Greater Prince William TRAILS COALITION

CORRECTION: Prince William County Trails Master Plan Meeting is 7:00-9:00pm on May 29

*Earlier announcement last week indicated the meeting would start at 6:00pm. Oops. See the **county's invitation**; they got the details right.*

Attendees will break up into groups, discuss trail types and priorities, and mark suggested trail connections on paper maps. Paddlers will have an opportunity to discuss blueways.

And mark your calendar - next Quarterly Meeting of the Greater Prince William Trails Coalition will be June 26, 10:00-11:30am. You can **register now**.

Second Sunday Hike on June 8: Broad Run Greenway

We will explore the upper reaches of Broad Run (downstream from Lake Manassas) from 1:00-3:00pm. It's a 2.5-mile hike in the shade on the **Broad Run Greenway**. Trail is flat, with an uneven surface in a few spots. Well-behaved dogs on a leash are welcome.

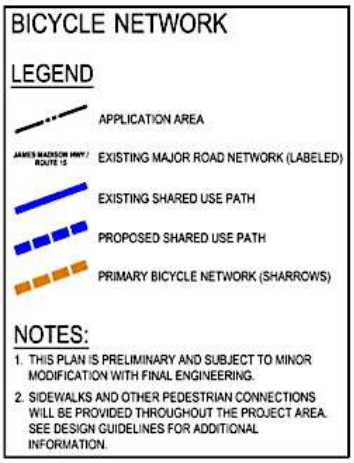
We will cross Rocky Run upstream of where a replacement bridge will be installed this Fall. The old bridge, installed in 2014, was washed out by a flood. **Register** to get parking details, and so we can notify you in case of weather cancellation.

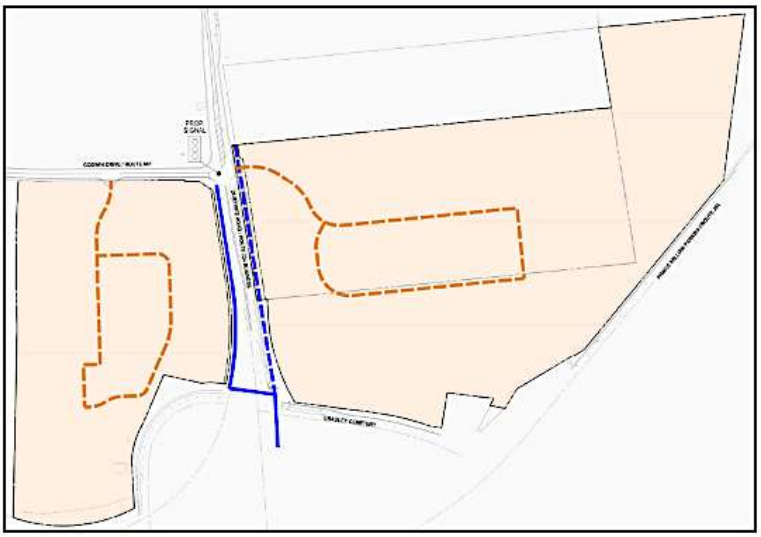
*(On July 13, we are planning to explore the Blue Trail at **Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve**. That trail is currently under construction and not open to the public. We'll get a sneak peak from the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.)*

Supervisor Margeret Franklin at Bike to Work Day

Report from May 27 Trails and Blueways Council (TBC) Meeting

- County staff will recommend restoring Flat Branch trail to Mobility Chapter when the Board of County Supervisors acts on the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to delete Route 28 Bypass. TBC recommended restoring trail on Route 234 (Sudley Road) along Manassas Battlefield Bypass route as well.
- Department of Parks and Recreation and **Prince William Water** have drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to coordinate activities that impact trails. This is the first of future MOU's to be prepared with other agencies and departments in county government.
- Final design phase of Powell's Creek Crossing starts in June.
- Next meeting of Potomac National Heritage Trail (PHNST) subcommittee to address gaps in trail will be July 24.
- For National Bike Month, Prince William Transportation Department and **Washington Area Bicyclist Association** (WABA) organized an Adult Learn to Ride class on May 10. It attracted 10 participants, with more expected when repeated in 2026. At least one bike repair kit is available in every library now for patrons to check out like a book.
- Traffic counter is documenting bike/pedestrian use in May at Brentsville interchange bridge.
- Trails and Blueways Council scheduled a joint meeting on August 20 with **Parks and Recreation Commission**.
- MORE is holding **sMORE's family rides** at Andrew Leitch Park on first and third Tuesdays of each month. Check the **Facebook page** for more details; rain can cancel events.
- Contract to build Rollins Ford Park pump track is being finalized. **Prince William Parks Foundation** raised the $$$ required to fund it.





Recent Rezonings

The Trails and Blueways Council does not endorse or oppose rezonings, but does support creating a well-connected trails network as county officials make decisions on land use and transportation changes.

