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## **Design to Begin for Pedestrian Bridge Connecting Rhode Island Metro Station to Metropolitan Branch Trail**

*Bridge to create safe crossing for walkers, bikers*

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**— The District Department of Transportation (DDOT) announced today that design work would begin on a bridge connecting the Rhode Island Avenue Metro Station to the Metropolitan Branch Trail and adjacent neighborhoods. The bridge will create a safe passageway for community members who often walk over active railroad tracks.

“Right now, to get to the Beacon House, the children cross the tracks. Once the bridge is built it will make a huge difference in giving access to our volunteers, children, and seniors from and to the metro station,” said Rev. Donald E. Robinson, director and founder of the youth program Beacon House. “We normally pick them up in the van, but if they could just walk over the tracks on a bridge it would help a great deal.”

Plans for a pedestrian bridge have been on the books for two decades, but a lack of property ownership and funding had prevented the project from moving forward. As the Metropolitan Branch Trail nears construction the necessity of building the bridge became more crucial.

“This project exemplifies our commitment to safe travel for bicyclists and pedestrians in the District,” said DDOT Director Emeka Moneme. “This project will literally bridge the Edgewood and Brentwood communities, including a link to metro. We look forward to working with the community on this very important connection.”

“Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has actively supported the development of the Metropolitan Branch Trail, and this bridge is one more excellent link to enhance the community,” said Keith Laughlin, president of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. “Connecting public transportation to trails gives neighborhoods greater access to all the benefits and services their city has to offer.”

The truss bridge, being designed by the engineering firm Ammann & Whitney, a subsidiary of Louis Berger Group Holdings, will cross 30 feet over the ground above the active rail line and will span approximately 150 feet. The bridge will connect from the Metro to the trail, the trail will be accessible from the adjacent neighborhoods, and will meet all ADA requirements.

The Metropolitan Branch trail is a multi-use rail-with-trail that runs from Union Station in the District of Columbia to Silver Spring, Md. Currently, three miles of the planned trail have been completed. As a commuter and recreational trail, the Metropolitan Branch Trail will link people to jobs, schools, stores and Metro.