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April 26, 2013

Commissioner Christopher Clement
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
PO Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

Dear Commissioner Clement:

This letter is to inform you that at the Strafford Regional Planning Commission's April Policy Committee meeting the regional project prioritization list was approved and is ready for consideration as part of the *2015-2024 NH Ten Year Transportation Plan*. The approval included three directives from our Policy Committee:

- 1) Submit a complete list of all Strafford Region transportation project priorities, not taking into account *Ten Year Plan* eligibility.
- 2) Submit a list of the projects that are eligible for funding through the *Ten Year Plan* process.
- 3) Submit a list of bridge project priorities.
- 4) Dock five points (out of the possible 100 points) for projects that originate from non-dues paying communities.

In this cycle of the Ten Year Plan process NH DOT collaborated with MPOs and RPCs to identify ways to enhance the process with the goal of making it more transparent and collaborative. As part of this process the Department of Transportation implemented new decision making software to help achieve those goals. Due to time constraints the implementation of the software presented new challenges including identifying the best metrics for evaluating projects and finding meaningful scoring scales for each of the metrics.

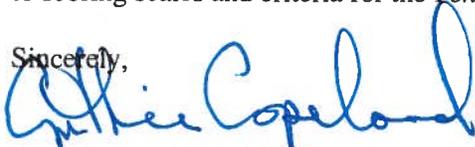
Over time, it is clear that New Hampshire will benefit from using this software as part of the *Ten Year Plan* development process. It will pave the way for a more equitable and easily understood *Ten Year Transportation Plan* process. With that said, during our initial use of the project evaluation criteria and scoring scales it was evident that both factors still require significant thought and would benefit from a reevaluation of how effective the criteria actually are for measuring the impact of an array of project types. This holds true for projects that were non-highway, as well as bridge projects. It is our belief that all groups that participated in this process would have benefitted from a group project scoring exercise with NH DOT to demonstrate agency expectations for scoring a variety of project types (transit, corridor studies, complete streets, bridge, bicycle, pedestrian, intermodal facilities, HSIP, Turnpike, etc..).

Moving forward Strafford Regional Planning Commission would like to continue as a partner with NH DOT. We would appreciate having the opportunity to discuss projects from our list with NH DOT concurrently with your scoring of projects. This will provide an opportunity for us to

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share our philosophy for project scoring and to provide NH DOT with background information about project intent and scopes of work. We would also value the opportunity to provide feedback about scoring criteria along with the chance to contribute feedback about future changes to scoring scales and criteria for the *Ten Year Plan*.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Copeland, AICP
Executive Director
Strafford Regional Planning Commission

cc: Bill Watson, NH DOT
Leigh Levine, FHWA
Bill Gordon, FTA
Paul Lockwood, DES
Strafford MPO TAC
Strafford MPO Policy Committee