



Heidi Wills
Seattle City Councilmember

December 20, 2002

Jack Tomkinson
I-5 Trails Coalition
4229 Baker Ave. NW
Seattle, WA 98107

Dear Jack,

Thank you for sharing with me your letter to the Seattle Parks Department regarding efforts by the I-5 Trails Coalition, Urban Sparks, and the Backcountry Bicycle Trails Club to develop I-5 open space as a recreational area featuring an urban mountain bike trail. This is a truly exciting proposal that has the potential to offer great recreational benefits community wide. I hope and trust that the City will lend the cooperation and support that this effort deserves.

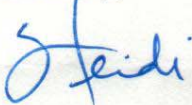
It is rewarding to see the collective knowledge and collaborative spirit the Trails Coalition and other stakeholder groups are bringing to this project. Preserving public open space in the manner you envision is creative, and is very much in keeping with the City's short- and long-term urban development goals. As our city becomes a more dense and more urban environment in coming years to keep up with growth demands and transit-oriented development goals, it is imperative that we take steps to preserve open space in ways that will offer recreational, economic and environmental benefits throughout our community.

I am happy to see that proponents of the urban bike trails project are exploring an array of public and private funding sources and design concepts. I believe this project will garner the public and financial support it needs as your vision for an urban park – one offering a wide variety of recreational opportunities, including novice and advanced mountain bike trails – becomes clear to city planners and the public at large. Broad public engagement in this process is needed, and I know that you and other project stakeholders are adept at maintaining open communications to ensure your concept becomes reality.

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The benefits of an urban recreational area and bike trail system are clearly apparent to the people of our great city. Support for the Burke-Gilman Trail shows the enthusiasm with which Seattle citizens have embraced multi-modal transit and recreational resources. I look forward to hearing about progress on the I-5 Open Space project and will do whatever I can to facilitate the City's cooperation with your efforts. Please feel free to call my office at 684-8808 or e-mail me at heidi.wills@seattle.gov with any updates or questions.

Sincerely,



Heidi Wills
Seattle City Councilmember

cc: Mayor Greg Nickels
City Councilmembers
Ken Bounds, Director, Seattle Parks Department
David Goldberg, Project Planner, Seattle Parks Department