



MAYOR ALEX B. MORSE

CITY OF HOLYOKE

July 6, 2012

Frank DePaola, Administrator  
MassDOT, Highway Division  
Ten Park Plaza, Suite 4160  
Boston, MA 02116

RE: HOLYOKE CANALWALK EXTENSION PHASE II – PROJECT NO. 603263

Dear Mr. Stegemann,

The Canalwalk is a vital project for the City of Holyoke and its revitalization efforts. It serves as the link to connect many projects in downtown Holyoke and will spur private investment within the canal district. There are significant public and private projects that are currently being constructed or in the planning stage, and the timely construction of the Canalwalk on its existing schedule of construction beginning next Spring is crucial to the other projects being completed in a timely manner and realizing their full potential.

As you know, transportation infrastructure improvements play a critical role in any revitalization plan for a community. Upgraded infrastructure creates public investment that will, in turn, spur private investment. The efforts that have begun through the Phase I Canalwalk, Transportation Center, Veterans' Park upgrades, Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center, City Parking Garage reconstruction project, and the Knowledge Corridor Passenger Rail project have created a catalytic effect on Holyoke's road to redevelopment. All of these items are key components considered within Holyoke's Urban Renewal Plan that is currently in the final draft stages.

The Canalwalk encourages pedestrian and bicycle traffic, so open-air cafes, restaurants, and festivals can thrive here. This major improvement will draw tourism dollars to Holyoke and bring shoppers into our stores, restaurants, galleries, and jobs. As more people spend their leisure time exploring this historic neighborhood, the idea of living and working in Holyoke will brighten both locally and throughout the region, attracting more businesses and residents to the area. Investment has already begun in anticipation of Phase II including the recent sale and redevelopment of several buildings along Race Street directly adjacent to the project.

In order for these projects to continue to be successful and others to join them, all parties must be committed to completing the public investments in a timely manner. I, along with my staff, am committed to working together with yourself and your staff to make the Holyoke Canalwalk a success story and an example of how collaboration on these projects can make a difference.

We look forward to your continued support of this vital community endeavor.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alex Morse", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Mayor Alex B. Morse