

October 9, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing today on behalf of The Columbus Partnership to offer support for the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's (MORPC) SMART Grant Program Proposal, "Position, Navigation and Timing (PNT) Resiliency for Vehicles in GPS degraded environments."

The Columbus Partnership is a non-profit, membership-based leadership organization of 80 chairpersons, chief executive officers and senior executives from the Region's leading businesses and institutions. Our members include Fortune 500 CEOs, as well as the leaders of top universities and the world's largest private, nonprofit research and development organization. The Partnership's goal is to provide a long-term vision for achieving greater economic prosperity and has positioned Columbus to be one of the strongest environments to attract businesses and investment in the world.

To keep pace with the Columbus Region's growth and trajectory, effective transportation will serve as a key building block to our region by providing for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout our community. This grant will further reinforce the Columbus Region as a hub that will accelerate the future of transportation and vehicle autonomy with an emphasis on safety and resilience. It also provides a range of benefits that support both our state and local goals around safety and technology innovation while advancing the safe and efficient operation of autonomous vehicles.

All outcomes from this initial planning phase will be aligned with the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission's Vision Zero Action Plan to eliminate traffic related fatalities and injuries. The testing of terrestrial-based PNT technology will lead us to safer connected vehicles and safer roads in our community, specifically in urban areas where GPS is vulnerable to cyberthreats, ensuring that resilient systems are properly evaluated, advanced, and ready for deployment.

The Columbus Region hopes to serve as a model of public, private and nonprofit partnerships. MORPC's partnership on this proposal with The Ohio State University, who have been at the forefront of research and development of complimentary and resilient GPS alternatives, positions our community to move forward together with the goal of making our region the most prosperous in the United States. MORPC and The Ohio State University have full support from The Columbus Partnership as we unite to strive for economic development advancement and success in the Columbus Region.

Very truly yours,



Kenny D. McDonald  
President and CEO  
KM/gb