



Committee: Directly to Council
Committee Review: N/A
Staff: Aaron Kraut, Senior Legislative Aide
Purpose: To introduce agenda item – no vote expected
Keywords: #CapitalTrailsNetwork

AGENDA ITEM #5B
July 13, 2021
Introduction

SUBJECT

Resolution to support completing the Capital Trails Network and Capital Trails Coalition Top 40 Priority Projects. Councilmember Friedson is the lead sponsor. Council President Hucker, Council Vice President Albornoz, and Councilmembers Navarro, Katz, Riemer, Glass and Rice are co-sponsors.

EXPECTED ATTENDEES

None

DESCRIPTION/ISSUE

This resolution expresses support for completing the Capital Trails Network and the Capital Trails Coalition Top 40 Priority Projects. The two Top 40 Priority Projects of the Capital Trails Network in Montgomery County are the Purple Line Trail and Metropolitan Branch Trail. Construction on both of the projects is underway and further funding to complete construction is programmed in the County's six-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

This report contains:

Draft resolution

Pages 1-4

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**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead sponsor: Councilmember Friedson

Co-sponsors: Council President Hucker, Council Vice President Albornoz, Councilmembers Navarro,
Katz, Riemer, Glass, and Rice

SUBJECT: Completing the Capital Trails Network and Capital Trails Coalition Top 40 Priority Projects

Background

1. The Capital Trails Network is a connected system of multi-use trails (largely off-road) located in the jurisdictions that compromise the Metropolitan Washington region, including Washington, DC, the City of Alexandria, the City of Falls Church, Fairfax City, and Prince George’s, Montgomery, Fairfax, and Arlington Counties.
2. The Capital Trails Coalition seeks to create a world-class network of 881 miles of multi-use trails that are equitably distributed throughout the Washington D.C. metropolitan region (of which 479 miles are already complete).
3. The regional trails network will transform public life by providing healthy, low-stress access to open space and active transportation for people of all ages and abilities to their daily destinations around the region.
4. When the trails network is complete, nearly four million people will live within a two-mile walk or ride of the network, giving them access to jobs, businesses, transit, and recreational opportunities, while also reducing the region’s greenhouse gas emissions by bolstering its sustainable transportation network. Completing the 40 priority trail projects (91 miles of trail) will bring access to an additional 231,000 residents in underserved areas that have historically lacked safe access to trails and open space (61% of whom are Black and 14% of whom are Hispanic).
5. Regional local governments have already made significant progress toward planning, designing and constructing the (40) priority projects with 21 miles of trail currently in construction and \$100 million already allocated to planned projects. This regional commitment will help ensure the adequate resources to complete the remaining miles by 2025.
6. The Capital Trail Coalition projects are also County/City priorities that will be a focus when requesting federal and state funding streams.
7. The National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board, our region’s Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) have both recently adopted the National Capital Trail Network, which includes the 40 priority trail projects identified by the Capital Trails Coalition, as a regional priority. The network is already being used to prioritize funding from federal, state and local grant programs including the

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and the Transportation-Land Use Connections (TLC) Program.

8. The Capital Trails Coalition Network forms the crossroads of multiple regional and national long-distance trails, including the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, the Grand History Trail, the September 11th National Memorial Trail, the American Discovery Trail, the C&O Canal Towpath, the Great American Rail-Trail, and the East Coast Greenway, which collectively span 33 states and tens of thousands of miles.
9. The results of a recent “Voices of the Region” survey conducted by MWCOG, which asked more than 2,400 Washington Region residents about their travel before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, show that residents’ travel patterns have changed as a result of the pandemic and that they would like to continue to walk (53%) and bike (26%) more and drive less post-pandemic. Additionally, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has found that 65% of over 800 participants surveyed in the Washington Region consider trails and open space to be important to them.
10. COVID-19 has highlighted the importance of investing in greenspace. According to the 2020 Menino Survey of Mayors, three out of four mayors expect residents to spend more time visiting parks and greenspace than they did before the pandemic, and roughly two-thirds expect residents will spend more time biking or walking. In the same survey, 38% of Mayors expect parks and recreation to see dramatic financial cuts in their community.
11. Completing the trail network would make the Washington Metropolitan Area a model for other regions across the nation. As working remotely becomes the new normal for more people following the COVID-19 pandemic, our area will be competing with other regions to attract top talent. A robust regional trail network will make our region more competitive for attracting and retaining new residents and businesses, and is estimated to generate \$1.02 billion in economic impact each year.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

The Council hereby endorses the concept of the region completing the Top 40 Priority Projects of the Capital Trails Network by 2025 and the full Capital Trails Network by 2030. The Council requests the County Executive and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, as well as the State of Maryland and the Federal Government, to assist in prioritizing Montgomery County Capital Trails Network projects for funding.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

Selena Mendy Singleton, Esq.
Clerk of the Council

Top 40 Priority Projects

Trail Name	Jurisdiction	Length (miles)
Rhode Island Avenue Trolley Trail	Prince George's	0.45
Long Bridge Section	DC/Arlington/ NPS	0.45
Memorial Bridge Sections	NPS/Arlington	.2
WB&A Bridge	Prince George's/ Anne Arundel	0.1
Oxon Run Trail (Forest Heights)	DC/ Prince George's/NPS	0.9
Arboretum Connector	DC/NPS	1.11
South Capitol St. Trail	DC	3.33
Central Ave Trail Connection	Prince George's	2
TR Bridge to N Meade St	Arlington	0.2
Piscataway Creek Trail	Prince George's	16.81
Little Paint Branch Trail	Prince George's	2.22
Georgetown Bridge over Rock Creek	DC/NPS	0.2
Key Bridge Connection to Capital Crescent Trail	DC/NPS	0.32
110 Trail/Cemetery Wall Trail	Arlington	0.73
Louisiana Ave	DC	0.59
Backlick Run Trail	Alexandria	0.77
Rock Creek Park Trail	DC/NPS	3.55
Washington Boulevard Trail Phase II	Arlington	0.59
Virginia Railroad Express/ South County East West Trail	Fairfax	17.1
Arlington Boulevard Trail	Fairfax/Arlington	7.2
Custis (I-66) Trail Extension	Fairfax	16.15
Purple Line Trail	Montgomery	4.5
Suitland Parkway Trail	Prince George's/NPS	2.4
Oxon Run Trail	Prince George's/NPS	0.9
Prince George's Connector	Prince George's	0.38
Metropolitan Branch Trail	DC	2.4
New York Ave Trail	DC	1.7
Anacostia Riverwalk Trail	DC/NPS	1.51
East Capitol Bridge Connector (Whitney Memorial Bridge Pedestrian and Bicycle Access)	DC/NPS	0.39
Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard (MD 704)/WB&A Extension	Prince George's	6.5
Metropolitan Branch Trail	Montgomery	.62
Pennsylvania Ave Sidepath	Prince George's	3.9
Eastern Ave Trail	DC	4.5
Fort Circle Parks Trail	DC/NPS	2

Cabin Branch Trail	Prince George's	3.8
Shepherd Branch Trail	DC	3.1
North Beauregard Street	Alexandria	1.8
Connection Trail for Anacostia River Trail to Marvin Gaye Trail	DC	0.4
Anacostia Riverwalk-SW	DC/NPS	1.61
Suitland Bog Connector	Prince George's	1.8