



April 20, 2016

Honorable Anthony Foxx, Secretary of Transportation
U.S Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington DC, 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I am writing in support of the Dutchess County and Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association's (HVRTA) application to complete the eight-mile trail connection between the Village of Millerton and Under Mountain Road in the Town of Ancram; the tunnel crossing of State Route 22 at the intersection of State Route 22 and Orphan Farm Rd. (Copake Falls); and three pedestrian bridges to connect to the trail at Black Grocery Rd. in Copake. These three components will finish approximately 28 miles of trail from Wassaic (Dutchess County) to Hillsdale (Columbia County), linking to New York City via Metro North Railroad. Upon completion the entire trail will be 46 miles in length.

This project will join two counties, NY State Parks, and a not-for-profit in a project which will become a destination for thousands of people from near and afar.

The Town of Hillsdale is counting on the positive impact that the Rail Trail will have on our community. Families, businesses, town officials, young and old – everyone looks forward to a continuous Trail that leads from Copake through Hillsdale and onward.

Hillsdale's vision, outlined in a Town-adopted comprehensive plan, includes the integration of the Rail Trail into the fabric of the Hamlet.

In my role as Supervisor, I am determined to shine a light on the Rail Trail's importance to the economic development of Hillsdale and all of Columbia County. I urge you to grant the HVRTA's grant request. As successful consultant is essential and will drive the project forward, forge necessary alliances with Town and County government, align funding sources, and educate all the stake-holders about the importance of the Trail.

I am hopeful that the you and the review committee will consider a grant for the Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association to aid them in improving this important "connection" in eastern Dutchess and Columbia Counties. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Peter Cipkowski
Supervisor, Town of Hillsdale