



MEMORANDUM

TO: Andrew Meese
FROM: Michael Farrell
SUBJECT: Update of the National Capital Trail Network
DATE: February 21, 2023

The UPWP calls for the following action with respect to the National Capital Trail Network:

- Update the National Capital Trail Network map; monitor implementation of National Capital Trail Network projects.

This memo proposes some actions to do so, and a schedule for subcommittee review.

BACKGROUND

TPB adopted the National Capital Trail Network in July 2020. This 1400-mile network of existing and proposed shared-use paths covers the entire region. [Map Detail | Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments \(mwcog.org\)](#) The map shows existing and planned facilities.

Completing the National Capital Trail Network is one of the TPB's seven unfunded regional priorities. As such, any project that help complete the network receives priority consideration for funds that the TPB administers, such as Transportation-Land Use Connections and Transportation Alternatives funds.

The TPB developed the National Capital Trail Network in consultation with the TPB member jurisdictions, and with the advice of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee of the TPB Technical Committee. Existing and proposed facilities were required to meet certain selection criteria, meant to ensure a high-quality user experience.

UPDATE NEEDS

The National Capital Trail Network is a long term project, and it was not envisioned as something that would change frequently. Conditions that would justify adding or removing facilities from the National Capital Trail Network would include the adoption of a new agency or jurisdiction plan, or a change in priorities.

However, sections of the planned network are completed every year, and their change in status should be recorded on the map and reported to the TPB periodically.

PROPOSED 2023 UPDATE

1. **Status updates.** A number of projects in the National Capital Trail Network have been built since July 2020. The interactive map needs to be updated to reflect those changes. I will coordinate the map update with the COG GIS department, which maintains the map.
2. **Add and/or Remove Projects, Technical Corrections.** Agencies may have projects that they wish to add or remove from the National Capital Trail Network, or minor technical corrections to make to the existing projects. I will contact each jurisdiction to determine whether they wish to make any changes. As discussed above, I anticipate that most jurisdictions will not make any changes. I will vet any proposed new facility to verify that it meets the selection criteria, including comparable network density, adjusting for population, between jurisdictions.
3. **Committee review.** I will report projects that have been completed, success stories, and overall progress towards completion of the National Capital Trail Network to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee, and the TPB Technical Committee. If need be, I will submit technical corrections and facility additions and/or subtractions to the TPB Steering Committee.
4. **Coordinate with the Capital Trails Coalition.** The Capital Trails Coalition will be carrying out its own update of its Capital Trail Network, which covers largely the same footprint as the National Capital Trail Network. These will be separate efforts, but we expect some synergies, since we will be asking for essentially the same information from the same people at the same time. We anticipate that this will make positive outcomes, such as getting the desired information in a timely manner, more likely. I will contact Capital Trails Coalition to identify the agency staff whom they will contact, and the information that they are requesting.

SCHEDULE

- March
 - Meet with COG/TPB GIS staff to advise them of the need for their assistance and determine their likely workload and availability.
 - Reach out the TPB member agency staff, gather information on project completions, and determine whether any changes or technical corrections are desired.
 - Brief the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
- April
 - Complete Information gathering
 - Coordinate with GIS staff to make the needed changes to the interactive map
- May
 - Complete Map and Progress Report
 - Present to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee
- June
 - Present to TPB Technical Committee
 - Present to the TPB Steering Committee

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Staff will work COG's Office of Communications to present a good news story to the public, showing the progress that the region is making on this regional priority, with specific successful projects and photos. I will present success stories to interested TPB subcommittees. The Office of Communications will also push that information out to TPB staff, to the public and the member agencies through newsletters, the TPB web site, and other means.