



February 6, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20590

RE: Letter of Support for Eastern Shore Rail Trail RAISE Application

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Eastern Shore Public Library is pleased to support the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission's RAISE application to fund construction of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail between the Town of Exmore and the Town of Onley. Development of this segment will support communities in both Accomack and Northampton County that have seen difficult times since the cessation of rail service by providing safe pedestrian and bicycle access that connects historic railway towns along the former railroad corridor which parallels U.S. Route 13, a major East Coast thoroughfare on the National Highway System.

**Eastern Shore Public Library has a special interest in the RailTrail as it will connect three of our libraries: Cape Charles Memorial Library, Northampton Free Library in Nassawadox, and our new Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Library and Heritage Center.** All three libraries were built in these historic railway towns. The RailTrail partnership will help us in promoting a Culture of Reading on the Shore and the local history story.

Many residents will need this trail for safe transport, whether by walking or biking, to attend our programs. Many of our library patrons do not have vehicles and many would prefer the exercise to go to their local public library. The libraries act as a visitor center for tourists, which can be expanded with the RailTrail, promoting economic growth.

Eastern Shore Public Library has participating in the RailTrail Working Group to help promote the benefit of the trail and its improvement to the quality of life on the Shore. We have heard nothing but positive feedback with many families and visitors being anxious to have access to such an asset in our community.

Thank you for the opportunity for the Eastern Shore Public Library to support funding of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Justis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janet Justis

Interim System Director