

Ryan Gordon
Hallowell

Dear Members of the Transportation Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support LD 1370, An Act to Establish Trail Until Rail Corridors. I live in Hallowell, close to the disused Lower Road rail corridor, and my family and I would greatly benefit from multi-use trail infrastructure over this corridor. Multi-use trails are not just for recreation, they are critical transportation links and economic resources that help make communities and families like mine healthier, happier, safer, and wealthier.

My family of three has two full-time jobs but only one car. In order to commute to work and to local businesses, we use bicycles 12 months of the year because they are economical and healthy alternatives to automobiles. Every day we use the Kennebec River Rail Trail to get to Augusta or Gardiner, and we could not live our lives with only one car without this important transportation resource. In fact, we bought our house in Hallowell because it is close to this trail. My 8-year-old daughter also uses the trail to get to school, socialize with neighbors, and exercise. During my commutes, I have also met many other trail users, many of whom cannot drive cars (for example, they are children, disabled, or poor), who rely on this trail as critical infrastructure for their lives.

More families like mine who live along other disused rail corridors in Maine could benefit from similar multi-use transportation infrastructure, including the proposed Merrymeeting Trail from Gardiner to Brunswick. We would love to use the Merrymeeting Trail to visit friends and access businesses and other resources in Richmond, Bowdoinham, and Brunswick, all from our home without using a motor vehicle. Trails like these make people healthier and safer, especially children, and they increase community cohesion by connecting neighborhoods, bringing people together, and encouraging time outdoors. Trails also have significant economic impacts, because they bring visitors and residents into downtowns, support property values, improve public health, and save families large amounts of money that would otherwise be spent on automobiles and gasoline.

Please support LD 1370, and thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Ryan Gordon
Hallowell