



Chambers Creek Regional Park
Environmental Services Building
9850 64th St W
University Place, WA 98467

September 1, 2022

RE: The Foothills Rails-to-Trails Coalition
Dr. Tail Plaza Letter of Support

Coalition Leadership, Members and Supporters,

Pierce County Parks is pleased to support your latest initiative of advance the use and value of the Foothills National Recreation Trail – the development of Dr. Tait Plaza in Buckley, WA.

While Parks completed a key and final link in the 21-mile Foothills National Recreation Trail from Puyallup to Buckley Trail in 2018, we recognize that the passion and vision for the Foothills Trail far preceded any government responsibility or involvement. The heart of the Foothills Trail was, and always will be, found in the hearts and minds of passionate citizens such as Dr. Tait and the Foothills Rails-to-Trails membership. The passion that created the Coalition in 1984 remains today and has been a key part in ensuring Puyallup, Orting, South Prairie, and Buckley are connected, with an emerging link over the White River into King County going into construction this year and further work being done for a South Prairie to Mount Rainier route.

We recorded nearly 1 million uses on the Foothills Trail in 2021 – and that is only what we capture from trail counters and race events. We know that many daily commuters and weekend warriors walk, bike, stroll, run and meander along the trail to schools, retail shops, town centers, scenic vistas, creeks and meadows. Every new users reaction is the same, 'wow – that was amazing'.

I am glad that you are seeking to capture the legacy of what was, what is and what will be. It is deserving that the Dr. Tait Plaza be in Buckley, where the first section was built in 1992. We know the effort it took to get the 21-miles connected in 2018 and the soon-to-be bridge pathway to King County. We know it may take another 10-20 years to fully link to the mountain. It may end up being 50 years in total...50 miles in total...and a history that riders in 2030 wouldn't know if you don't capture it now and give it the recognition that is deserved.

The Foothills Trail has proven the case for the need for more trails in Pierce County and the County's Regional Trails Plan calls for a built-out system of nearly 300 miles. While we are barely 20% there, Pierce County Parks will continue to build trails as the number one park and recreation priority for our citizens for years to come and its our pleasure to do it alongside partners like the FRTT Coalition.

Having a plaza in Buckley will not only provide a place for users to rest, it will also encourage them to look back and remember, and to look forward and dream. Thank you for pursuing this project to not only benefit current users, but to also inspire the next generation of trail enthusiasts.

In full support, 
Roxanne Miles, Director
Pierce County Parks & Recreation