



June 25, 2009

John J. Matheussen
Chief Executive Officer
Delaware River Port Authority
One Port Center
2 Riverside Drive
P.O. Box 1949
Camden, NJ 08101-1949

Dear Mr. Matheussen:

On behalf of the Board of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), I am writing to express our support for the selection of the light rail alternative utilizing the Conrail rail right-of-way in the expansion of PATCO service from Camden to Glassboro. We find the selected alternative consistent with DVRPC long-range plan goals and endorse the phased approach using state funding to "quick start" construction.

The selected plan calls for diesel light-rail trains to run 18 miles alongside an existing Conrail freight line to serve Glassboro, Pitman, Mantua, Wenonah, Woodbury, Deptford, West Deptford, Westville, Bellmawr, Brooklawn and Gloucester City. The line provides connections to PATCO and RiverLINE trains at the Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden, where passengers could catch trains to Philadelphia or Trenton.

The light-rail alternative was the one recommended by the state Office of Smart Growth and State Planning Commission, and one which DVRPC staff had found most compatible with the goals expressed in our Long-Range Vision for Transit. The selected alternative would employ diesel light rail cars similar to the RiverLINE service run by New Jersey Transit. The success of the RiverLINE in both its ridership and its ability to stir economic revival along its corridor, serves as an apt model for proceeding with your plans.

We also believe that a phased arrangement first to Woodbury using \$500 million in funding from the state Transportation Trust Fund with the second phase to Glassboro dependent on future funding, accelerates construction, providing community benefits sooner. With funding and environmental approvals, the line could run to Woodbury in five years and to Glassboro and Rowan University in six to ten.

All in all, we believe the chosen alternative to be beneficial to the communities in South Jersey, meeting the goals of our *Connections* plan and enhancing responsible mobility in the region.

Very Truly Yours

Barry J. Seymour
Executive Director