



November 8, 2004

Madhu Oberoi
Planning Department
City of Pontiac
47450 Woodward Avenue
Pontiac MI 48342-2271

Dear Ms. Oberoi,

The *Friends of Clinton River Trail* wish to state our unqualified support to the City of Pontiac for its grant application to the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan regarding the Clinton River Trail. This application is being made to assist with engineering evaluation and recommendations for a pedestrian bridge to span the Clinton River Trail across Telegraph Road on the City's west side.

A safe, trail user-friendly crossing at Telegraph Road is vital to the realization of the Clinton River Trail as the very hub of Oakland County's emerging trailways network. This highway is a state trunk line, U.S. 10, and carries major traffic volumes at posted speeds of 50 miles per hour in the stretch of road where the Clinton River Trail crosses.

Without a safe trail-road interface here, Telegraph Road will be a barrier and deterrent to use of the trail. This would diminish the trail's use, and reduce the potential that it has to revitalize Pontiac's downtown city center, provide high-quality recreation in a densely populated urban region, and to connect communities via non-motorized access throughout a large portion of the metropolitan Detroit area.

The need to evaluate a pedestrian-only bridge at the Telegraph Road crossing is the result of a significant effort on the part of trail/highway stakeholders to find a suitable alternative for the trail-road interface. Beginning back in February of this year, a series of meetings known as the "Clinton River Trail Telegraph Road Crossing Study Group" have been exploring alternatives.

MDOT staff for the Oakland Service Center determined that the at-grade crossing that was proposed in the Clinton River Trail Master Plan (funded by a Greenway Initiative pre-development grant in 2003) was unacceptable from a pedestrian safety point of view. Other key trail stakeholders, including City of Pontiac and Friends of Clinton River Trail, have concurred with this conclusion.

The work to be funded by this grant application will provide vital engineering analysis and cost estimates that are essential for final decisions and specifications for an optimal

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Telegraph Road crossing. It is a prerequisite to gaining the necessary stakeholder buy-in and funding sources in order for a project of this magnitude to be undertaken.

We lend our full support and enthusiasm to your efforts, and wish to assist Pontiac by all means within our capacity.

Best regards,

Dan Keifer
Director, *Friends of Clinton River Trail*