



Town of Concord

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

141 Keyes Road, Concord, MA 01742

978-318-3290

April 30, 2009

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

Dear Representative Tsongas,

As a Chairperson of the Town of Concord Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee, I am writing to express our strong support of your request for High Priority Project (HPP) funding for Phase 2A (Acton, Westford, Carlisle) and 2C (Concord) of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT).

Phase 1 of the BERT, which is just less than seven miles connecting the communities of Chelmsford and Westford, is currently under construction. Phases 2A (Westford, Carlisle and Acton) and 2C (Concord) of the BFRT would incorporate an additional eight miles of trail spanning two regional planning agencies, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), two MassHighway Districts, District 3 and District 4, and four towns.

The BFRT is an extremely popular project supported by Town and State elected officials and by thousands of citizens in the town. The Concord section of the BFRT has received widespread community support at four different Town Meetings. The April 2006 Town Meeting voted to approve Community Preservation Act funding for the preliminary 25% design of the rail trail. The April 2008 Town Meeting voted to approve the preliminary 25% design for submission to MassHighway and voted to authorize an additional \$50,000 to fund revisions to the plan as requested by Town Meeting. On April 29, 2009, an additional \$125,000 funding was authorized under the Community Preservation Act by Town Meeting, without any questions asked.

However, historic underfunding of Transportation Enhancement projects like the BFRT has slowed the design and construction of the trail, and the municipal funds authorized are insufficient to complete design of the trail. It will be extremely valuable to have construction funds allocated to the BFRT.

Thank you for your consideration and your support for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

Sincerely,

Elissa Brown, Chair
Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee

cc: Concord Board of Selectmen