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# HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR BIKING, WALKING AND TRAIL FUNDING: BEST PRACTICES FOR 2024 STATE LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS

NOV. 29, 2023 WEBINAR







# ***Trails Connect Everyone, Everywhere.***

**At Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, we are building a nation connected by trails. We reimagine public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors.**



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# BENEFITS OF TRAIL NETWORKS



TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS



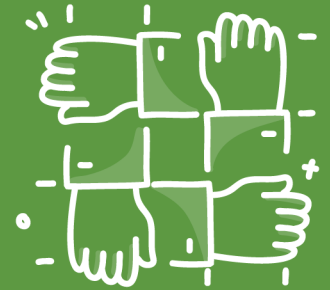
STRONG BUSINESSES  
AND ECONOMIES



OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
HEALTH AND WELLNESS



A THRIVING ENVIRONMENT



EQUITABLE ACCESS

# Technical Support

- As people across the world continue to work and learn from home, platforms like Zoom are experiencing increased usage, which can result in technical difficulties.

Here's how to troubleshoot:

1. Log out and back into the webinar
2. Listen by phone: +1 646 931 3860 & Webinar ID: 839 3241 9163
3. Browse Zoom Customer Support topics & contact Customer Support: <https://support.zoom.us>

Live transcription is enabled for this webinar

# Meet Our Panelists

**Miranda Jones Cox**



- **Government Affairs  
Manager, Wasatch Front  
Regional Council (WFRC)**

**Barb Chamberlain**



- **Active Transportation Division  
Director, Washington State  
Department of Transportation  
(WSDOT)**

