

February 12, 2019

To the members of the Transportation Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill No. 775, "An Act Concerning the Creation of the Central Connecticut Loop Trail."

As Chair of the Middletown Planning and Zoning Commission, my goal is to foster development that will improve the quality of life for our residents, promote sustainability, and to raise property values. The proposed Central Connecticut Loop Trail does all those and so much more.

- As you know, bicycling for transportation reduces road congestion, greenhouse-gas emissions, and the need for additional parking—all goals of the State's Active Transportation Plan. Middletown has a large, untapped potential to dramatically increase the number of residents using a bicycle for transportation: many year-round residents, as well as a large number of Wesleyan students who would use a regional trail. Even a modest increase in the number of trips that are done by bicycle would reduce the problems and the costs associated with congestion, emissions, and parking.
- Middletown is one of the largest cities in the state that does not have a train station. The M-Link express bus service and the creation of a bicycle connection between Middletown and the Meriden train station will give city residents ready access to the new New Haven to Hartford rail line.
- Bicycle and pedestrian trails are economic engines for growth through tourism. Trails are a destination for visitors from out of town and out of state, who bring families for exercise and exploration. The Loop Trail would synergize with existing Middletown attractions like KidCity, The Buttonwood Tree, O'Rourke's diner, and Eli Cannon's, bringing vibrancy and dollars to our city.
- Bicycle and pedestrian trails increase the value of existing homes, see for example the exhaustive study by Racca and Dhanju, "Property Value/Desirability Effects of Bike Paths Adjacent to Residential Areas" (<https://tinyurl.com/y2hb6mu9>).

I urge you to support Senate Bill No. 775.

Sincerely Yours,



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