



SUSTAINABLE PITTSBURGH

425 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1335 • Pittsburgh, PA 15219

January 4, 2012

Mr. Vincent Troia
Chief Executive Officer
Ohio River Trail Council
1100 Pennsylvania Ave
Monaca, PA 15061

Dear Mr. Troia:

The Outdoor Recreation Partnership (ORP), based in southwestern Pennsylvania, is writing in support of the Ohio River Trail Council's (ORTC) and Town Center Associates' (TCA) efforts in planning and developing the Ohio River Trail. ORP is a voluntary network of independent agencies and organizations that are working together to make outdoor recreation a hallmark of quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Parks, greenways, and trails such as the Ohio River Trail contribute greatly to a region's sustainability. These natural amenities bolster the social, environmental and economic aspects of communities: They foster healthier lifestyles; contribute to economic development; and are accessible to all, regardless of socio-economic status. They also help instill a sense of environmental stewardship and serve as a major selling point for attracting and retaining top-notch talent.

In particular, development of the Ohio River Trail offers residents and visitors of this region more options when it comes to transportation. Bicycling, walking, and even paddling, provide healthier and affordable alternatives to individuals commuting to work, running errands, and getting exercise. These active modes of transportation result in less traffic on the road and reduced emissions from fuel-burning vehicles, among other benefits.

The project that ORTC and TCA are proposing for the Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program funding is a key catalyst for continued community and economic development along the Ohio River Trail corridor. Consider, for example, the economic benefits the Great Allegheny Passage is documented to have brought to its local communities. An economic impact study conducted in 2008 shows \$40.8 million in direct spending by trail users, up from \$7.26 million in 2002.

Overall, the Ohio River Trail project integrates transportation, community and system preservation plans and practices as outlined by the Department of Transportation. We look forward to working with ORTC and TCA in their efforts.

Sincerely,

Ginette Walker Vinski, ORP Facilitator
Sustainable Pittsburgh

On behalf of the following organizations:

Bike Pittsburgh
Bour Associates
Family Tyes
Friends of the Riverfront
Pennsylvania Environmental Council

The Progress Fund
Sustainable Pittsburgh
Three Rivers Rowing Association
Venture Outdoors

412.258.6642 • fax 412.258.6645 • www.sustainablepittsburgh.org • info@sustainablepittsburgh.org