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## **METROPLAN ANNOUNCES CARTS MULTI-USE PATH INVESTMENTS**

**LITTLE ROCK, AR**, February 26, 2019 — Metroplan announces a strategic commitment to developing a regional multi-use path network over the next ten years. From Fiscal Year 2021 through Fiscal Year 2030, Metroplan will target approximately half its Surface Transportation Program Block Grant (STPBG) funding toward building a regional trail system. This amounts to at least fifty-five million (\$55,000,000.00) dollars over the next ten fiscal years.

This plan is more than a funding outline. It will include a strategic plan to target funds for optimal path infrastructure using top-quality designs. The multi-use path network will be integrated into the next regional master plan, due for release in 2022.

“This is a huge strategic step forward,” says Metroplan Executive Director Tab Townsell, because “this initiative will make a region-scaled footprint and provide accessibility that is currently not there.” The system will yield benefits for personal health and wellness, tourism, economic development, regional image, and overall quality of life. The regional multi-use path system will integrate existing trails, paths, and sidewalks to make vital connections within the overall regional transportation system. It will also aim for seamless connection with the existing and future transit network. Metroplan is the agency uniquely positioned to champion this initiative.

Townsell acknowledges that, while its ten-year multi-use path network investment is sizeable, further improvements are desirable. Metroplan therefore seeks public and private partners to help implement its vision for a region linked by a network of trails, paths and sidewalks that is second to none.

“This trail initiative is innovative, it is trend-setting, and it will succeed because we are committed to it over the long term.” – North Little Rock Mayor Joe Smith, president of the Metroplan Board.

Metroplan is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the four-county region of Faulkner, Lonoke, Pulaski and Saline counties. It is a voluntary association of local governments that has operated since 1955. For more information go to [www.metroplan.org](http://www.metroplan.org).

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