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Greater Prince William TRAILS COALITION

Second Sunday Hike (October 8, 1:00-3:00pm)

We will explore the Neabsco Creek stream corridor between Cloverdale Park and Darbydale Ave. Total distance will be about 3.5 miles. Come schmoooze with fellow trail advocates, and discover a section of the Neabsco Greenway that is “low hanging fruit” for funding/construction.

Please register at **https://tinyurl.com/e27h4m8s** to get details, including the location of the starting point. Registration will allow us to notify you if the hike is postponed or cancelled because of weather conditions.

Trails and Blueways Council (TBC) Meeting Notes

At its September 26 meeting, the Prince William County **Trails and Blueways Council** approved a resolution regarding the preferred route for section 19 and 20 of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. Preferred route is along the Occoquan River, going under the I-95 and Route 1 bridges, to offer scenic vistas.

Hedges Run Bridge Update

The **bridge on Segment 3** of the Occoquan Greenway was closed to public use on September 18, after failing to pass the final inspection. The contractor must fix the bolts.

REMINDER - Northern Virginia Regional Commission and partner organizations are holding the 2023 Recreational Trails Summit on October 24, 2023. ***Register online****, so you can connect and coordinate trails planning, funding, and management.*

Virginia Statewide Trails Plan Survey

The **Virginia State Trails Office** invites everyone to **complete the Virginia Statewide Trails Plan Survey** before October 20. It will help guide the State Trails Office as it completes the Virginia Statewide Trails Plan for a network of multi-use trails in the Commonwealth.

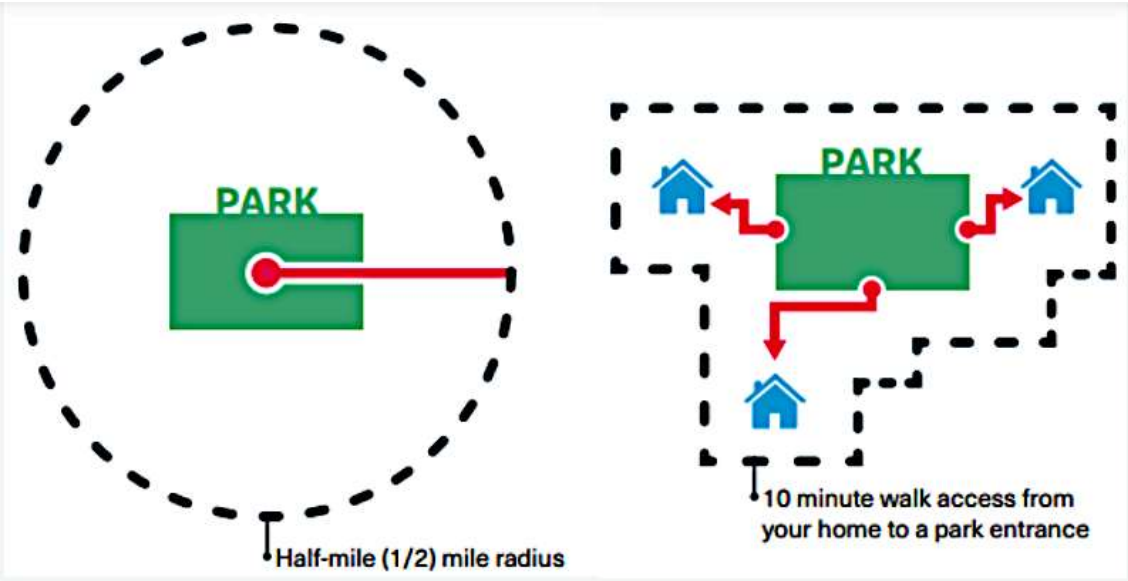
Walk and Roll to School Day… and Walk-tober

The 27th annual **National Walk & Roll to School Day** is October 4, 2023.

And yes, there are webinars. Register for **Walkinar I: National and State Perspectives** (October 5, 10:30am-noon) on walkability trends and public support for safe streets, walking, and walkability and **Walkinar 2: Infrastructure and Safety** (October 12, 10:30am-noon) on links between land use and transportation. Also, check out **All Aboard the Bike Train** from Fairfax County Public Schools.

Firefighters of the Prince William County Fire and Rescue System will join students, from selective schools around the county, to celebrate International Walk to School Day and throughout Walk-tober. Chief Tom LaBelle of the Prince William County Fire & Rescue System **said** "*Communities deserve safe places to walk and bike... What better place to start than with our children who travel to and from school, nine months out of the year*."

