

David Asmussen
Bowdoinham
LD 29

Hello, my name is David Asmussen, resident of Bowdoinham, president of the Bowdoinham Farmers' Market Association and a vendor at the market and we are enthusiastically in support of the Merrymeeting trail and LD29. I represent our vendors that set up a market at the Maily waterfront park in Bowdoinham from June to October. The current rail corridor which is proposed for the Merrymeeting trail forms one edge of the 30 acre park, and the market sets up right next to it. The rail corridor is such a prominent feature that many customers and vendors actually carry their products over the tracks to the parking lot. We have heard from customers that it could provide a conduit for them from Topsham and Richmond but more locally it connects to adjacent public land where Bowdoinham is developing another park with a hand-carry boat launch, pavilion and other amenities. The trail would also support having "Complete Streets" because the trail would directly intersect with our existing sidewalk network as well as our town's "Phase 2" plan for sidewalks. This features prominently in the town's plan for activity for aging residents which make up a significant portion of our customer base, and we want them to be able to walk to the market. Our farmers' market is also a weekend destination for young families that have told me they would love the opportunity to walk or bike to the market and then go on an adventure on the Merrymeeting trail. Maybe it's part of a long ride, but there is also interest in kids simply riding within the new park while parents are doing their market shopping.

Cyclists arriving at the market are particularly enthusiastic about the trail. Our market would be a destination for those on an excursion via the trail, but because we have a large parking lot, it would also be ideal as a trailhead. This could draw customers to our market from towns that do not connect to the trail. The whole area would be a real highlight on the trail, between the farmers market, the park, and the public docks on the Cathance river. There is also a pub, art center and general store nearby as it is the center of our town. This trail will be an incredible opportunity for our customers but also really great business for our vendors and we really would love to see it completed. Thank you for your hard work on this and please vote yes on LD29.