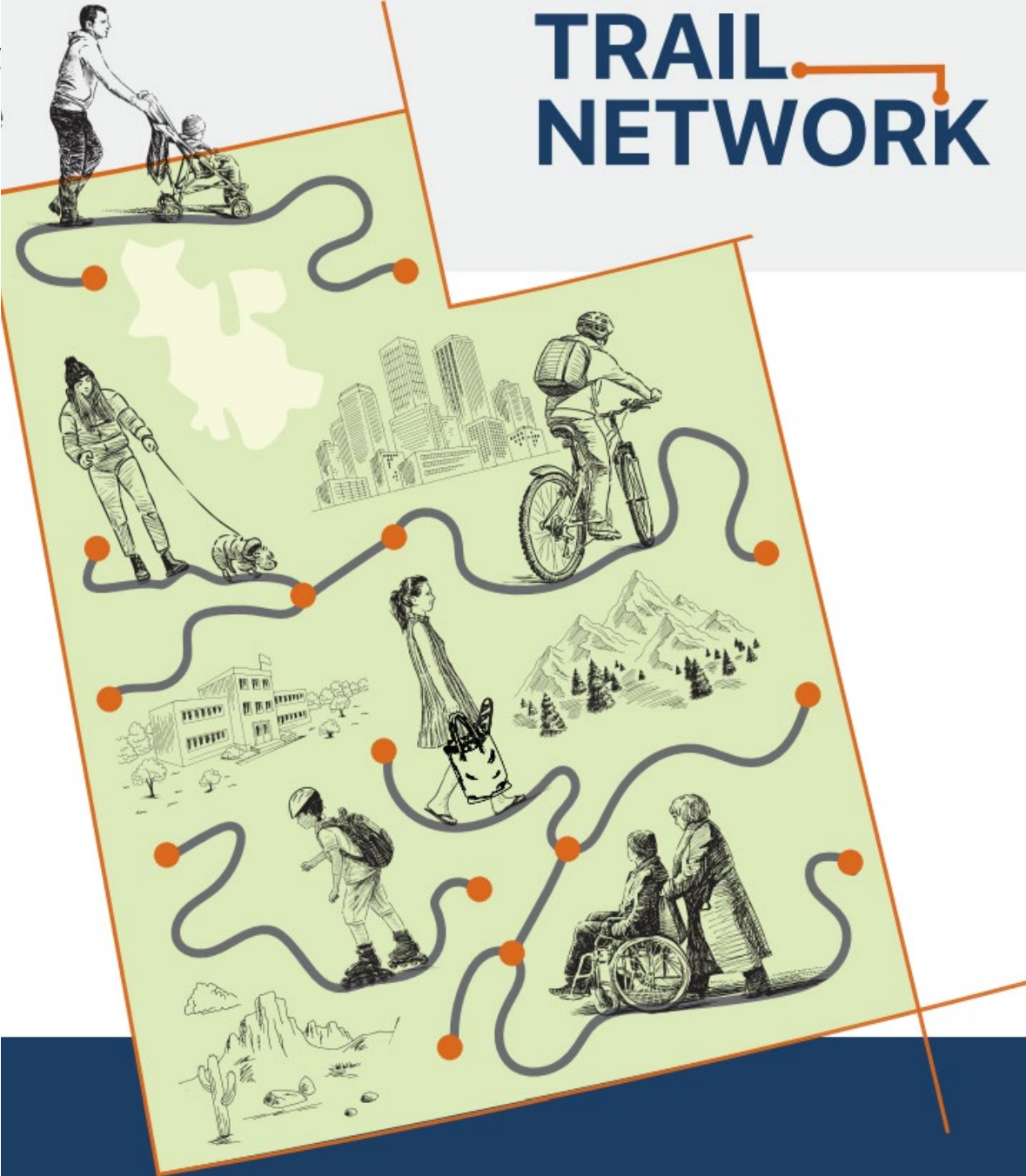
**Justin Dennis**



- **Camden, NJ Program  
Director, Trust for Public  
Land (TPL)**

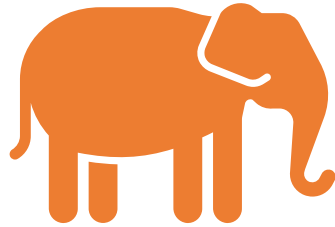


# UTAH TRAIL NETWORK



- Creates the “Active Transportation Investment Fund” (ATIF)
- Use of funds: paved pedestrian or paved non-motorized trail projects
- 5% of annual TIF (road dollars) transferred into ATIF annually
- \$45M estimated in FY24

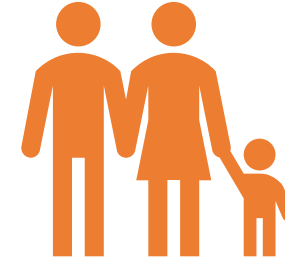
# LEGISLATIVE LANDSCAPE



Red  
State



Roadway  
Focused



Growth  
Pressures



Outdoor  
Enthusied



State  
Surplus





## Support the Utah Trail Network

We support investing in constructing high priority, regionally important "active transportation" (i.e., biking and walking) projects throughout the state, with the goal of completing a core backbone of safe and family-friendly active transportation facilities serving communities across Utah.

## Creating a Safe, Family-Friendly Paved Trail Network

[Sign the Letter](#)

