



Calvin S. Hawkins, II  
Chair  
At-Large Council Member

July 22, 2021

Secretary Pete Buttigieg  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I write to you in support of the Maryland-National-Capital Park and Planning Commission's (M-NCPPC) request for Federal discretionary grant funding through the RAISE grant program for continued development of our shared use path system. This network of connected, off-road, paved, trails functions as our arterial bicycling and walking system inside of the Capital Beltway. As a result of past work with our District of Columbia partners, this trails network continues directly into the District to the Anacostia River waterfront where the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) is located. It provides close-to-home recreation and time-saving, non-polluting transportation for residents of inner Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, as well as the District of Columbia.

M-NCPPC, on behalf of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) in Prince George's County and Montgomery Parks in Montgomery County, is submitting a funding request for the *Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity* (RAISE) infrastructure program provided by USDOT. This package of new trail segments and trail rehabilitation projects make up a set of connected and mutually supporting trail improvements to ensure that, when the Purple Line opens, we will have a first-class trail network connecting to the new transit stations, as well as to the existing Metrorail stations along the Green, Red and Blue line corridors. This package of projects are all high priorities of the Capital Trails Coalition which has identified a set of trail extensions and gap closures that will move the region toward a fully connected and first-class active transportation system.

Federal funding support will enable us to speed up completion of the following set of projects for which we have already initiated design and partial funding support:

- Rehabilitation and trail/roadway crossing improvements for the Sligo Creek Trail in both Counties.
- Completion of the long-awaited Maryland section of the Anacostia Gateway/PG Connector Trail linking Fort Totten Metro with West Hyattsville Metro and linking the Metropolitan Branch Trail with the entire 45-mile Anacostia River Trail Network.

- Jump starting Phase 2 of the Central Avenue Trail and extension of the Marvin Gaye Trail from NE DC to and through Seat Pleasant and Capital Heights to Largo along the Blue Line corridor.
- Rehabilitating and upgrading the Rock Creek Trail inside the beltway and linking to Beach Drive and the Rock Creek Trail in DC.
- Completing Phase 1 of extending the Suitland Parkway Trail from the DC border into Prince George's County at the Naylor Road Metrorail Green Line station, through an arterial intersection that has seen seven (7) pedestrian fatalities in the last six (6) years.
- Rehabilitating the Montgomery County Section of the Northwest Branch Trail and paving the connection to the largely Latino community in the Oakview Drive / Broadacres community.

On June 17<sup>th</sup> the Maryland-National Capital Planning Commission met as the full Commission and adopted a resolution in support of this grant request to USDOT (see attached). On June 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Prince George's County Council unanimously adopted CR-62-2021 pledging County support for completion of 40 high priority projects in the visionary Capital Trails Network completion plan, including all of the new trail segments packaged for this request (see attached).

Please note that M-NCPPC is requesting support for projects that are in the design phase but have only partial funding. This request directs our partial funding as a match to leverage federal funds and enables us to complete these projects on a faster timeline.

Speaking for the whole Council, we are proud of our amazing trail system. This package of related projects does not even include other fully, locally-funded projects that also contribute toward completion of Capital Trail Network and our local priorities, such as Phase 1 of the Central Avenue Connector Trail, the Capital Crescent and Wayne Avenue Trails under construction along with the Purple line; Northwest Branch Trail extensions and security lighting projects in Langley Park and Cottage City, rehabilitation and extension of the Oxon Run trail in Forest Heights, just to name a few.

We are excited to have had tremendous support from the National Parks Service (NPS) in preparing this request, and would love to have the opportunity to show you and your staff and the Interim NPS Director Shawn Bengé, what we have done (Anacostia River Trail Kenilworth-Bladensburg segment), and can continue to do with a strong partnership with Federal agencies in the Washington, DC metro area.

Sincerely,



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Calvin S. Hawkins, II  
Chair  
Prince George's County Council