To whom it may concern: November 13, 2023

I am writing this letter in support of the proposed bike path / trail from Fairview, UT, to Gunnison, UT. I have been cycling in Sanpete County for over thirty years and can easily envision what a blessing such a trail would represent to local cyclists. It would also attract cyclists from away to come and enjoy what the trail would have to offer.

Over the course of many years, I have seen the available safe roadways in Sanpete County become increasingly limited. I have always ridden with confidence in traffic based on my experience but there are more and more roads on which I either feel at risk with traffic conditions, or at the minimum, the traffic greatly reduces the quality of the experience due to stress and noise. I am specifically referring to such roadways as Highway 89, Highway 132 through Chester to Moroni and Fountain Green, as well as the highway between Moroni and Mt. Pleasant. Instead, cyclists remain safer riding back roads, which limit options for rides and which are even inaccessible for those who live in Ephraim and Manti. Cyclists in those southern communities have to ride Highway 89 in order to access roads with less traffic and safer experiences. The bottom line is that with growth and today’s traffic realities, motorists are driving faster and in greater numbers, posing a significantly greater risk to local cyclists on those roads. It is clear that a county bike trail would provide excellent access to the quieter back roads, for all residents, as well as a great recreational opportunity in and of itself. Those cyclists currently intimidated by riding busy highways would feel welcome and safe when riding a dedicated bike path.

I have experience riding a trail very similar to the one which has been proposed. Each summer we spend a holiday in northern Wisconsin, an area home to a dedicated non-motorized trail which runs over fifty miles, end to end. I have ridden it many times, including end to end and back again. It is enjoyed by a wide variety of people, including walkers, runners, and cyclists. The opportunity to ride with no traffic, and the interaction with other similar-minded people, has proven very positive. It has been such a boon to the tourists and local residents. The path winds its way through the forest, along parallel to local roads, and provides access to small towns and cafes where users can rest or enjoy a drink or a bite to eat. That would be my vision for such a path in Sanpete County.

In short, I see the proposed trail system as a logical addition to the many recreational opportunities currently available in Sanpete. However, existing trails cater to a motorized clientele. The outstanding scenery and rolling terrain offer equivalent opportunities to non-motorized transportation and recreation. Please consider this excellent idea, moving forward.

Bill Bedford

Wasatch Academy, Board of trustee member