transit - we must provide "mass transit that people feel comfortable riding - whether it's a bus, light rail or a streetcar - and making them efficient and cost effective."

Since 1988, RGMC has been a vocal proponent of sound growth management strategies and plans. We advocate for sustainable development practices that link growth to local needs. Our aging population here in Florida needs mass transit!

Sincerely Yours, **Bobbie Lee Gruninger**, President, RGMC

... Ensuring Southwest Florida remains a desirable place to live...

