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## Ohio River Trail Council

*"Joining communities through fitness, recreation, heritage and transportation networks"*

January 5, 2012

The Honorable Ray H. LaHood  
Secretary  
U. S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Re: Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program

Dear Secretary LaHood:

Please accept the enclosed Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program application in behalf of the Borough of Coraopolis, Pennsylvania. I can be available to answer any questions that you might have as you review the application for the **"Ohio River Trail - Phase I"**.

The Ohio River Trail Council (ORTC) was formed several years ago and began to undertake various planning and community revitalization related initiatives along the Ohio River Corridor. The **"Ohio River Trail - Phase I"** is part of the Ohio River Trail Council overall plan to develop a forty-one (41) mile multi-use land & water trail system along the Ohio River and its tributaries, known as the Ohio River Trail (ORT). The corridor runs from Coraopolis, PA to Ohioville, PA near the three-way intersection of Ohio, Pennsylvania and the northern tip of West Virginia.

In 2009, the Ohio River Trail Council, in partnership with eight of the South Shore communities (including Coraopolis Borough and Moon Township) and Beaver and Allegheny Counties received a Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA-DCNR) Planning Grant to prepare a feasibility study to link the South Shore communities together via a multi-modal trail and public access to and along the Ohio River.

The South Shore Feasibility Study is complete and has identified a series of proposed recommendations to create a trail which links the current 46-mile Montour Rail-Trail in Coraopolis Borough and Moon Township, through the eight communities to Monaca, Pa. The Study is available for download at <http://www.ohiorivertrail.org/index.php/ohio-river-trail-south-shore/orsst-feasibility-study>. From this study, comes the **"Ohio River Trail - Phase I"** request for funding.

The Ohio River Trail Council is in full support of a progressing state and national movement to develop greenways, especially since 1987 when President Reagan's Commission on "American Outdoors" recommended establishing a national greenways network and Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge vision in 2001 to create a network of trails throughout the Commonwealth, with a greenway in every community by 2020.

Greenways

Blueways



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The Ohio River Trail is part of the "Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area", "Lewis & Clark Trail" and is being considered for part of the *U.S Bicycle Route 50* and a portion of the *Underground Railroad Trail, Pittsburgh spur*. The Ohio River Trail will also follow sections of the "Great Path" and the "Lincoln Highway". Furthermore, the Ohio River Trail Council proposes the broad vision of a tri-state greenway system between Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

The Ohio River Trail will serve to complete a key segment in a nationally-significant trail. The proposed Ohio River Trail will unite the "Great Ohio Lake-to-River Greenway" in Columbiana County, Ohio to the "Great Allegheny Passage" in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and continuing on the C&O Canal Towpath National Historic Site, forming a mega-trail from the great lakes region to our nation's capitol. This mega-greenway has substantial support from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, as indicated in their Letter of Support.

The "Ohio River Trail – Phase I" project is an exciting transportation prospect in that it will connect two wonderful recreational projects, the seventy-eight (78) acre Allegheny County Sports & Athletic Complex at Coraopolis and the Moon Township Waterfront Park. These two sites are former industrial sites, and are brownfields under redevelopment. In fact, a U.S. EPA funded Partnership for Sustainable Communities Area-Wide Brownfields Planning Project has been underway to address reclamation and reuse of certain brownfields along the Ohio River including the site at Coraopolis, Pa.

Support for the Ohio River Trail Project is widespread. The importance of the Ohio River Trail Project has been recognized by the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, Conservation and Assistance (RTCA) Program by receiving a two year award. Most importantly, matching funds are anticipated from the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources along with county and municipal sources. The ORTC communities and partners are encouraged about this opportunity to start implementation of the Feasibility Studies through the "Ohio River Trail – Phase I", and to show on-the-ground successes, as indicated in the very strong fourteen (14) Letters of Support.

I respectfully request that FHWA, through the TCSP funding, support our mission to honor our past and build our future by providing recreation opportunities, environmental stewardship, heritage development, safe transportation networks and economic stimulus to our region.

Please feel free to call or email me with any questions. The Ohio River Trail Council office phone number is 724.728.2625. My personal cell phone is 724.462.3183 and email is [drvtroia@troiaeye.net](mailto:drvtroia@troiaeye.net).

Sincerely,

*Dr. Vincent Troia*

Dr. Vincent Troia  
Chief Executive Chairmen & CEO

Greenways

Blueways