



The Honorable Thomas E. Dernoga, Chair
Prince George's County Council
Wayne K. Curry Administration Building
Largo, Maryland 20774

April 18, 2023

Good evening Chair Dernoga and Members of the County Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. My name is Kalli Krumpas and I am here on behalf of the Capital Trails Coalition - which is made up of more than 75 member organizations, including government agencies, businesses, and community groups across Prince George's and Montgomery Counties in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and Northern Virginia. Our goal is to create an equitable, connected, and low-stress trail network that will transform public life by providing access to open space and reliable transportation for people of all ages and abilities.

We know Prince George's County's trails are valued by residents. The County's Trails Master Plan shared that:

- nearly 80% of residents think it's very important to add, expand, and improve trails and
- two-thirds of residents said walking, biking, and biking are the most important activities to priorities in the County's parks.

Meanwhile, the Maryland Department of Transportation's report of 2022 Traffic Fatalities shows that the County had the most traffic-related fatalities of all counties in the state, with 121 total fatalities in 2022. In fact, the next highest county, Baltimore County, had about half the number with 62 total fatalities.

Off-street trails provide safe options for people to exercise and get around, they enable human-powered transportation routes, and they support local business and tourism. We thank MNCPPC's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for their regional leadership in multi-use trail development and maintenance and call for continued support and funding.

The county has some great existing trails, but there's more work to be done: especially in the central and southern parts of the county, to complete the more than 200 miles of planned trails needed to complete the Capital Trails Network.

To that end, we applaud DPR's continued focus on trails as a top priority in their FY24 budget. In particular, we're glad to see the prioritization of the design and construction of the Prince George's County Connector Trail, initiation of the Piscataway Trail Implementation Plan, and the implementation of the countywide trails signage plan. However, DPR needs additional staff to support trail planning, development, and maintenance. We also recommend increased prioritization of the Oxon Run Trail, especially as other jurisdictions are working to improve and

rehabilitate other sections of this important multi-jurisdictional connector.

In addition to building out the trail network, we call for adequate resources for the maintenance of existing facilities, especially routes with high usage. The Park Ranger Trail Ambassador program is an important component. The county must continue to support this program to help all people feel welcome and safe on the county's trails and to help reach the county's 2024 goal of completing monthly trail inspections of every trail to help advance public safety.

We know that multi-use trails are a popular amenity. But they are also critical pieces of sustainable transportation and recreation infrastructure that are vital to our mental and physical health and to supporting the economics of our community. We look forward to working with you to complete the trail network.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kalli Krumpas
Capital Trails Coalition