

July 23, 2013

Mayor Kooiker and Rapid City Council members:

The Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce would like to express our support for the repurposing of the rail line section that runs between Cambell and Jolly Lane streets into a hiking and biking trail.

As a business organization, the Chamber works to promote a healthy and growing business climate in the Black Hills area. We feel that projects like this one directly enhance the quality of life for our community members; and as such, have direct positive effects on the availability of a stable, healthy work force.

Converting this section of rail line to a hiking and biking trail would open up Rapid Valley to non-motorized commuters. Currently, students of Western Dakota Technical Institute and residents of the Valley have no other option but to travel by car because that section of Omaha has no safe accommodations for bikers or walkers.

The city of Rapid City is becoming known for its beautiful trail systems. They offer community members the opportunity to enjoy the area, promote a healthy lifestyle, and commute around town by bicycle. The section of trail between Cambell and Jolly Lane could potentially be the first phase in a much larger trail project called the Mako Sica trail; a 100 mile rails-to-trails project that would go from Rapid City to Kadoka. This would be a wonderful opportunity for hiking and biking enthusiasts in the Black Hills area as well as those visiting from around the world.

During a recent Chamber Board of Directors retreat in Ft. Collins, CO the Board met with developers of the Colorado trail system and heard about the wonderful opportunities created by their trails. The connection of trails in the Ft. Collins area has brought in biking and hiking groups from all over, increasing their tourism dollars. The trails have cultivated an atmosphere within their community where people are able to enjoy walking or biking to various places throughout town.

We look forward to the enhancements a system of trails would continue to bring to our community. We support the efforts to seek additional funding through grants and other means to design and develop the trail.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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

Linda Rabe, IOM CCE
President & CEO
Rapid City Area Chamber of Commerce



PO Box 9351
Rapid City, SD 57709

July 26, 2013

To: Honorable Mayor Sam Kooiker

From: Roger St.Pierre-Black Hills Mountain Bike Association

Re: Rails to Trails Opportunity

Dear Honorable Mayor Kooiker:

I would like to let you know that on behalf of Black Hills Mountain Bike Association we fully support the idea and grant opportunity for a rails to trails extension of the Leonard Swanson Trail. This area of Rapid City and Rapid Valley deserve the corridor for walkers and bicyclists to travel east and west unimpeded by auto and truck traffic. Not only will it be safer for pedestrians and cyclists, but it will also relieve the city streets from that traffic that makes automobile drivers nervous and a hazard for the non-motorized user.

The area of the rails to trails has been idle for 30 years and is not likely to be used for other development.

There could be revenue to the State of SD in terms of lease income of the trail corridor. This would be a much safer and direct route for non-motorized users traveling between Rapid Valley and downtown Rapid City.

We on behalf of Black Hills Mountain Bike Association fully support the process to ultimately make this corridor into a Rails to Trails trailsystem.

I ask your support of this project.

Sincerely,



Roger St.Pierre
President-Black Hills Mountain Bike Association




CITY OF RAPID CITY

Department of Parks and Recreation

515 West Boulevard
Rapid City, SD 57701
(605) 394-4175 -- FAX (605) 394-5307

To: Patsy Horton, Long Range Planning Division Manager
Community Planning & Development Services

From: Jeff Biegler, Director 
Parks & Recreation Department

Subject: Letter of Support for the Proposed Rails-to-Trails Project
SDDOT TAP Applications

Date: August 20, 2013

The Rapid City Parks & Recreation Department fully supports the pursuit of TAP funding for implementation of the first phase(s) of the proposed Mako Sica (*Badlands*), Rails-to-Trail Project.

If funding for construction of these phases is approved, the City of Rapid City Parks & Recreation Department will operate and maintain these sections in-line with its current operations of the Leonard Swanson Memorial Bike Path. These new facilities would be managed as year-round recreational paths that provide bicyclists and pedestrians with routes for alternate modes of transport and recreation.

As such, any future sections constructed within the City Limits would receive the same support by the City of Rapid City.