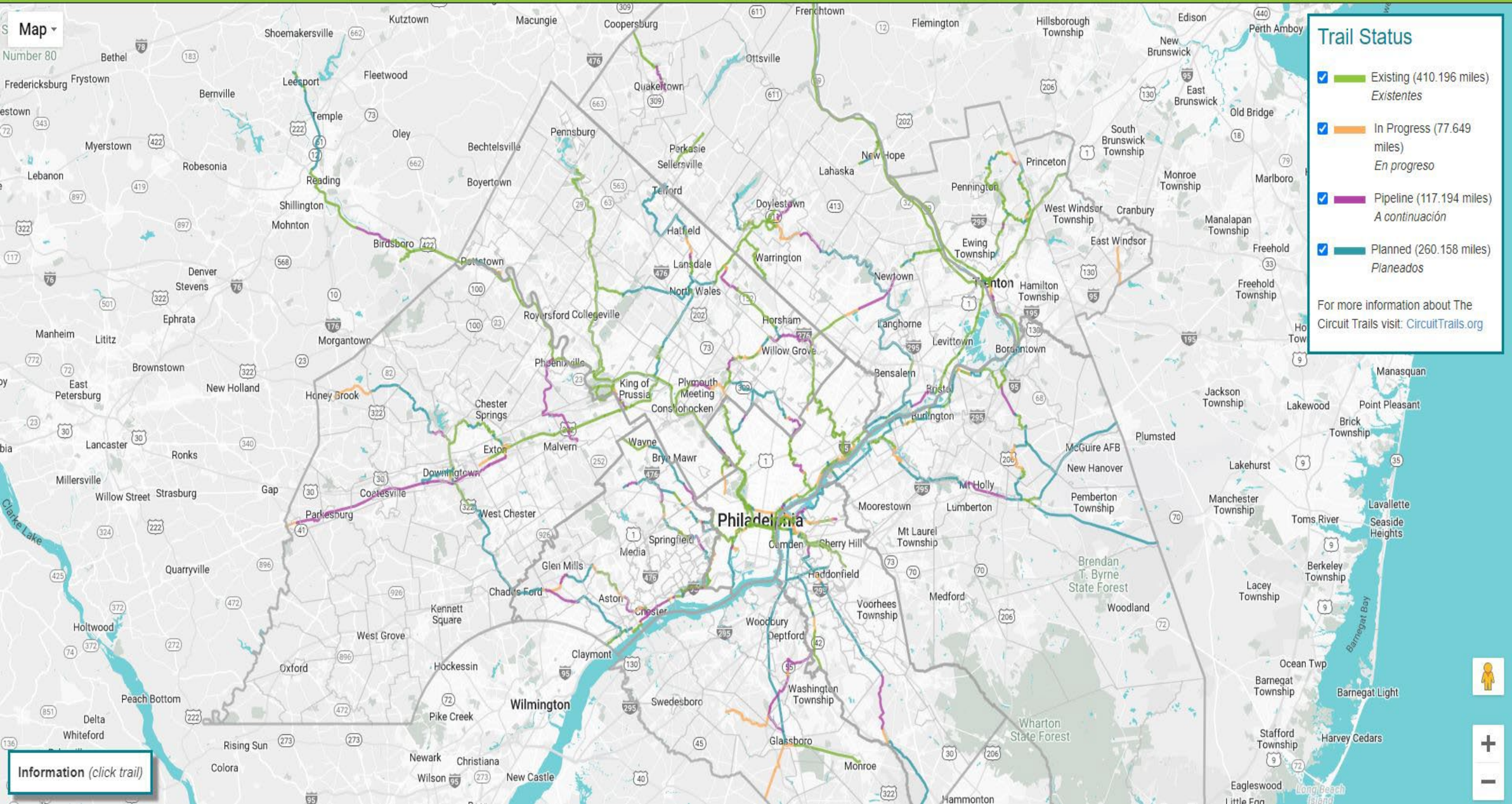






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**[Railstotrails.org](http://Railstotrails.org)**



### Trail Status

- Existing (410.196 miles)  
*Existentes*
- In Progress (77.649 miles)  
*En progreso*
- Pipeline (117.194 miles)  
*A continuación*
- Planned (260.158 miles)  
*Planeados*

For more information about The Circuit Trails visit: [CircuitTrails.org](http://CircuitTrails.org)

Information (click trail)







Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national nonprofit that works to connect everyone to the benefits and joys of the outdoors. As a leader in equitable access to the outdoors, TPL works with communities to create parks and protect public land where it is needed most.

Since 1972, TPL has protected more than 3 million acres of public land, created more than 5,000 parks, trails, schoolyards, and iconic outdoor places, raised \$84 billion in public funding for parks and public lands, and connected more than 9 million people to the outdoors.

**Connecting everyone to the outdoors™**

**Justin Dennis**

**Camden Program Director, Trust  
for Public Land**

[justin.dennis@tpl.org](mailto:justin.dennis@tpl.org)

# Thank you!



# RTC State Policy Goals

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Renew, Defend & Increase *State-Generated Funding* for Trails, Biking & Walking



Support Partner Organizations; Coalition Building



Share Replicable, Innovative Policies from Other States



Promote Trail & Active Transportation Connectivity, Trails as Essential Infrastructure with Real Benefits



Get Legislators and Agency Staff Excited About Trails

# Billions for Trails and Active Transportation



RTC has worked to secure ***\$10 billion*** in state funding over the past 5 years, supported by Democrats and Republicans



