

**METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT OF NASHVILLE AND DAVIDSON COUNTY**



**FREDDIE O'CONNELL**  
**MAYOR**

March 28, 2024

Via electronic mail to [mskipper@gnrc.org](mailto:mskipper@gnrc.org)

Michael Skipper

Executive Director

Greater Nashville Regional Council

44 Vantage Way, Suite 450

Nashville, TN 37228

RE: Climate Pollution Reduction Grant – Greater Nashville Regional Council Letter of Support in response to EPA's CPRG Implementation Grant General Competition

Mr. Skipper,

I am writing on behalf of the City of Nashville and Davidson County (Metro Nashville) in support of the Greater Nashville Regional Council's (GNRC's) application for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Program: Implementation Grants General Competition, EPA-R-OAR-CPRGI-23-07. If funded, we look forward to helping implement GNRC's proposed transportation measure included the application to EPA.

GNRC is the CPRG lead planning entity for the Nashville-Davidson-Murfreesboro-Franklin Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and serves as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) serving a large portion of the area, which Metro Nashville is a part of. GNRC's proposal focuses on expanding and enhancing the operations of the WeGO Star, the middle Tennessee region's passenger rail line extending from downtown Nashville in Davidson County, Tennessee to Mt. Juliet and Lebanon in Wilson County, Tennessee. Specific upgrades included in the proposal are converting the rolling stock to zero emissions and implementing planned capital upgrades to enable higher levels of service along the corridor. If funded, these measures will set the stage for possible future route extensions to serve additional, higher density areas within middle Tennessee.

Metro Nashville is eager to collaborate with GNRC to implement this measure in Tennessee specifically by performing equitable and meaningful outreach and engagement on the project; supporting any workforce development, job creation, and other related training opportunities; providing access to data and information that can contribute to project design and implementation; supplementing CPRG funding with our own funding, programs, etc. as feasible; and other activities that support the implementation of this project.

**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

METROPOLITAN COURTHOUSE • NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37201  
PHONE: (615) 862-6000 • EMAIL: [mayor@nashville.gov](mailto:mayor@nashville.gov)

Metro Nashville fully supports the expansion of passenger rail in Middle Tennessee via upgrades to the WeGo Star, which will result in significant emissions reductions for the region. As an example of our commitment to these areas:

- We are currently working to enter into a site agreement with a developer in Donelson which will provide dense, mixed-use development on the WeGo Star rail line and provide an upgraded train station as part of the development.
- We provide \$1.5 annually to support the operation of the WeGo Star.
- The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is undertaking a zero-emissions transition plan for its transit bus fleet, recognizing the significant opportunities that there are to reduce emissions from the transportation sector.

We believe GNRC's proposal aligns with Metro Nashville's decarbonization, transportation, and mobility goals and look forward to partnering with GNRC on this project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Freddie O'Connell".

Freddie O'Connell  
Mayor