On May 7, Prince William Planning Commission approved the proposed **Strathmore rezoning** on Vint Hill Road. Proffers include a Shared Use Path to connect to Broad Run Greenway via future Silver Bell rezoning proposal. A joint development agreement between Brookfield Homes and other developers on north side of Vint Hill Road is anticipated to create a logical network of trails. Rezoning proposals for 3,000-4,000 new houses in the area will have Planning Commission and BOCS work sessions to discuss, among other topics, bike/ped infrastructure.

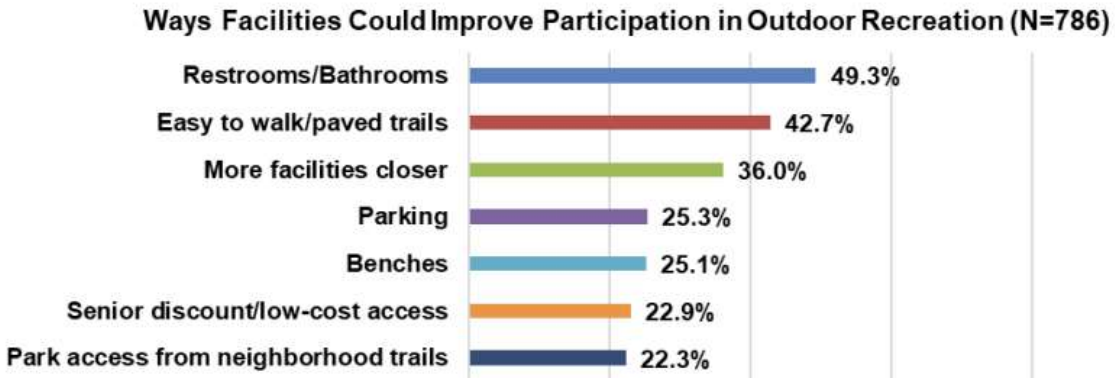
The Bradwyn Grove/Bradwyn Village rezoning (**REZ2025-00029**) proposes to add 504 dwelling units on 62 acres near the Brentsville Interchange, where Dumfries Road (234 business) and Prince William Parkway meet.

As proposed, the new subdivisions would include a shared use path (SUP) parallel to the existing one already on the opposite side of Dumfries Road. That new SUP would provide access for users on the east side of Dumfries Road to the bike/pedestrian route through the complicated intersection.

June 20 - Play All Day

June 20 is the longest day of the year, the summer solstice. Prince William County will offer **numerous recreational opportunities**, including a Stroller Walk at Harbor Drive Wellness Park 10:00-11:00am. Come and connect with other families while enjoying the spring weather, and getting some healthy, low impact exercise.

Check out the events in **Manassas** and **Manassas Park.**



Virginia Outdoors Plan

Virginia published its most recent **Virginia Outdoors Plan** in 2024. It included information on obtaining **state and Federal grants** for planning, designing, and building trails.

The 2022 **recreational survey** which preceded the plan noted "*When asked for ways to enhance outdoor engagement, probability sample respondents most frequently suggested adding restrooms/bathrooms (49.3%) and easy to walk/paved trails(42.7%).*"

The survey documented that in Virginia, the two most-needed recreational resources were trails and natural areas. The top three reasons people use trails are pleasure or relaxation (75%), scenery and natural environment (62%), and health and physical training (56%). A trail was considered to be "close-to-home" if it could be accessed by a 10-15 minute walk, a 15-minute bike ride, or a 15-19 minute drive.

Bike and Pedestrian Safety

Prince William Board of County Supervisors is being asked to adopt a **Comprehensive Traffic Safety Action Plan** on June 3. Plan uses a "*safe streets approach to identify safety initiatives to improve traffic and pedestrian safety projects, programs, and strategies to move towards zero deaths across the County.*"

Prince William Transportation Department expects to update the plan every five years, and 72 specific projects are ranked in this first version. Over $11 million in costs are identified for Initial Prioritized Projects, including programs such as a "PWC Transportation Engagement Strategy."

As part of the Highway Safety Improvement Program, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has completed a **Strategic Highway Safety Plan** plus a **Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment** (a comprehensive crash cause analysis). Check out the **Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) 3.0 map**. Also, VDOT will publish an updated statewide **map of sidewalks** in 2026.

One challenge is to make paths of various sorts safe and user-friendly for parents with strollers and people using walkers. The Virginia Department of Health **says**: "*One of our priorities is to improve walkability in cities, towns, and neighborhoods. Our work focuses on improving walkability through active transportation, health equity, and transportation equity.*"

The League of American Bicyclists and AARP have created the AARP **Bike Audit Tool Kit: A Self-Service Guide to Assessing a Community's Bikeability**. AARP is making clear that **Bicycles Aren't Just for Kids**.

