

Attachment 2 - Summary of Public Comments/Testimony

NAME	GROUP REPRESENTING	FORMAT	COMMENTS	STAFF RESPONSE
David Scull	Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE)	In-person	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plan provides for equal treatment of all trail users 2. Hikers and mountain bikers have same impact when trails are dry and well designed 3. Supports trail closures for wet conditions 4. Supports Loops and Links, especially if PEPCO corridor is included, connecting stream valley parks in western county 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Staff agrees, assuming responsible trail use as well. 3. Thanks for the comment. 4. Thanks for the comment. M-NCPPC staff is coordinating with County DOT to ensure the PEPCO trail is funded in the proposed CIP.
Austin Steo	Trail Conservancy (Natural Surface Trail Construction Program vendor), Trails Working Group (TWG)	In-person And written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appreciates inclusive process (TWG) 2. Continued interaction/collaboration necessary to help implement the plan 3. Ensure adequate funding 4. Accelerate completion of unresolved issues 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff agrees the process worked well. 2. Staff agrees. 3. Staff agrees. 4. Staff agrees. Staff will share a proposed schedule to address unresolved issues during the Planning Board worksession.
Shawn Punga	MORE	In-person	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More focus on eastern county needed 2. Continued coordination/collaboration to fulfill plan's vision for multi-use trails 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Several trail recommendations are intended to better serve eastern county, including a new natural surface trail within Paint Branch Stream Valley Park south of Martin Luther King Jr. Recreational Park, allowing mountain biking on the Northwest Branch Trail, and new trails in McKnew Conservation Park. In addition, staff will be developing a trail plan for the Upper Paint Branch. 2. Staff agrees.
Joe Fritsch	MORE, TWG	In-person and written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amendment is step in the right direction 2. Commitment to implementation will be key 3. Sustainable trails are also key, including moving existing trails out of flat areas where water puddles develop 4. Remember the spiritual aspect of trails, rejuvenation/recreation 5. Park trails are for everyone 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Staff agrees. 3. Staff agrees. 4. Thanks for the comment. 5. Staff agrees.
Roberta Steinman	Maryland Native Plant Society	In-person and written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concern about more trails, particularly hard surface 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. The plan proposes to replace many proposed hard surface park trails with natural surface park trails due to environmental concerns.

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			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Matthew Henson Trail was a bad decision; trail design was 8' with 3' shoulders each side, ended up being a 25' wide corridor 3. Degradation to forests and forest ecology 4. Concerned with forest fragmentation, imperviousness and water quality 5. Believes the plan should clarify changes to existing trails, particularly those in conservation parks 6. Changes to trail user designation, particularly in conservation parks, should be publicly vetted 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The decision to build the trail involved trade-offs. While the trail impacts some sensitive resources, the level of service the trail provides justified the decision to build the trail. 3. The decision making matrix that guides decisions where to build trails (and not) included analyzing impacts to natural resources 4. Ditto. 5. Decisions about trails in parks with separate guiding plans will be determined during separate planning processes to amend each park's guiding document/plan. These plan amendments will take place in the future, schedule TBD. 6. Staff is working on a decision making process and criteria for determining trail user designations. Staff will review the criteria with the Planning Board during worksession #2 for this plan amendment.
Paul Daisy	Individual	In-person	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loops and Links is a great plan framework, but... 2. Plan is dependent on bikeway master plan 3. Hard surface park trails should be recognized for their transportation value 4. Bikeway master plan update's low stress analysis identified park trails 5. Recreation-only trails have inferior maintenance standards that will not meet needs of transportation users 6. Coordinate closely with bikeway master plan update 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Staff agrees overall trail connectivity relies on bikeway implementation in certain areas. 3. Many park trails are used for transportation. The question is which ones should be operated and maintained in a manner that promotes and safely accommodates the needs of transportation cyclists? We will discuss with the Planning Board at a future worksession following the approval of this plan amendment. 4. Yes. See response #3 above. 5. Yes, recreational trails are not necessarily operated and maintained in a manner intended to promote and encourage commuting. See response #3 above. 6. Staff agrees.
Barbara Solner-Webb	Trail Riders of Today (TROT)	In-person	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports sustainable trails open to all users 2. Urges the Board to pursue PEPCO trail regardless of result of merger 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Thanks for the comment and your support for this proposed trail corridor.

