

CAPITAL DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

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December 2, 2010

Ms. Mary Ivey
Regional Director
New York State Department of Transportation Region 1
328 State Street
Schenectady, NY 12305

Subject: Livingston Avenue Bridge

Dear Mary:

I understand that scoping for the rehabilitation or replacement of the **Livingston Avenue Railroad Bridge** is well underway. I am writing to convey the Capital District Transportation Committee's (CDTC) strong support for the project, as evidenced by previous Policy Board actions. The CDTC added this project to the *Transportation Improvement Program* in 2009 in anticipation of ARRA funding, contingent on restoring pedestrian and bicycle accommodation across the bridge. Not only will this project preserve a critical link in the State and national rail system, but will accomplish this in a manner that supports major community initiatives for waterfront revitalization.

As you know, the Livingston Avenue Bridge represents a critical link in the Capital District's regional trail system, connecting the Mohawk-Hudson Bike-Hike Trail in Albany County and the planned Mickey Mahar Trail in Rensselaer County. Restoring bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on the Livingston Avenue Bridge has been a goal of several local and regional plans completed over the last twelve years. CDTC's REVEST initiative, the joint CDTC/NYS DOT Hudson River Crossing Study, the Rensselaer County Trail Plan - a joint CDTC/Hudson Valley Greenway effort with participation from the City of Rensselaer, Rensselaer County, Town of North Greenbush, and others -- all affirmed the importance of designing a structure to accommodate pedestrians would have for waterfront revitalization on both sides of the river. The *Hudson River Crossing Study*, for example, concluded that "...re-establishment of bicycle and pedestrian access on the Livingston Avenue Bridge should be considered an 'early win' and given the highest priority for implementing an improved bike/ped crossing over the Hudson River. It would provide the most useful and desirable connection between Rensselaer and Albany."

A recent regional initiative spear-headed by Congressman Tonko involved the creation of a regional waterfront task

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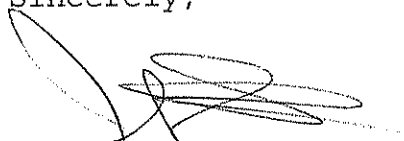
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force - the Mighty Waters Task Force. The mission of the task force is to find ways to enhance access to the Hudson River and other waterways in the region, preserve infrastructure and green space, and foster sustainable development and tourism. In addition, enhanced public access and recreation are adopted policies contained in the Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs (LWRP) of the Cities of Albany and Rensselaer, and the Town of North Greenbush. A pedestrian and bicycle link across the River connecting the cities of Albany and Rensselaer is considered an important part of revitalization efforts. Access to the Rensselaer Train Station would be improved as well.

I would respectfully ask that you carry this message to the Commissioner. CDTC believes that this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that shouldn't be missed. The CDTC staff, along with members of CDTC's Planning Committee and Policy Board, look forward to actively working with the Department and other regional and local stakeholders on this important project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John T. McDonald, III". The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a large loop at the beginning and several smaller loops and flourishes throughout.

John T. McDonald, III
Mayor, City of Cohoes
Chairman, Capital District
Transportation Committee