

Robert Brent to Thomas Jefferson, March 9, 1807, from Thomas Jefferson and the National Capital. Edited by Saul K. Padover.

Robert Brent to Jefferson

City of Washington March 9th 1807 recd Mar. 9.

Sir

The last Congress having appropriated 3000\$ to be applied under your direction to the improvement of Roads Streets and Avenues I must ask the favor of you, if you do not deem it improper, to direct an application of part of that fund to the opening and improveing the Delaware and Maryland Avenues from the Capitol to their intersection with the potowmack.

The First of these Avenues will open a communication between the Capitol and Greenleafs point, the Rope Walk and Magasine; and, if improved, some arrangement will probably be made for establishing packets at its junction with the River to ply between Alexandria and this City, which, you will readily perceive, by viewing the map, will afford the nearest point of communication in that way.

The Second, Maryland Avenue, leads to a situation on the potowmack at which a Ferry is about to be established, thus while these Avenues will afford two additional communications from Alexandria, they will add much to the convenience of persons now settled, or who may settle, on the point or in the

neighbourhood of either of them.

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I am informed that measures will probably be taken to finish in the course of the ensuing summer, the Houses which have been so long in a ruinous state at the point, and that they will be occupied by respectable and Reputable Inhabitants. By opening the Delaware Avenue it will add to the inducement of persons wishing to settle in them: Besides the present population at that place is not inconsiderable.

I can not ask you for this application of money unless you see in it a proper discharge of the Trust which is confided in you. But if you see no impropriety in the application as it regards this trust, I would add this observation as some inducement to the application, that no original proprietor made greater sacrifices in comfort and convenience than did the late Mr. Young, whose Family now represents him, by yielding up his property for the City; and none have had less of the public money laid out on the land given up by them, by which that which they retained could be brought into action.

I have the honor to be With respect & esteem Sir

Your Mo Obt Sert Robert Brent

[Ms., *Jefferson Papers*, Library of Congress.]