



## TOWN OF ACTON

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### Planning Department

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August 31, 2006

Ms. Jane Healey  
TOD Program Coordinator  
Office for Commonwealth Development  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 1010  
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Ms. Healey:

On behalf of the five-town ARRT Steering Committee<sup>1</sup>, I am requesting the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Bond Program Committee's support of the Town of Acton's application for preliminary design for the Assabet River Rail Trail (ARRT) bridge in South Acton Village (SAV).

Portions of the ARRT have been constructed in Marlborough and Hudson. The ARRT communities have been awarded significant funding for the rail trail through various programs since before 1997. Most recently, the towns secured over \$1.6 million in High Priority Project funding for the ARRT, which is shown in distinct project portions for Hudson, Stow, and Acton/Maynard in the MPO's 2007-10 Draft Transportation Improvement Program to be available beginning in 2007. We are now beginning the project design at the northern end of the ARRT from South Acton through Maynard.

The ARRT approaches South Acton from the south. The connection to the South Acton Commuter Rail Station on the north side of the Fitchburg line tracks completes the inter-modal link for the ARRT at its northern terminus. The notion of a separate bridge or deck for the ARRT to cross over the Fitchburg line is a newly added element as it has recently become clear that an on-street solution is inadequate. The existing street bridge is not wide enough to accommodate the ARRT bicycle traffic.

The following is a brief update on recent progress made on the entire ARRT:

- ARRT completed in Marlborough and Hudson
- Acquisitions completed in Maynard and Acton, except MBTA
- Rail Trail Environmental Insurance Bill passed<sup>2</sup>, should clear closing with MBTA
- Acton / Maynard RFP for 25% & 100% design due out shortly

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<sup>1</sup> Appointees by Inter-Municipal Agreement from Marlborough, Hudson, Stow, Maynard, and Acton.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 123 of the Acts of 2006 - AN ACT Relative to Economic Investments in the Commonwealth to Promote Job Creation, Economic Stability, and Competitiveness in the Massachusetts Economy; SECTION 14

- Acton / Maynard local design funding available
- Federal HPP acquisition and supplemental design programmed for 2007 (expected)
- Federal construction funding programmed for 2008 or '09 for Acton / Maynard
- Close cooperation with MassHighway (District 3)
- PNF and PIF filed with MassHighway (including rail line crossing in South Acton)
- Acquisition efforts in Stow ongoing

I am excited about the progress that the ARRT has made in recent years. It positions the ARRT communities well to more rapidly complete the rail trail. On behalf of the five ARRT communities, I want to thank the TOD Bond Program Committee for its consideration of the ARRT SAV bridge application. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Roland Bartl  
Town Planner  
Town of Acton, Lead Community for the Acton/Maynard project

cc: ARRT Steering Committee