

Maryland Department of Transportation
The Secretary's Office

Martin O'Malley
Governor

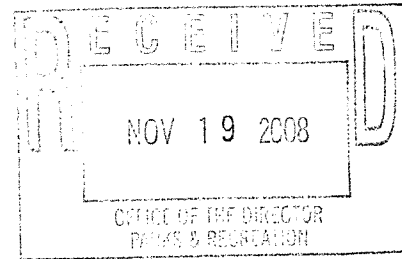
Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

John D. Porcari
Secretary

Beverley K. Swaim-Staley
Deputy Secretary

November 13, 2008

Ronnie Gathers, Director
Department of Parks and Recreation
Maryland-National Capital Park and
Planning Commission
6600 Kenilworth Avenue
Riverdale MD 20737



Dear Mr. Gathers:

Thank you for your letter to State Highway Administrator Neil J. Pedersen and me regarding your planned north extension of the Henson Creek Trail to Branch Avenue. The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the State Highway Administration (SHA) recognize the challenges of extending the trail past I-495 and we look forward to working with you to resolve these issues.

There are significant concerns regarding the use of a portion of the existing box culvert under I-495 to extend the trail. Flooding, limited water capacity of the existing culvert, liability issues, and concerns for the safety of potential users will preclude the use of the culvert. The triple-box culvert under discussion, along with many other culverts that are in the 50-year-old range in our metropolitan areas, do not have sufficient capacity to convey water, particularly in major rain events. This circumstance is a direct result of the increase in impervious surfaces in the drainage area that has resulted in increased runoff. This condition was not anticipated when these older culverts were designed and constructed. We have similar concerns about tunnel options, as well as with the resulting liability issues.

Although SHA recognizes the need to address the missing link and wants this trail to succeed, the safety of the trail's users and the optimum drainage capacity of the culvert are the prime considerations. The SHA staff will be available to meet with Commission staff to discuss these options. It may be useful to consider other alignments that could take the trail to the intended commuter destinations. If you wish to consider a pedestrian bridge at this or another location, your assumption of the associated issues, particularly the requirement that the facility must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, is correct. Please note that the underclearance of the pedestrian bridge must be 19 feet, 7 inches.

Prince George's County Parks and Recreation
Office of the Director

Rec'd 11/19/08 To: Larry Quarick
Action: Please prepare a response

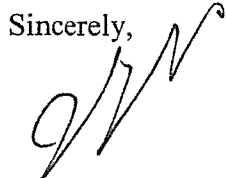
My telephone number is 410-865-1000 for RG by 12/3/08
Toll Free Number 1-888-713-1414 TTY Users Call Via MD Relay
7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, Maryland 21076

Mr. Ronnie Gathers
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The SHA will be pleased to review and comment on studies and preliminary plans before the Commission submits its Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) application. The SHA will also review and comment on structural reviews and construction plans if the project is approved for TEP funding. The design, any studies, and any related expenses will be the Commission's responsibility.

Thank you again for your letter. If we may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Douglas H. Simmons, Deputy Administrator/Chief Engineer for Planning, Engineering, Real Estate and Environment, SHA, at 410-545-0411, toll-free 866-697-0559, or via email at dsimmons@sha.state.md.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John D. Porcari', written over a diagonal line that extends from the bottom left towards the top right.

John D. Porcari
Secretary

cc: Mr. Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator, SHA
Mr. Douglas H. Simmons, Deputy Administrator/Chief Engineer for Planning,
Engineering, Real Estate and Environment, SHA