



Metropolitan Area Planning Council

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Serving the 101 Cities and Towns in the Metropolitan Boston Region

May 1, 2009

The Honorable Congresswoman Niki Tsongas
U.S. House of Representatives
1607 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Subject: High Priority Project (HPP) Designation for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Dear Representative Tsongas:

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) strongly supports the nomination and solicits your assistance in designating the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) as a High Priority Project.

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, located in the MAPC communities of Acton, Concord, Carlisle, Sudbury, and Framingham, is a priority for our region for the following reasons:

- The trail will provide connections to open space, business districts, and commuter rail stations.
- The trail will be widely used and will help ease traffic congestion, improve air quality, reduce global warming, and promote walkable communities.
- The project has demonstrated a significant amount of community support.
- The communities, regional and state agencies have already contributed an extensive amount of time, resources, and funds to this project.

In addition to regional benefits, this project is consistent with *MetroFuture*, the regional policy plan for the Boston metropolitan area, MAPC's Smart Growth Principles, and the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles.

As our country's focus is now on the greening of energy and transportation, investments in public infrastructure should demonstrate sustainability and contribute to a reduction in the human carbon footprint. Accordingly, we believe that good governing should result in this rail trail project receiving a High Priority status so that its completion can be expedited. We ask for your assistance in this effort and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marc D. Draisen
Executive Director