



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF
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SECRETARY OF ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

August 20, 2010

Secretary Shaun Donovan
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington DC 20410

Dear Secretary Donovan:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is pleased to support the application of the Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD) for a HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. The Commonwealth will provide this support by being one of the Lead Partners for the grant application and for the partnership that will be formed to implement the grant.

If funded this grant would allow SRPEDD and its partners the opportunity to build on significant work done in the region through the South Coast Rail Corridor Plan. This plan, a cooperative effort of 31 cities and towns, SRPEDD, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development, has provided a blueprint for growth and preservation related to the proposed construction of the South Coast commuter rail line to this region. The plan, a product of an extensive citizen engagement process, embraces a set of strategies intended to create more sustainable communities within the region, while directing growth to train stations, and city and town centers.

The South Coast Rail project is a major priority for this Administration. For the first time, the State has provided resources to assist communities in preparing for growth pressures prior to the construction of a major state transportation project. The \$1.5 billion rail extension will bring significant economic development benefits to the region. Therefore, it is imperative that the communities and the region plan well in order to prepare for the growth demands they will face in the coming years. The primary goal of this grant application will be to create a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development that will aim to reverse years of unsustainable trends in the region.

The State understands that a formal consortium agreement will be executed within 120 days of the grant start. We are pleased to commit to be a partner of this consortium. We will continue to provide significant technical and financial support to the sustainable development efforts of this important region. We appreciate your consideration of this grant application.

Sincerely,



Gregory Bialecki
Secretary



Jeffrey Mullan
Secretary



Ian Bowles
Secretary

August 19, 2010

Secretary Shaun Donovan
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington DC 20410

Dear Secretary Donovan:

It is my pleasure to write this letter to express the enthusiasm of the Urban Initiative at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth to participate as a lead partner in the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District's (SRPEDD) grant application to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development for the creation and implementation of a *Regional Plan for Sustainable Development*. The conditions in Southeastern Massachusetts for the development of such a plan are strong and suitable to this particular grant request. As an organization with deep concerns over the progression of development and sprawl in this region, the Urban Initiative commits itself to be fully engaged to support SRPEDD's efforts to ensure a successful planning process and the development of an implementable plan.

The Urban Initiative is a public policy research center and outreach unit of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth that was established in November of 2007 for the purpose of advancing the University's long-standing mission to engage and embed its resources and expertise in communities beyond our campus for the enhancement of regional and statewide economic and social development. A major focus of the Urban Initiative's work has centered upon the development of an urban agenda for the Commonwealth - in partnership with 11 of the state's oldest, urban cities - that is rooted in the philosophy of smart and sustainable growth that preserves precious resources and guides development back into redeveloping areas where the infrastructure and capacity to support such development already exists.

As a lead partner, the Urban Initiative looks forward to providing SRPEDD and the larger partnership with quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis of specific indicators that will allow it to track and measure progress over the course of the planning process and initial implementation. Many of the research projects performed by the Urban Initiative and its staff have included quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis that provides clients and partners with practical and understandable assessments for the evaluation of programs, projects, and initiatives. The opportunity to serve as a lead partner in this capacity for the purpose of SRPEDD's *Regional Plan for Sustainable Development* project would be a natural fit with the Urban Initiative's capacity, experience, and expertise.

We believe that SRPEDD's plan for the development of a *Regional Plan for Sustainable Development* is of great import to our region of the state and fully endorse its purpose, mission, and activities.

Sincerely,



Edward M. Lambert, Jr.
Executive Director

OFFICE OF CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

August 22, 2010

The Office of Campus and Community Sustainability at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is poised to partner with SRPEED to create a regional sustainability grant plan as proposed to HUD. The complimentary programs at UMass Dartmouth will be significant partners in the proposed consortium as the plan evolves.

The Office of Campus and Community Sustainability at UMass Dartmouth is an award-winning initiative that links university students, faculty, and staff with the southeastern Massachusetts region. Faculty from Engineering, Business and Policy Studies colleges have worked closely with the Regional Council on Sustainability as well as with individual towns on research and service endeavors. The University's sustainability academic programs include a minor and certificate programs as well as several graduate-level classes for Master of Business Administration, Master of Engineering, and Master of Public Policy students. A Major and a Masters in Sustainable Development is in the works and the partnership with the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development will match coursework with regional priorities and needs.

The University's inclusion in this grant proposal brings academic and research expertise to the project, as well as graduate student manpower that will both benefit the planning process and enrich the applied learning experience for our students interested in sustainability and regional planning. The University also brings a strong history of active involvement and interest in initiatives that benefit our region. Moreover, we expect this process of creating a regional sustainability plan to be far-reaching as a model for other regions across the country and around the world.

The UMass Sustainability Initiative will receive \$85,000 in HUD funds and will match with a minimum of \$21,250 in in-kind services. Sustainability Office Executive Director Susan Jennings will be involved in the project, as will graduate students bringing advanced business, policy, engineering, research and communications skills to the project.

Thank You,



Susan Jennings
Director, Office of Campus and Community Sustainability, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth