

WHEREAS:

Transit and bicycling are each desirable and sustainable modes of transport, which, properly integrated, can provide a synergy which improves the efficacy of both, providing inclement weather options for cyclists and extending the effective service area of transit stations, and

A subset of the extremely successful and popular “Rails to Trails” movement is the “Rails with Trails” phenomenon, in which trails are built alongside existing railroads rather than on the roadbed of an abandoned line, ranging from once-a-week low-speed freight spurs to high-speed, high-volume freight, passenger, and transit lines, and

Proper design and policy can make multi-use paths along as compatible with rail lines as sidewalks are with streets, with safety ensured with appropriate levels of separation and/or barriers, and

One of the most successful examples of Rails with Trails is in Maryland, along the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, and

A parallel trail can enhance a transit line by providing greater rider potential, right-of-way visibility and management (therefore security), and maintenance/inspection/law enforcement access for the operating agency, and

Maryland has numerous opportunities for Rails with Trails, ranging from the Maryland and Delaware Railroad on the Eastern Shore, to existing and planned transit systems in the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas,

THEREFORE:

The Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee strongly endorses the concept of Rails with Trails and urges the Secretary of Transportation to direct and encourage the agencies and authorities under his purview to incorporate Rails with Trails into planning and policy in all appropriate circumstances, and specifically:

- alongside the existing MTA Central Light Rail Line from Linthicum to Baltimore,
- the proposed WMATA Purple Line in the Washington suburbs, and
- the proposed MTA Red Line in Baltimore.

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