



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Jan. 9, 2023

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New Federal Investment Marks Big Win for Baltimore Greenway Trails Network

Rep. Sarbanes (Md.-3), Sens. Van Hollen (D-Md.) and Cardin (D-Md.) secure \$2.5 million in Community Project Funding, demonstrating federal momentum behind investments in walking and biking infrastructure

BALTIMORE—The [Baltimore Greenway Trails Network](#), a developing 35-mile trail system connecting more than 75 neighborhoods citywide, scored a significant win in the federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Omnibus Appropriations Bill passed by Congress at the end of December, according to Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), one of the organizations championing the project. Rep. John Sarbanes (Md.-3) and Sens. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) and Ben Cardin (D-Md.) [secured \\$2.5 million in Community Project Funding](#) that will help to advance the remaining 10 miles of undeveloped trails in the Greenway Trails Network plan.

“The \$2.5 million allotment to Baltimore City in the omnibus bill is a boost that the city needs,” said Brant Fischer, president of Brewers Hill Neighbors, a community association working to advance the trail network. “This brings us closer to adding more greenspace and connectivity between neighborhoods. Parts of neighborhoods, most notably Brewers Hill, lack viable greenspace. This investment brings our community closer to achieving that goal we have long been waiting for.”

Partners for the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network envision creating connections between the city’s 25 miles of established trails—comprising the Jones Falls Trail, Gwynns Falls Trail and Herring Run Trail—with a goal to link the city’s diverse neighborhoods to popular destinations, including universities, hospitals, museums, parks, schools, waterfronts and employment centers. As it’s completed, the trail network will provide equitable access to open space and reliable transportation and recreation for people of all ages and abilities, increasing mobility and economic opportunity across the city, and generating a projected economic impact of as much as \$28 million each year.

“This investment in Baltimore’s trail network is exciting, especially since we know that trails can bring so many benefits to communities,” said Kate Foster, Mid-Atlantic director of trail development for Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC). “Once complete, this project will extend the health, economic and environmental benefits of trails to more of Baltimore’s neighborhoods. We appreciate the leadership provided by Representative Sarbanes and Senators Van Hollen and Cardin. Their investment gives the project momentum as we seek to secure the full funding needed to build out the remaining 10 miles.”

“The addition of public multimodal trails will provide safer trails for Baltimore, which are greatly needed throughout the city,” said Dr. Nia Reed-Jones, president and executive director of Black People Ride Bikes. “These types of trails benefit people of all ages, including pedestrians, cyclists and those using other forms of nonmotorized transportation, providing a safer way to move throughout the city.”

Mayor Brandon Scott expressed in his administration’s Transition Report, 100-Day Agenda and First-Year Action Plan that the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network is a benefit to the city and a vehicle for advancing multiple priority goals, stating, “[The greenway is] essential to my plans to increase equitable access to public open space and essential destinations while improving public health and economic outcomes across the city.”

“Youth groups in Baltimore will benefit greatly from the opportunity for greater access to trails and recreation. Our Panther Outdoor Society has to travel out of the city often to find suitable trails for mountain biking practice,” said Scott Johnson, the community coordinator for Belair-Edison School.

The community project funding for the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network is one example of momentum behind federal investments in trails and active transportation infrastructure. Dozens of community projects included in the omnibus bill support trail and active transportation infrastructure. In addition, the federal omnibus bill includes \$45 million to kick-start the [Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program \(ATIIP\)](#), a new program that provides dedicated funding for the planning and construction of safe and connected trail and active-transportation networks and long-distance spine trails. Learn more about the demand for trails, walking and biking infrastructure and available federal funding at railstotrails.org/policy/funding.

The Baltimore Greenway Trails Network is one of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy’s [TrailNation™ projects, comprising regional trail networks that represent diverse people, places and approaches to building connected trail systems across city, county and state lines](#). TrailNation is a national initiative that that brings together model projects, leaders, champions and resources to accelerate the pace of equitable trail development nationwide, creating new access to this essential infrastructure and the benefits it brings for everyone in America. Learn more about TrailNation at railstotrails.org/trailnation.

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.

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