

# The Friends of the Chester Creek Branch, Inc.

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## Press Release

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Media, PA, - The Friends of the Chester Creek Branch, Inc. ("Friends") is greatly appreciative of today's vote by Delaware County Council to approve a contract with SEPTA acquiring the rights to the Chester Creek Branch rail line. This contract and another contract between Friends and the County will provide the opportunity to convert the unused Chester Creek Branch into a multi-purpose, non-motorized rail-trail.

These contracts resulted from years of negotiation between the County, SEPTA and Friends. They could not have been successfully completed without the leadership of County Council, especially Councilman Andy Reilly. While years of work went into negotiating these contracts, today's vote and approval only concludes the first phase of this project.

The Chester Creek Branch traverses Aston, Chester, and Middletown Townships in Delaware County. Friends is proposing to build this rail-trail in sections. The first section would be approximately three miles in length. It would parallel the scenic Chester Creek from Lenni Road in Middletown to Creek Road, also in Middletown. This first section would connect with the Linvilla and Indian Orchard trails and could provide access to the Aston-Middletown Little League Fields. Construction of this section would also allow for the rehabilitation of the historic bridge over Pennell Road in Aston. However, prior to any

engineering or construction, Friends must successfully complete the next phase of the project.

The next phase of this project will involve meetings with the elected officials of Aston and Middletown Townships, emergency responders, security officials, and the general public. The purpose of these meetings is to fully explain the rail-trail concept for this first section, to take comments, and finally to seek approval to move forward with the rail-trail. Friends expects these meetings to occur during the last calendar quarter of 2005.

The popularity and benefits of rail-trails have been proven throughout the country. Over 13,000 miles of unused rail lines have already been converted into trails, a large percentage of them in Pennsylvania. However, Delaware County has only one other rail-trail, the P & W Trail in Radnor, which was recently dedicated.

The Friends of the Chester Creek Branch is an Aston based not-for-profit corporation. For more information on Friends, please visit our website at [www.chestercreektrail.org](http://www.chestercreektrail.org), or write to P.O. Box 2313, Aston, PA 19014.