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April 7, 2022

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington DC, 20590

Re: The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission Expresses Strong Support for Albemarle County's FY22 RAISE Application: Three Notched Trail – Planning a Shared Use Path

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

Thank you for considering Albemarle County's FY22 application for the RAISE Grant Program. Titled "Three Notched Trail – Planning a Shared Use Path," this application would support Albemarle County's efforts to plan a shared use bicycle and pedestrian path extending from the Blue Ridge Tunnel (Afton, Virginia) through the town of Crozet to the City of Charlottesville. This project would be a collaborative effort including Nelson County and the City of Charlottesville, as well as Albemarle County.

There has long been local and Commonwealth-wide interest in the development of a shared use path along the historic Three Notched Road. This shared use path is highlighted in the Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan, the Crozet Master Plan, the Jefferson Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and the most recent Virginia Outdoors Plan.

The planning – and eventual construction – of the Three Notched Trail shared use path would connect the Region 10 Planning District with the now-extensive bicycle and pedestrian facilities constructed and planned throughout the Commonwealth. These facilities are proliferating because of the enormous value they bring to the local community: improving the safety of vulnerable road users, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, improving quality of life by increasing opportunities for physical activity and access to nature, and having a positive impact on the local economy – especially through increased tourism.

RAISE is the ideal opportunity for this multi-jurisdictional planning project that would have local, regional, and Commonwealth-wide benefits. Stakeholders, planners, and others must engage in 'big picture' thinking to identify the best overall alignment to meet the transportation and recreation needs of the many pedestrians and bicyclists who will use this facility.

The Three Notched Trail Shared Use Path would be an asset to the region and the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission supports Albemarle County's FY22 RAISE Application: Three Notched Trail – Planning a Shared Use Path.

Sincerely,

Christine Jacobs
Executive Director

Jesse Rutherford
Chair