



BARRY GLASSMAN

HARFORD COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 2022

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Harford County Opens New Segment of The Ma & Pa Trail in Downtown Bel Air

BEL AIR, Md., (April 25, 2022) - Harford County is one step closer to connecting the Fallston and Forest Hill sections of its popular Ma & Pa Heritage Trail.

County officials on Saturday cut the ribbon on a 1.2-mile segment through downtown Bel Air between the Williams Street trailhead and a new parking lot at North Avenue. The Bel Air segment extends the existing Fallston section of the trail that begins at Annie's Playground to a total of 4.5 miles.

A final 1.6-mile segment between North Avenue and Blake's Venture in Forest Hill is expected to be finished sometime in 2024.

When the entire Ma & Pa connection is complete, the trail will total eight miles from Edgeley Grove in Fallston through Bel Air to Friends Park in Forest Hill.

The Ma & Pa Trail roughly follows the tracks of the old Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad. The ribbon-cutting was held to coincide with National Celebrate Trails Day, also known as Opening Day for Trails, established by the nonprofit Rails to Trails Conservancy.

Funding for the new Bel Air segment came from Harford County government, the town of Bel Air, Maryland Program Open Space, and the Federal Transportation Alternative Program.

Harford County officials had sought for 25 years to connect the Fallston and Forest Hill sections of the trail. In 2016, the Glassman administration successfully negotiated with the family of the late state Sen. J. Robert Hooper to acquire a key parcel of land that allowed work on the connection to begin.

"I would like to thank our partners, and the family of my friend and mentor, state Sen. Hooper, for making this day possible," County Executive Barry Glassman said. "The Ma & Pa Trail has always helped citizens enjoy the outdoors and stay healthy, especially through the pandemic. Today Harford County is one step closer to completing the connection and making it one of the best rail trails in the state."



Harford County leaders cut the ribbon on a new Ma & Pa Trail segment at Williams Street in Bel Air. Pictured from left: Kathy Burley, director of parks & recreation; Billy Boniface, advisor to the county executive; Phil Anderson, president, Ma & Pa Heritage Trail, Inc.; County Executive Barry Glassman; Councilman Chad Shrodes; Councilman Tony Giangiardano; Del. Mike Griffith; Paul Magness, deputy director of parks & recreation.


Videos:

Ribbon-cutting - https://youtu.be/xzMZ8n_VXiw

Crossing Main St. onto the new trail section - https://youtu.be/colhwz_s2nQ

Walking the trail - <https://youtu.be/MyJwD7UBEP0>

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