From: David Riggleman
To: Amy Lacy
Subject: Adding letter of support for park board appropriations for rail trail expansion project
Date: Sunday, April 23, 2023 9:34:27 PM

Hi Amy,

Hopefully, you are the correct person to reach out to. I am writing in support of the recent request by the parks department for additional appropriations related to the rail trail expansion project. Please see my letter below. Thank you.

Thanks,
David Riggleman

To respected members of the Zionsville Town Council,

I am writing to express my support in favor of the park board's recent request for contingency funds to complete the rail trail extension. First, I do want to say I agree with many of the concerns expressed around seeing if other projects could be deferred a year or other ways can be found to pay for the increased costs. For example, I know there were plans for a soft dirt shoulder. As a competitive trail runner, this is something I appreciate but would be willing to defer if necessary. However, it would be an extremely short-sighted move by the council if the expansion project was forced to introduce choke points in the trail with narrower sections. The rail trail is the chief asset of the parks department, not only providing a means for recreation and promoting healthy lifestyles (which has economic benefits for the town) but also serves as the backbone connecting all of the many amazing parks. The rail trail led me to choosing not only my first apartment in Zionsville, but also influenced the purchase of my first house in Zionsville. With Zionsville not only poised for future growth, but also with the upcoming connections to other trail systems, such as Whitestown, traffic will increase where the increased width will eventually be necessary. And it will most likely come with a significantly higher price tag, incurring a much larger net use of taxpayer dollars to complete at that point rather than spending a bit more now to ensure it's done right in a way that will serve this community for decades to come.

Thank you for your consideration,
David Riggleman