

Robert Patten  
Trail Development Program Manager  
6600 Kenilworth Ave.  
Suite 301  
Riverdale MD 20737

Mr. Patten:

I am a resident of Mount Rainier, MD and have been living in Route 1 Corridor of Prince George's County since 1998. I started riding my bike on the trail network that Prince George's County has to offer starting around 2001 and I have always seen it as a quite impressive network and am glad we have invested in it, though as this plan makes clear we do need to continue to invest in both maintaining and increasing access to this valuable resource the County has to offer.

I would like to say from my personal experience that the areas near to the trails tend to be well maintained from the perspective of mowing. When using the bike network that I regularly use I do not fear being covered by ticks when I go for a jog or a bike ride. Emptying of trash and recycling receptacles often happens regularly.

However, I do think some maintenance improvements could occur on the trail network. There are some severe issues with invasive vines destroying the trees that line the trails on some part of the trail network, the NW branch just up river of it merging with the Anacostia comes to mind. This is a problem that needs immediate attention, and while neighborhood groups can help, maintenance staff needs to step in when community groups are not available.

Additionally, the busier trails are often not wide enough, especially when I am jogging, or more so, walking with my children. I would concur that trail widths should be updated to current standards.

Also, maintenance following inclement weather could use improvements. Many of the M-NCPPC parks that abut regularly used sidewalks, as well as the trails, are not typically plowed within the 24-hour window following a snow event. Sometimes they do not get plowed within a week of a major storm. Improvements to this aspect of maintenance are necessary since the trail network, as well as sidewalks abutting M-NCPPC parks are often a necessary part of many commuters trips.

Circling back to the waste receptacles, there could be an increase in the number of recycling containers. When I go for jogs, I would prefer not to have to carry all of the recyclables that I pick up back to my house, but would should able to dispose of them in the park in which they are collected. Also, Big Belly or other solar-powered, compacting, email-enabled cans could be beneficial allowing maintenance staff to not need to visit receptacles unless they needed to be empty, plus the compacting would lead to less need to visit cans in the first place. If not, since there may be other issues, a more

direct way to use the County Click app to report cans in need of emptying would be an alternative.

Finally, concerning maintenance, lighting needs to be added to many of the trails as suggested in the plan. It is important, however, that any lighting be implemented that minimized impact on wildlife. Lighting that only comes online when a trail user is present and that does not unnecessarily impact birds, bats, insects, and other nocturnal animals is needed.

Concerning working with other agencies, as a member of the public, it does not often appear that other agencies are willing participants in trail improvements. The agencies that work on the levees, for instance, will pave a path on the top of a levee and not connect it to existing trails (some examples are provided as an attachment). While, I understand that requirements put forth by the Army Corp of Engineers can be strict, there needs to be a realization that people will develop paths that they want and that a paved path will maintain the integrity of a levee longer and be accessible to persons with disabilities or those using bicycles. Given that the levees are intended to benefit specific properties in flood plains, efforts really should be made to design them so other residents can benefit if only in a small way from these projects.

State Highway Administration and county transportation officials need to be more involved in this work as well. Trail networks cannot be successful if the roads leading to them are dangerous. Separated and continuous bike lanes leading to the trail network need to be implemented and crossings for roads with speed limits above 35 mph all need to have a traffic signal that trail users can call to ensure vehicles stop.

I also realize that I only know particular portions of the trail network that I regularly use, and think that this project and others could benefit from crowd sourcing. Our neighbors in the District implemented a rather good resource that allows people to point out particular problems with the road system - <http://visionzero.ddot.dc.gov/VisionZero/>. While the level of detail in this mapping exercise might not be possible, nor needed, something along these lines is so that regular users can point out missing links in the trail system, in particular when it comes to connecting to the trail networks. And if mapping is not possible, consideration should be given to using the paths that have been worn by people walking in the direction they typically want to travel will also provide spots where trail connections are needed (many of the examples provided as an attachment specifically show such paths as connections needing pavement).

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joseph Jakuta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" and last name "Jakuta" clearly distinguishable.

Joseph Jakuta  
Mount Rainier, MD 20712

**Figure 1: Lack of paved connection along top of levee from Mount Rainier to NW Branch Trail Network south of Queens Chapel Apartments**



**Figure 2: Lack of paved connection between trails at top and bottom of levee on Northwest intersection with Bladensburg Road**



**Figure 3: Lack of Paved Connection and Physical Barrier to Route 1 from Top of Levee on Southern Side of NW Branch**



**Figure 4: Alternative Connection to Route 1 from Top of Levee on Southern Side of NW Branch**





**Figure 5: Dead End Connection between Avondale Neighborhood Park and NW Branch Trail Network**

