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**Governor Bredesen Announces Enhancement Grant for City of Ripley
*Grant to Fund Continued Improvements to Downtown Ripley in Lauderdale County***

NASHVILLE - Governor Phil Bredesen and TDOT Commissioner Gerald Nicely joined state and local leaders today to announce the award of a \$741,842 transportation enhancement grant to the city of Ripley for Phase IV-B of the Downtown Improvement project.

This phase of the project will extend the existing improvements to the downtown area to Washington Street between the Ripley Center and Keller Avenue, further enhancing the district. The project includes the addition of street parking and medians, decorative limestone details, and new sidewalks. New benches, pedestrian lighting, bicycle racks and landscaping will also be installed throughout the area.

“Revitalizing downtown Ripley will help improve the local economy by increasing tourism and making the area more appealing to new businesses,” said Bredesen. “This phase of the project will completely link downtown with the Ripley Center and I’m pleased the state could provide the funds necessary to complete the final phase of this project.”

Representative Craig Fitzhugh is a strong supporter of the project and added, “The first phases of this project have already improved the appearance of the city and the next phase will enhance downtown, create a new transportation alternative for residents and visitors and support economic growth. I’m pleased the state could make this investment in Lauderdale County.”

Senator Mark Norris also supported the project.

The grant is made possible through a federally funded program administered by the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

“Through Transportation Enhancement grants, TDOT has funded approximately \$223 million in non-traditional transportation projects,” said Nicely. “Established by Congress in the early 1990’s, the program supports activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the nation’s transportation system.”

A variety of activities such as the restoration of historic facilities, bike and pedestrian trails, landscaping and other non-traditional transportation projects are eligible for grant funds under the federal program.

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