



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Metropolitan Branch Trail

*District of
Columbia,
Maryland*



Metropolitan Branch Trail

District of Columbia, Maryland

Connecting Union Station, historic D.C. neighborhoods, and the bustling beltway town of Silver Spring, the Metropolitan Branch



Connecting Union Station, historic D.C. neighborhoods, and the bustling beltway town of Silver Spring, the Metropolitan Branch Trail (MBT) weaves connectivity, post-industrial renewal, and outdoor fun into the urban fabric of the nation capital's dynamic northeastern quadrant. The paved 11-ft wide trail traverses 7.9 miles through D.C. and the Maryland suburbs.

Serving thousands of commuters and recreation-seekers alike, the trail is home to vibrant artwork and a series of revolving murals. Following active rapid transit, freight, and intercity rail lines, users of this rail-with-trail can dabble in train spotting while enjoying safe, off-road access to local attractions, businesses, and residential areas.

Parts of the MBT follow active rail lines including the Amtrak Corridor and WMATA subway system. The trail and rail are separated by a fence and each railroad crossing features warning signals.

About the Route

The Metropolitan Branch Trail's northern endpoint is in Silver Spring, Maryland, at King St and Fenton St. Heading south, the trail heads to Upper Portal Park, meeting the D.C.-Maryland line. Here, an on-road segment carries the trail through a series of turns through the Takoma (D.C.) neighborhood. Refer to the [TrailLink map](#) for specific details.

After crossing underneath the Red Line tracks on Van Buren Avenue, the trail turns south on 3rd Avenue NW. Here, trail users can find several recreational facilities at the Takoma Community Center, including tennis courts, an indoor pool, and sports fields. Further south on 3rd Ave NW is Fort Slocum Park featuring a slice of civil war history.

At Gallatin St. NW, the trail maintains an on-road segment east until the Fort Totten Metro stop. Here the trail resumes off-road, heading south along the rail tracks, towards Catholic University of America. At the Brookland-CUA Metro, the trail makes another on-road segment from Monroe St NE to Franklin St NE. The 0.5 mile on-road stretch, called the Arts Walk, features galleries, studios, and Monroe Street Market, with an array of eateries shops. South of Franklin Street, a skating rink, cinema, and brewery are just off the trail.

At the Rhode Island Ave–Brentwood Metro station, the trails follows a pedestrian bridge, a major milestone for both the trail's development, and for pedestrian access to the Metro station. South of Rhode Island Ave, the trail passes a concentration of murals as it comes to Alethia Tanner Park, which includes a playground, a dog park, plaza areas, and gardens.



Metropolitan Branch Trail

District of Columbia, Maryland

States: District of Columbia, Maryland

Counties: Montgomery, Washington

Length: 7.9 miles

Trail end points: Union Station (Washington, D.C.) to King St. (Silver Spring, MD)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Walking

Parking & Trail Access

The Metropolitan Branch Trail runs between Union Station (Washington, DC) and King St & Fenton St (Silver Spring, MD).

There is no designated parking available along the trail.

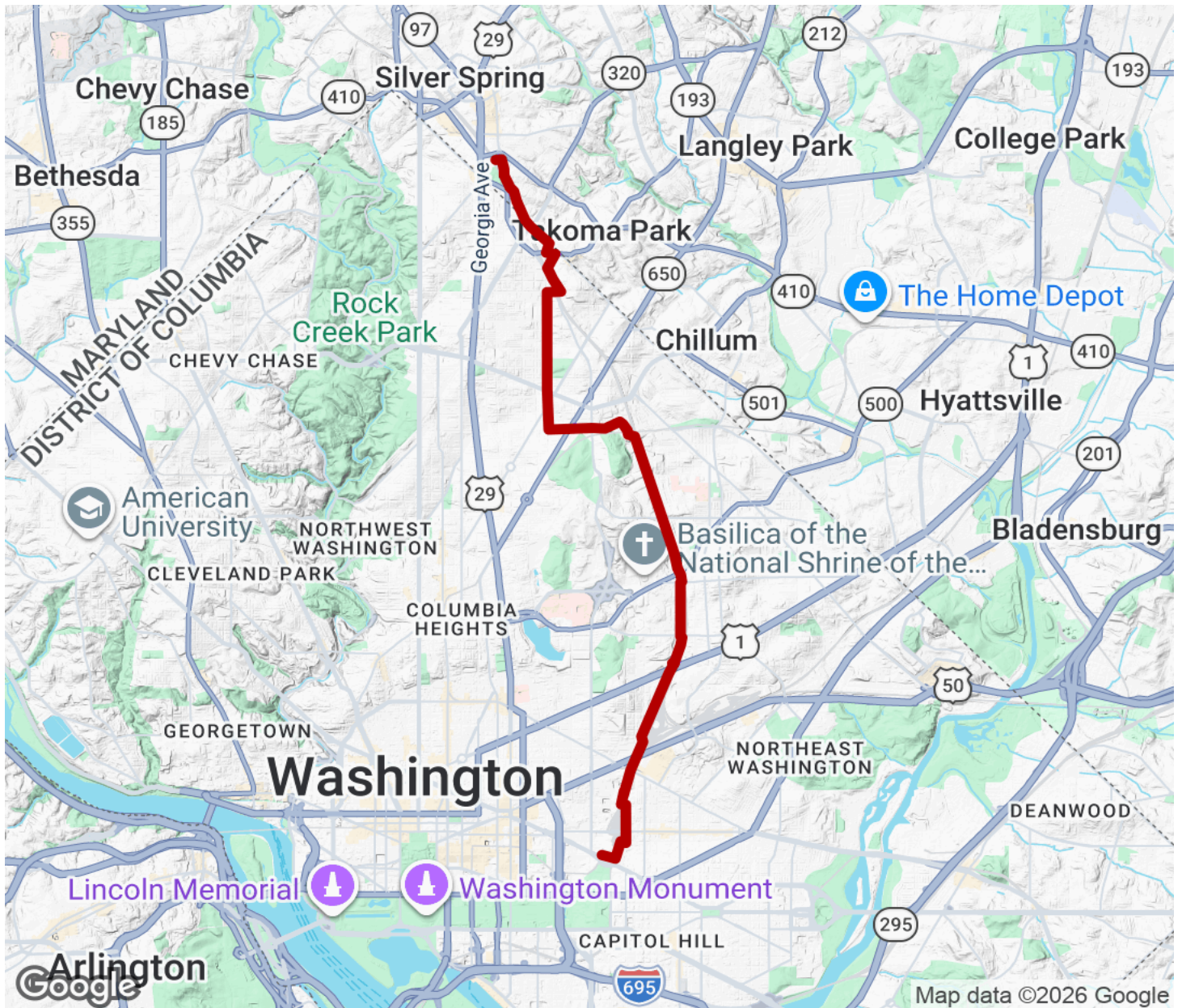
The region's Metro and commuter rails provide convenient transit access to the trail. If taking your bike aboard a train, please observe the transit agency's rules. Several train stops are close to the trail:

- Silver Spring (Red Line, MARC)
- Takoma (Red Line)
- Fort Totten (Red Line, Green Line)
- Brookland-CUA (Red Line)
- Rhode Island Ave-Brentwood (Red Line)
- NoMa-Gallaudet U (Red Line)
- Union Station (Red Line, MARC, VRE, DC Streetcar, Amtrak)



Metropolitan Branch Trail

District of Columbia, Maryland



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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