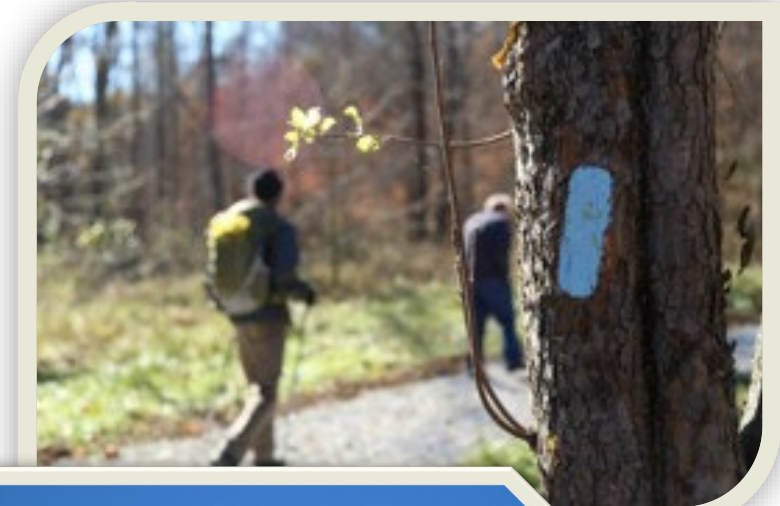
Bipartisan support, funding in GOP-led states (FL, IN, NE, OH, UT), Dem-led states (CA, NY), & divided government states (NC, VA)



Significant increases in state-administered, federal Transportation Alternatives funding



Winning political issue: ***voters like trails!***



NC State Capitol, by Jimmy Emerson, DVM





Atlantic Trail on East Coast Greenway in South Beach, FL | Photo by Ken Bryan

# Case Study: Florida

- **Sustained trail investments**
  - SUN (Shared-Use Nonmotorized) Trail Networks and Florida Communities Trust
  - 2023: doubled SUN annual funding to \$50 million plus \$200 million one-time
  - State applying toll credits to support federal Transportation Alternatives (TA) projects



