May 17, 2017

Honorable Eric Holcomb
Governor of Indiana

Mr. Cameron Clark, Director
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Ms. Elaine Bedel
President, Indiana Economic Development Corporation

A regional project worthy of support – the Mounds Greenway

Governor Holcomb, Mr. Clark, and Ms. Bedel:

As Mayor of Noblesville, I recognize the value in building our city’s and region’s quality of place. We strive to be a welcoming community, one that recognizes the importance of art and cultural attractions, a healthy and clean environment, and ample places for outdoor activities, gatherings with friends and family, and for quiet reflection. As a state without mountains or a coast, we have to think outside of the box to successfully create a greater sense of place in our community. As such, our riverfront, historic downtown, city parks, greenways, trails, and open spaces serve as both enormous points of pride and valuable quality of life amenities.

Along with the people of Noblesville, my administration has worked hard to connect and enhance the great places in our community – Federal Hill Commons, the Midland Trace Trail, our Riverwalk, efforts to conserve green space, work to connect our historic downtown to the river, the designation of our downtown Cultural Arts District, and efforts to improve trail connectivity in our own community and with others. In particular, our residents place a high value on trails for both connectivity and for the enjoyment of nature. As Mayor, I can tell you that investing in these amenities has paid dividends for our city.

That is why I write you today to urge your support of one excellent project that will further build our quality of place while connecting us to our neighboring communities in central and east central Indiana -- the proposed Mounds Greenway. The Mounds Greenway would be a linear park and trail network following the White River from Muncie to Anderson and ultimately Indianapolis. The Greenway plan would conserve the free-flowing White River, its forested floodplain, and the historic resources found
along its path, connecting communities to each other - and to the river – while contributing to economic well being on a regional scale. What’s more, completing this “missing link” between Anderson and Muncie sets the stage for a regional trail network of remarkable dimension.

The greenway would eventually continue through Hamilton County, connecting the trail networks of Noblesville, Westfield, Carmel and Fishers before reaching the White River Greenway in Indianapolis. It is my desire to, one day, see Noblesville’s Riverwalk become part of this fully connected Muncie to Indianapolis Mounds Greenway.

The Mounds Greenway Economic, Health and Environmental Benefits Analysis forecasts that the Greenway between Anderson and Muncie would produce $13 million in annual economic, health and environmental benefits, boost neighboring property values by nearly $33 million, and lead to over $10 million in construction spending. These forecasted benefits are in line with the actual economic outcomes being produced by existing greenway projects throughout the U.S, and given the ultimate goal of a fully connected Muncie to Indianapolis White River Greenway, the potential future impact would be far greater.

Given its potential as a regional outdoor recreation, conservation, economic, and quality of life project of substantial scope, for Noblesville, and for the central and east central Indiana regions, I am declaring my support for the Mounds Greenway and urge you to join in making this proposal a reality.

Very truly yours,

John Ditslear, Mayor
City of Noblesville