



October 7, 2018

Mr. Kevin Corbett, Executive Director  
NJ TRANSIT Headquarters  
1 Penn Plaza East  
Newark NJ 07105

*Re: Plan to Suspend Train Service on Princeton Branch*

Dear Mr. Corbett,

We are a non-profit citizens group with a mission of preserving Princeton's rail link to Princeton Junction. We understand that New Jersey Transit plans to suspend service on the Princeton Branch for three months or more in order to use its equipment elsewhere during system-wide installations of Positive Train Control (PTC) technology. We ask you to reconsider this plan .

Dinky service is an economic lifeline for Princeton and the region. The service that the Princeton Branch performs for commuters, occasional users and students is a critical feature of our community's commitment to sustainable transit and to support for mobility options that reduce reliance on the automobile. A months long suspension of service will lead to major disruptions for Dinky riders who will be forced to either drive to Princeton Junction or use bus alternatives with longer travel times. In addition to the immediate effects, the proposed lengthy suspension can be expected to result in a net loss of ridership, with consequent negative impacts on the environment as former riders abandon mass transit in favor of the automobile. As you know, ridership has yet to recover from the net 22% loss that followed the station relocation.

Because of the adverse effects from the proposed suspension, almost 500 of those riders have signed an online petition urging you to adopt an alternative plan.<sup>1</sup> The petition reads:

We are among the many passengers who rely on the Princeton Branch Dinky train for daily commutes to or from work or school and who will be severely and adversely affected by New Jersey Transit's announced plans to shut down this train service for three or more months or beginning in October. The provision of bus service to Princeton Junction on congested Alexander Road is not a substitute for a four-minute train ride. Many of us will end up driving our cars, at both personal expense and expense to the environment. If service is in fact being shut down to free up Princeton Branch equipment in connection with the installation of safety technology, we urge New Jersey Transit to find alternative approaches.

---

<sup>1</sup> A link to the petition can be found in the following news story:  
<https://planetprinceton.com/2018/10/03/dinky-train-passengers-start-petition-calling-on-nj-transit-to-scrap-plans-to-stop-service-for-three-months/>

We ask you to listen to your riders and reverse the decision to suspend train service on the Princeton Branch. A plan that will inevitably discourage the use of Princeton's long-standing mass transit link to the Junction is not in the best interests of Princeton or the State, and reflects a shortsighted allocation of public resources.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.

Sincerely,

Anita Garoniak  
President

cc. Liz Lempert, Mayor, Princeton  
Jenny Crumiller, President, Princeton Council  
Senator Kip Bateman  
Assemblyman Dan Benson  
Assemblyman Roy Freiman  
Assemblyman Andrew Zwicker