



Wilmington Bicycle Advisory Committee  
c/o Dawn Thompson, Mayors Office  
City of Wilmington  
800 French Street - City/County Bldg.  
Wilmington, DE 19801

Stephen Kingsberry  
Chair  
WILMAPCO Council  
900 Public Safety Boulevard  
Dover, Delaware 19901

July 11, 2011

Dear Chairman *Stephen* Kingsberry,

In the wake of the vote of the Delaware General Assembly on June 30 to vote new state funds for bike routes, we suggest that the WILMAPCO Council program \$480,000 of congestion mitigation / air quality (CMAQ) federal funds for the final phase of the New Castle Industrial Track. The Council voted last year on July 15, 2010 to rank this project as the Council's #1 priority in the TIP Bike/Ped category. If the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control is willing to provide the required local match, we request that the Council consider moving this project to design and engineering by programming FY2012 CMAQ matching funds for it.

As you know, after years of planning, effort and investment, this six-mile long off-road route and greenway between Wilmington and New Castle is nearly complete. Only a one-mile gap remains to be funded. By closing this small remaining gap, Delaware would complete a safe, direct, paved non-motorized travel route between the Wilmington Riverfront and New Castle. From a transportation point-of-view, this route would provide pedestrians and bicycle users with a non-motorized travel alternative between New Castle and Wilmington to two high speed, high volume arterial roads, Rt. 9 (4 travel lanes) and Rt. 13 (8 travel lanes). Between 2000 and 2008, these roadways had 98 pedestrian crashes, including 8 fatality crashes and 69 injury crashes. A non-motorized, independent right-of-way "bicycle highway" alternative to these busy roads between Wilmington and New Castle will hugely expand the pool of potential bicycle commuters in the area, while simultaneously offering an active transportation and recreation opportunity to the surrounding communities.

The project is also attractive from economic development, recreation and tourism points of view. When complete the project will support the Wilmington Riverfront as a recreational and leisure destination for everyone who wants to access a long, flat trail that's free and safe for all for walking and bicycling, including kids, seniors and people with physical disabilities. More, it would also make the Riverfront an easily accessible bicycle destination for people bicycling from the New Castle area. Going in the other direction, it would provide easy access to old New Castle for bicycle tourism originating in Wilmington. In other areas of the country where such 5 to 10 mile bike paths exist between neighboring towns, it is observed that they are used by individuals and small groups who ride from one town to the other, stop for breakfast or lunch, and then turn around and ride back home. A bike connection with a neighboring town also offers a significant activity for tourists that can provide a reason to prolong a visit and can be something that they can do in an unscheduled way.

Both New Castle County and DelDOT support connecting the Riverwalk to the New Castle Industrial Track. DELDOT has given permission for the trail and negotiated an arrangement with New Castle County for use of this state owned right-of-way. Further, the Riverwalk and the New

Castle Industrial Track are planned to be part of the East Coast Greenway as it passes thru Delaware. Completion of the New Castle Industrial Track Greenway would not complete the entire East Coast Greenway (ECGW) in Delaware, but it would close the most critical remaining gap and bring the Delaware portion of the ECGW a giant step forward. Together with the Northern Delaware Greenway, it would also form a spine for off-road bicycling that extends all the way thru Wilmington from north to south.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill".

William S. Montgomery  
Chair of the Wilmington Bicycle Advisory Committee

cc: James M. Baker, Mayor  
Tigist Zegeye, WILMAPCO  
Kash Srinivasan, Department of Public Works  
Peter Besecker, Department of Planning  
Wilmington Bicycle Advisory Committee members  
Urban Bike Project