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conservancy

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White House Infrastructure Agenda Fails to Invest in the Transportation Americans Need

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Responds to Infrastructure Plans Shared During State of the Union Address

WASHINGTON—Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) responded to President Trump’s push for a massive 2018 infrastructure agenda during the State of the Union with muted optimism and skepticism.

“When we look at the real-world outcomes that President Trump aims to achieve by investing in infrastructure—trails and active transportation networks excel at them all. Many of these projects bring considerable private, state and local investment to the table; federal active transportation investments deliver superior economic and social impact, and many regional trail projects are economic engines for rural communities. Investments in trails, walking and biking consistently stand up against every metric that the White House has put forward for evaluating infrastructure projects, yet this vital infrastructure is currently absent from the debate,” said Kevin Mills, senior vice president of policy at RTC.

“The president is right that our country’s infrastructure is in disrepair. The nation needs to maintain its roads, highways, bridges and railroads, while also investing in a balanced set of transportation choices that includes trail, walking and biking infrastructure. Only then will this infrastructure plan meet 21st-century needs and deliver meaningful outcomes to the nation—from jobs to increased tax revenues, affordable mobility, health and environmental impact.”

“While we’re optimistic about the much-needed focus on infrastructure investment that this proposal initiates, we will remain skeptical until smaller-scale projects with the potential to deliver outsized impact—such as trails and active transportation networks—are taken seriously. What is needed is an authentic, realistic national funding plan that delivers sufficient investment in balanced mobility choices and retains public responsibility for defining transportation priorities,” said Mills.

RTC is calling on the Administration—and ultimately Congress—to ensure that connected trail infrastructure and active transportation networks are included in any future federal infrastructure legislation. Specifically, this includes increasing funding for active transportation, focusing investment on completing trail and active transportation networks, and including active transportation projects across federal transportation programs.

Advanced Sports Enterprises as well as member organizations of the Partnership for Active Transportation, America Walks and LOCUS, have echoed RTC’s call for robust federal investment in trails, walking and biking as part of any future federal infrastructure legislation. For more information, visit RTC’s website.

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is the nation’s largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to connecting people and communities by creating a nationwide network of public trails, many from former rail lines. Connect with RTC at railstotrails.org and @railstotrails on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).