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Jack Cochrane	MOBIKE, TWG	In-person and written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Matthew Henson Trail was a good decision; the service it provides was worth the impacts 2. Need more trails as the County grows, to keep up with demand 3. Really appreciated the Trails Working Group experience, seeing real-world application of resource analysis 4. Clearly distinguish between planning framework and user-friendly framework (how people will actually use trails) 5. Hybrid loops can be awkward for mountain bikers and other cyclists; consider replacing Lower County Loop with two trail systems: Lower County East Loop (paved); and Lower County West Loop (unpaved multi-use) 6. Re: prioritization, commit to completing the ICC Trail, which is part of numerous loops and links 7. Give higher priority to Rock Creek Trail-Millennium Trail Connector 8. Keep in mind that prioritization only address county park trails, and not trails managed by other agencies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff agrees, thanks for the comment. 2. Staff agrees. Trails are the most popular park facilities. 3. Thanks for the comment. 4. Staff agrees. 5. Refer to the figure in the plan showing trail surface types (Figure 9 in Public Hearing draft). Your proposal has merit for trail user maps, but less so for policy maps. 6. ICC Trail is SP-40 in the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, and therefore not part of the prioritization of the trails plan. 7. This connector relies on a future land transfer after the current Gude Landfill settles and is suitable for development. This may take 20 years or longer. 8. Staff agrees.
Paul Havlinka	Muddy Branch Alliance	In-person and written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports MOCO EPIC, believes this event has been very successful 2. Concerned about hard surface trail proposal in upper Muddy Branch between MD 28 and Quince Orchard Road; since original plan, many paved trails have been built in City of Gaithersburg that well-serves this area of the county (and thus paved trail in Muddy Branch no longer needed); and therefore consider removing HS trail from Muddy Branch SVP 3. City also is working with residents to extend NS trail to Muddy Branch Road 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Thanks for the comment. Staff understands and appreciates your comment about Gaithersburg trails serving this area of the county. The Muddy Branch Trail Corridor Plan removed the lower 2/3 of the hard surface trail from this stream valley park. Keeping the upper 1/3 in the plan was a compromise solution and we do not recommend its removal. The future facility plan for the hard surface trail will try to minimize areas where it will replace portions of the natural surface trail. 3. Thanks for the comment.
Holly Fisher	MORE	In-person	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appreciates plan’s focus on multi-use natural surface trails 2. Loops and Links will improve trail service throughout the county 3. Supports sustainable trail design 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Staff agrees. Thanks for the comment. 3. Thanks for the comment.
Ginny Barnes	Conservation Montgomery	Written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commended staff on coordinating Trails Working Group 2. Appreciated use of Resource Atlas 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Thanks for the comment.

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	and Trails Working Group		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. TWG worth the effort, fostered communication among user groups 4. Stewardship must drive allowable uses 5. Widespread application of multi-use trails should be carefully considered 6. Restrict use in conservation parks and other resource-sensitive parks 7. Parks are sanctuaries for spiritual renewal 8. Concern about use of park trails for transportation 9. TWG needs more diversity and balance, less representation from cycling community 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Thanks for the comment. 4. Staff agrees stewardship is a key component of all long range planning, and balancing recreation and stewardship has been a guiding principal in the department for many years now. 5. Thanks for the comment. We agree stewardship must be considered when deciding when trails should be open to all users and when trails should be limited use. The issue of allowable uses will be determined on a case-by-case basis (i.e., context sensitive), using the criteria staff will be discussing with the Planning Board during worksession #2. 6. See response #5 above under Steinman comments. 7. Thanks for the comment. 8. Thanks for the comment. 9. Staff will be re-evaluating the Trails Working Group following the adoption of the plan amendment.
Richard Denton	Seneca Creek Greenway Coalition	Written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include in the plan the Seneca Bluff Trail and Seneca Ridge Trail 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. We have identified these trails in the plan.
Liz Jones	Maryland Native Plant Society	Written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Multi-use trails not suitable for all parks 2. Plan needs a clearer statement to protect and conserve uncommon, sensitive and high quality habitats, particularly in parks/areas where bicycle and equestrian use is considered 3. Multi-use trails should only be considered where impact would be minimal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff agrees. The plan acknowledges and recommends limited use trails may be appropriate some parks. 2. Please see responses #4 and #5 above for Ginny Barnes, and also responses #5 and #6 for Roberta Steinman. 3. See response #5 above for Ginny Barnes.
Carey Creed		Written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reconsider any trails in Serpentine Barrens CP. 2. Park is a globally rare resource and should be protected 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hiking and equestrian trails are recommended in the Planning Board’s Use and Operations Plan for this park. Any changes to this document would need to be made during a separate planning process, which will take place following the approval of this plan amendment. Schedule TBD. 2. Staff agrees the park contains rare resources and should be protected.

