



January 29, 2023

Bloomberg Initiative for Cycling Infrastructure  
Global Designing Cities Initiative  
120 Park Avenue, 21st Floor  
New York, NY 10017

To Whom It May Concern:

The Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) is an advisory board appointed by the Durham City Council and the Durham County Board of Commissioners. BPAC works to make Durham a more walkable, bikeable, and transit-friendly community for all residents. BPAC is pleased to provide a letter of support for the City of Durham's application for a Bloomberg Initiative for Cycling Infrastructure (BICI) grant that would provide funds for a transformative connection between the American Tobacco Trail (ATT) and the Durham Rail Trail (DRT).

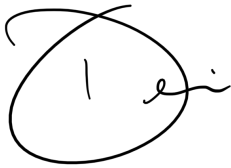
The ATT is a 22-mile regional rail trail that spans Durham, Chatham, and Wake Counties. With hundreds of thousands of users each year, this trail is one of the most well-used cycling facilities in Durham. The DRT is a 1.7-mile rail trail that is currently in design, to be constructed in 2026 with support from the federal Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program. Together, these multi-use trails enhance the mobility, livability, and economic competitiveness of Durham. However, there is a ½-mile gap between the two facilities in the heart of Downtown, home to many local businesses, employment centers, parks, and cultural and entertainment destinations.

The proposed ATT-DRT connector project would address this key gap in Durham's cycling network by providing a safe, separated facility linking the two trails. This relatively short connector will greatly enhance the reach of Durham's cycling infrastructure network – both the ATT and the DRT provide direct connections to the rest of the City's greenway and bicycle network. It will better connect West Durham and Duke University with the ATT and North Carolina Central University, and will provide protected bicycle infrastructure from South Durham and Cary through to points in North and East Durham, increasing the likelihood that there will be demand to extend the DRT in the future. This project will also connect people to transit and jobs throughout the Triangle by improving bicycle and pedestrian access to Downtown, Durham Station (local and regional bus service), the Durham Amtrak Station, and several affordable housing developments. Connecting the ATT and DRT will improve overall health, well-being, and quality of life within the community by providing people with safe, affordable, and sustainable transportation and recreation opportunities.

BPAC believes this project will provide an extraordinary return on investment with regards to bicycle usage, community health, community access, and car-traffic reduction. This connection will also provide a backbone for other ongoing efforts to make the safety and comfort of cyclists and pedestrians a higher priority in Downtown Durham. BPAC has made official visits to this site area, met with city employees and local developers, and advocated for the construction of this connection since 2021.

BPAC strongly supports and recommends that a BICI grant be awarded to the City of Durham. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Deniz". The signature is enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval shape.

Deniz Aydemir  
Chair, Durham Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission