

February 25, 2025

My name is Bill Allen.

I am a resident of Hallowell, and I am writing in support of LD 29.

Currently, I am a member of Kennebec River Rail Trail Board of Supervisors, and of the Friends of the Kennebec River Rail trail.

20 years ago (approximately), I served on a Hallowell committee, and the goal was to select a route for the trail through Hallowell. If there had been enough space, I think we would have recommended building a trail next to the tracks, all the way to Second Street.

Eventually the council approved the existing route, which goes south on Water Street to the trail head at the Great Wall.

I think this works very well for the pedestrians, but as a cyclist, I find it inconvenient. I like to ride from Hallowell to Gardiner. Coming back, I am supposed cross the road at the bottom of the Great Wall, before I continue north. Then, after riding a short distance, I have to cross Water Street again to get to my home in Hallowell.

If DOT removed (or covered) the tracks between Greenville Street and Second Street, there would be no need for me to cross Water Street. I could ride straight to Second Street, and up the hill to my home. This would be better not just for me, but for others who aren't planning to ride further than Hallowell.

Even for those headed to Augusta, there is an advantage to extending the trail to Second Street. It gives the cyclist more choices, as to where they can cross Water Street.