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Dan Hudson	MORE	Written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Appreciates Loops and Links, modeled on MoCo EPIC 2. Excited about partnerships with federal and state land managers 3. Very important in eastern county 4. Consider multi-function (disparate surfaces) trails such as The Fullerton Loop in Orange County, CA. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Staff agrees. Thanks for the comment. 3. Staff agrees. Thanks for the comment. 4. Staff agrees. Another good example is the 4T Trail in Portland, OR.
Gale Monahan	Trail Riders of Today (TROT) President	Written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. TROT appreciates representation on TWG 2. TROT fully endorses final product 3. Especially appreciate focus on multi-use trails 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Thanks for your support. 3. Thanks for the comment.
John Thomas	Montgomery County Department of Transportation	Written	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supports the general goals and recommendations 2. It is important to include a trail/path safety component in all plan updates 3. Appreciates recognition of trails as transportation, but plan should include recommendations to upgrade design of trails that may be used for non-motorized transportation, including Sligo Creek Trail, Georgetown Branch/Capital Crescent Trail, Rock Creek Trail, Matthew Henson Trail and other key regional bikeways listed on page 35 4. Page 49, Figure 22 – consider including proposed trail design standard as well as likely parties responsible for implementation (including private sector responsibilities), recommended ownership, operations and maintenance agency; distance of unbuilt segments, and potential funding sources 5. Coordinate with McDOT on trail-road intersections, including Arcola Avenue and Sligo Creek Trail 6. Roadway crossing improvement design and implementation should be included within the scope of all trail/path development projects both in design and budgeting of project construction costs 7. Also coordinate with McDOT on connectors which may rely on low-volume rural roads, including Sugarloaf West, Woodstock Link North and Woodstock Link South 8. Appendix 13 should be amended to read “Parks Director Letter for Maryland DOT” 9. Figure 4, page 53 – title and bottom horizontal bar should more clearly explain purpose of chart 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Thanks for the comment. 2. Safety is addressed as part of design guidelines, park rules and regulations, law enforcement, and education/outreach, all of which are beyond the scope of a typical master plan. 3. Trails as transportation will be addressed at future worksession with the Planning Board following the approval of the plan amendment. 4. These types of details are addressed during facility planning for park trails, not master planning. Appendix 5 will clarify the new trail planning process resulting from this plan amendment. All appendices will be completed prior to plan approval. 5. Montgomery Parks has already initiated a trail-road intersection study for hard surface park trails, and this process includes extensive coordination with McDOT as well as MdSHA. 6. Staff agrees. 7. Staff agrees. 8. We will change the title. 9. We will clarify the language. }

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			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Inclusion of maps referenced in Appendix 4 would be helpful 11. Consider using a version of the Bikeways Functional Master Plan map (Appendix 12) that includes a legend 12. It could be helpful to add a notation on Figure 5 to refer the reader to Appendix 12 13. Future iterations of the report should include a section on the process to implement the recommendations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Staff agrees. 11. Staff agrees. 12. We will add a notation 13. Appendices 4 and 5 will clarify the trail planning and implementation process.
Sanjida Rangwala		Web post	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allow 24-hour use of Sligo Creek Trail. 2. Consider lighting and other facilities to make it better for commuting 3. Also, improve connection along US 29 crossing Northwest Branch 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 24-Hour use of park trails will be discussed with the Planning Board during a separate item following the approval of this plan amendment. 2. Ditto. 3. Staff has explored this issue in the past and agrees it is important to improve trail access to Northwest Branch.