

The Civil War Railroad Trail Project

CITY OF HAGERSTOWN AND WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND

Project Description:

This project entails the planning, design and construction of a rail to trail pedestrian and bicycle trail connecting Hagerstown's City Park with the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal at Weverton. Following the former B & O railroad line, this twenty-three mile trail has been envisioned as part of Washington County's Comprehensive Development Plan for decades.

The project will create tourism, economic development and healthy lifestyle opportunities for the Hagerstown and Washington County area.

Connectivity will be established, via the trail, between Hagerstown and Washington DC; Pittsburgh, PA., Northern, VA and could augment commuter traffic to the MARC rail line in Brunswick, MD.



Photo-simulation of the trail south of Keedysville, MD.

The trail is proposed in close proximity to 14 federal, state and local parks. An extensive series of shared use designated bike routes are interconnected with this route providing easy access to the Municipalities of Hagerstown, Williamsport, Boonsboro, Keedysville, Sharpsburg and many unincorporated areas throughout Washington County. Based on funding availability, the project could to be constructed in one to five phases. At the terminus of each phase vehicle parking is envisioned to allow portions of the trail to be enjoyed and allow for easy on and off access. Lodging and restroom facilities exist in the vicinity of the trail and should see a commensurate increase in traffic.

Economic Development Opportunities:

When speaking with business owners in the vicinity of trail projects; on average, they indicate that one-quarter of their gross revenues are directly attributed to trail users and two-thirds reported they experienced at least some increase in gross revenue because of their proximity to the trail. Lodging and outdoor trail related businesses consistently report increases in annual revenues.

In 2007, businesses near *The Great Allegheny Passage* (Cumberland, MD to Pittsburgh, PA) *Project* alone have documented \$23.8M in receipts attributed to the trail. Despite tough economic times, these figures rose to \$40.7M in 2008. Studies have well documented between \$240,000 and \$310,000 in business revenue per mile per year. Using this methodology; the estimated economic impact on the community could net \$6.4 million in annual small business revenue. Rail to trail projects enhance the employment base. New business start-ups and up-staffing can all be attributed to trail activity. This project is expected to generate >200 sustained local jobs.

Healthy and Happy Community Living:

Cycling is among the leading outdoor activities in the nation. "Good health starts where you live", a quote from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website, is the underlying foundation for designing healthy and happy communities. Who could object to healthy living? Healthy community design integrates evidence-based health strategies into community planning, transportation and land use decisions which is essential in building sustainable communities. This project will increase our opportunity for physical activity and strengthen the social fabric of the community;

Potential Funding Sources/Invited Partners:

- Private non-profit entities
- Washington County and Cooperating Municipalities
- State of Maryland, MDOT, MDNR.
- United States Government, USDOT, Interior Dept.

Preliminary estimate of funding needed:

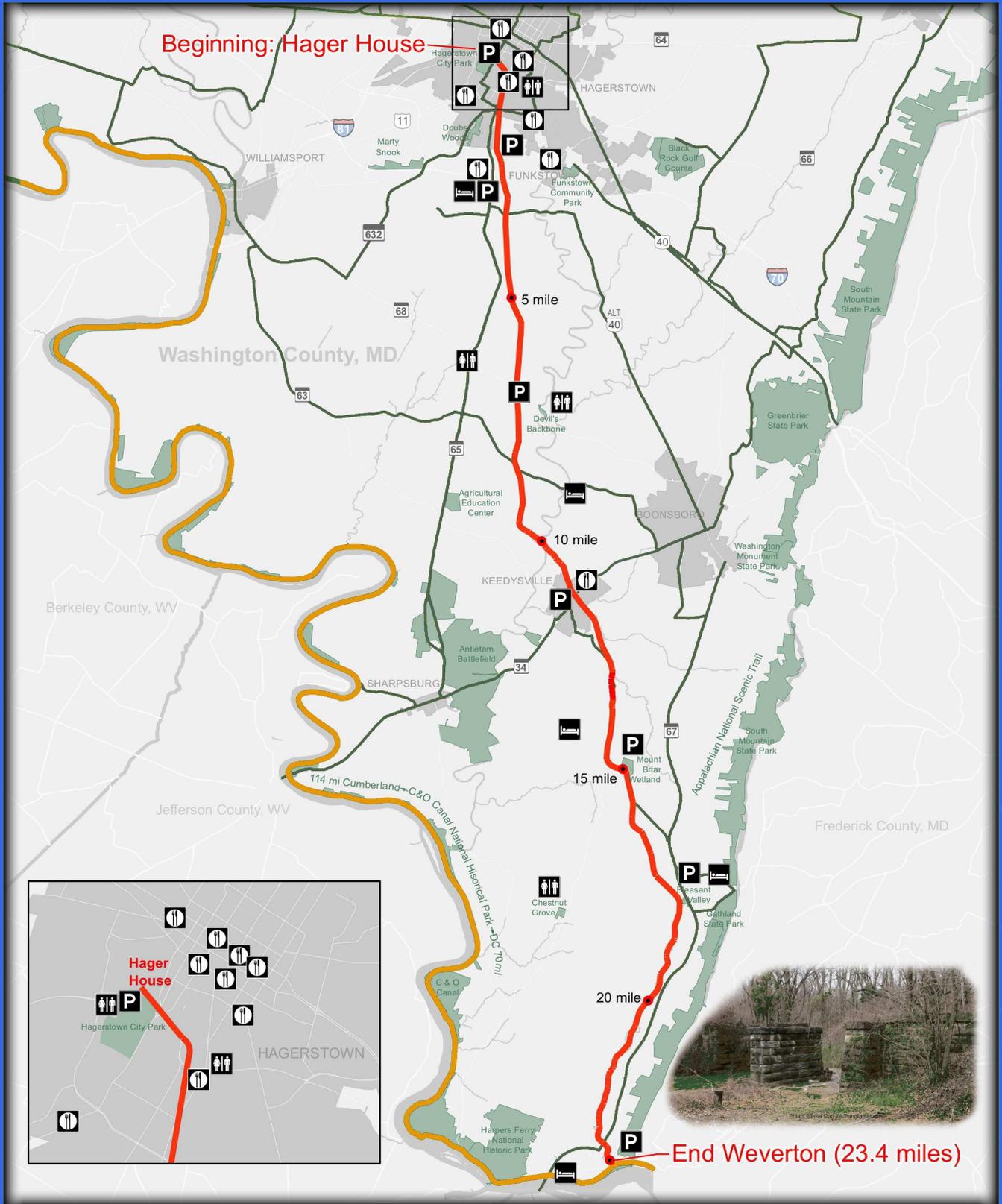
Phase	From/To	Miles	Cost
1	City/Oakridge Dr	2	\$1.00M
2	Oakridge/Lappans	4.7	\$2.35M
3	Lappans/Keedysville	4.3	\$4.15M
4	Keedysville/Pleas. Valley	6.8	\$4.10M
5	Pleas. Valley/Weverton	5.6	\$4.80M
Total		23.4	\$16.40M

For project information contact:

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 Phone: 301-790-3200, website: www.hagerstownmd.org

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The Civil War Railroad Trail



— Proposed Rail Trail
 — Shared Road Bike Trail
 — Dedicated Bike Trail (C&O Canal)