Doves Landing Park Update

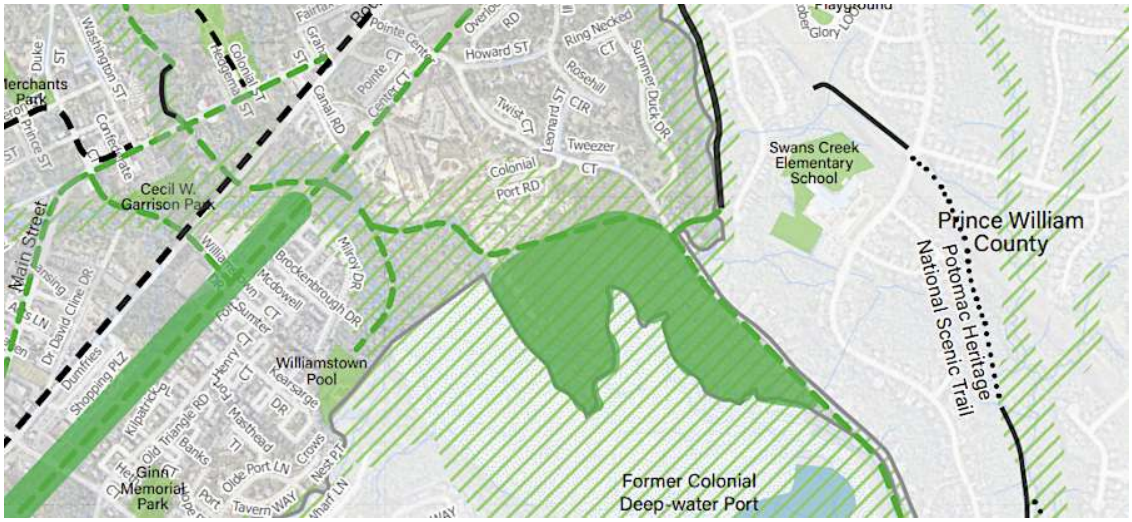
Some highlights from the May 19 public meeting to discuss the 35% design of the **Doves Landing Park**:

o*n Sinclair Mill portion*
- trail will cross Long Branch on bridge rather than cut into streambanks for at-grade crossing
- accessible trail to overlook will start at parking lot next to restrooms
- one of two kayak launches has been eliminated
- existing house will be removed rather than renovated
- remaining $2 million in park development budget will be used for Sinclair Mill projects

On Dove's Landing portion
- one mile of accessible trail will be located on western side, with two loops that allow taking shorter/longer walks. Number of ADA-compliant spaces may need to be expanded at existing parking lot in later 65% design.
- existing trail along waterfront will be renovated to avoid floodplain and private land (new signs now identify where trails stop at edge of county ownership)
- horse parking area is now separate from existing parking lot, located instead next to cell tower
- trail network on eastern side will be accessed from two separate parking lots, with larger lot providing link to boardwalk in wetland
- accessible kayak launch has been relocated to eastern edge to avoid cutting 5 acres of trees, to eliminate need to cross private land at waters edge, and to shorten distance to haul boats from parking lot
- dogs trained to search for the small whorled pogonia plant (an endangered species) found none

In addition,
Another public meeting will be held before design is finalized, and Board of County Supervisors as well as Planning Commission will need to approve in a Public Facility Review.

Comments can be submitted directly to Prince William County at **doveslanding@pwcgov.org**



In Other News…

- Dumfries Planning Commission will review Comprehensive Plan update, **Destination Dumfries 2044**, on June 9. Some of the trails in the town's plan (*see above*) do not align with Prince William's current **Countywide Trails Plan**, including the route of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.
- **VDOT Gives Fairfax City Deadline To Approve Or Cancel George Snyder Trail Plan** (*Patch*, May 13) "*The Virginia Department of Transportation has given the Fairfax City Council a June 30 deadline to decide whether to move forward with construction of the* ***George Snyder Trail project*** *with the approved alignment or cancel the project altogether and pay $3.7 million in concessionaire funding.*"
- Researchers and practitioners in the **Nature and Health Alliance** seek to generate evidence on the benefits of nature for health and well-being, and propel evidence of the benefits of nature for health and well-being into policy and practice.
- **Middle school PE class in Virginia helps students learn to ride bikes, some for the first time** (WUSA, May 15) One child "*never learned to ride a bike as a kid. The road near his home was too busy, and his parents didn't feel it was safe... Now, thanks to Prince William County Public Schools' bicycle program, he's getting a second chance.*"
- Construction of **trailhead improvements at Valley View Park** will begin this summer.
- **Virginia Safe Routes to School programs see future funding in jeopardy** (*Virginia Mercury*, May 19) "*It used to be funded by a specific line item at VDOT that was for Safe Routes to School with federal funding. And that funding went away about three years ago*."
- The regional Transportation Planning Board has awarded a **$80,000 grant** to Prince William County for a High School Pedestrian Safety Improvements Study. It will identify and prioritize locations near high schools for safety improvements, and recommend Safe Routes to Schools projects.
- Presentations from the 2025 Land Conservation & Greenways Conference are **now online**. One track for the entire conference focused on trails in Virginia, including "How to Kickstart a Trails Program" in Prince William County.
- On June 7, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail is hosting a **National Trail's Day Celebration** at the C&O Canal National Historical Park. That same say, the 6th annual **Appalachian Trail Festival** will be in Hillsboro.

- Henry County, with a population density of 133 people per square mile, has completed an **Active Transportation Plan** "*to create a connected network that supports walking, healthy exercise, biking, and is integrated with transit options*." Population density in Prince William County is 1,438 people per square mile.

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