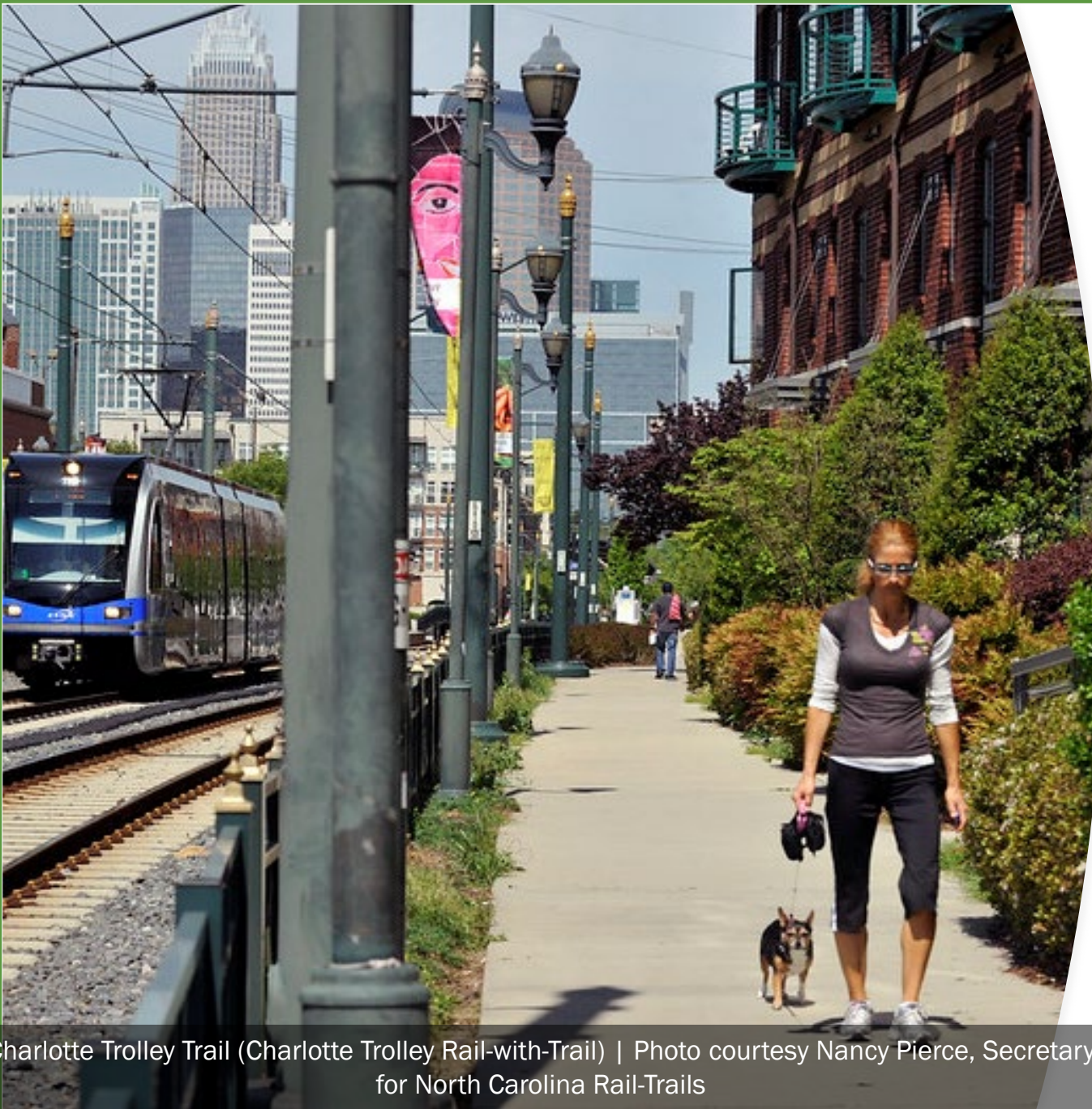
- **Visionary Trails System**

- **Bipartisan trails caucus**
- **Invested \$60M ARPA in Next Level Trails Program**
- **Additional \$30 million to Next Level Trails in 2023; total over five years: \$180 million**
- **Maintenance & Agency Capacity**
- **Gov. Eric J. Holcomb and State Rep. Carey Hamilton have each received RTC Rail-Trail Champion awards**



Monon Trail, Carmel, Indiana | Photo by [the.urbanophile](#) (Flickr)

# Case Study: Indiana



## Case Study: North Carolina

- **Great Trails State Coalition**
  - Planned, multi-year, incremental campaign
  - Year of the Trails bill, ~\$30 million funding (2022)
  - \$54 million in bipartisan funding (2023)

Charlotte Trolley Trail (Charlotte Trolley Rail-with-Trail) | Photo courtesy Nancy Pierce, Secretary for North Carolina Rail-Trails



# Funding Sources and Policies



STAND-ALONE BILL (*SEE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION POLICY HUB FOR REAL BILL TEXT EXAMPLES: [RTC.LJ/POLICYHUB](https://rtc.lj/policyhub)*)



EARMARK BILL (WHERE ALLOWED) OR BUDGET RIDER



GOVERNOR'S BUDGET OR OTHER EXECUTIVE GOALS (E.G., STATE OF THE STATE)



IN-HOUSE AGENCY ACTION OR FUNDING AGENCY STAFFING POSITIONS; STATE TRAILS OFFICE; TRAIL PLAN



BALLOT/BOND MEASURE



VIA TRANSPORTATION SOURCES: GAS TAX (WHERE PERMITTED), STATE ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FUNDS, STATE CLIMATE PLANS



VIA NATURAL RESOURCES SOURCES: TRAIL-SPECIFIC, PARKS, OUTDOOR RECREATION, CLIMATE, LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION, TOURISM



STATEWIDE TRAIL PLAN (INTER-AGENCY)



# Successful Tactics

Pre-session governor's budget

State-specific economic development, etc. data

Legislative trails (or bike, outdoor recreation, etc.) caucus

Lobby (or "Advocacy") Days, press conferences at Capitol/State House

Bring legislative staff sample bill text: [rtc.li/policyhub](http://rtc.li/policyhub)

Statewide trail plans & economic impact studies

On-trail events and engagements with legislators

Year of the Trail legislative designation (including agencies, events)



Minnesota State Capitol rally | by Tony Webster

Grassroots Advocacy: leverage membership, targeted emails, action alerts, paid targeted online ads

Commission a poll/survey

# Questions?





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