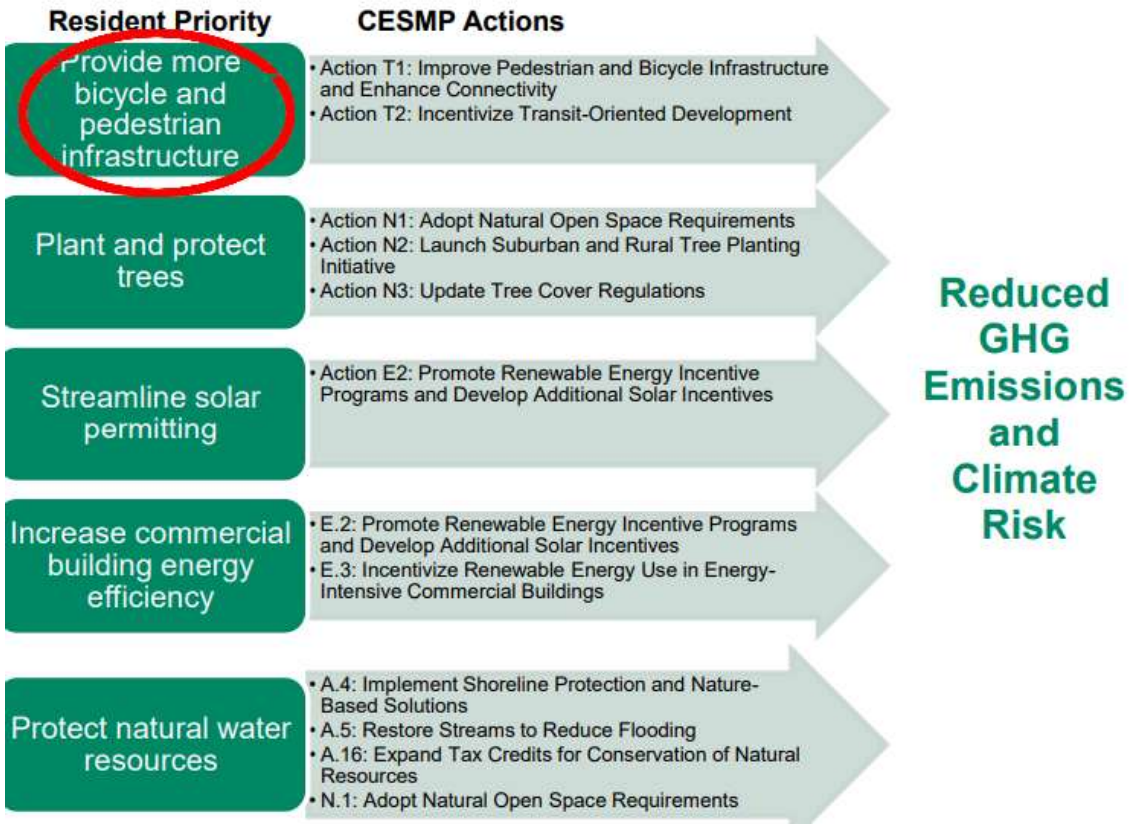
From the **Virginia Safe Routes to School Program Annual Report 2020-2022**: *Just a generation ago, 90% of students living within a mile of school walked or biked to school. Today, just over 10% of students walk or bike to school.*



Walking Access to Local Parks: Making It a Priority

The final Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Access (PROSA) Strategy of the Fairfax County Park Authority is **now available**.

NOTE: the first strategy is to improve 10-minute walk access to Park Authority parks.



Bike/Pedestrian Infrastructure and Climate Change

On September 28, the Prince William Sustainability Commission reviewed the **final draft** of the Community Energy and Sustainability Master Plan (CESMP).

It **strongly endorsed immediate adoption** of all six measures designated in the CESMP as having high greenhouse gas reduction potential, including "T.1: Improve Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure and Enhance Connectivity."

Plannng steps for that measure include:
• Hire an active-mobility planning consultant to develop a strategic Active Transportation Plan that includes recommendations for prioritizing infrastructure improvements and outlines new active transportation policies and processes
• Ensure Active Transportation Plan development process includes extensive community engagement
• Evaluate expansion of County-wide Trails Plan in Comprehensive Plan
- Review Trails and Blueways Council's Aspirational Trails Map and identifyadditional facilities to include
- Ensure elements of Active Transportation Plan are also incorporated into update of County-wide Trails Plan
• Incorporate the Trails and Blueways Council's Aspirational Trails Map into the forthcoming Parks, Recreation and Tourism Master Plan

• Use forthcoming Transportation app to crowd-source data on barriers to pedestrian and bicyclist access to schools and transit and identify priority actions
• Identify existing private facilities/community destinations that need bicycle facilities and evaluate incentives that could be provided to encourage visitor bicycle facilities
• Evaluate use of counters to track usage of bicycle/pedestrian facilities or hire consultant develop bicycle/pedestrian facility usage counts *(sic)*

2024 Virginia Land Conservation and Greenways Conference

Virginia's United Land Trusts (VaULT) will host the 2024 **Virginia Land Conservation and Greenways Conference** on May 14-16, 2024 at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg. There are four primary tracks:

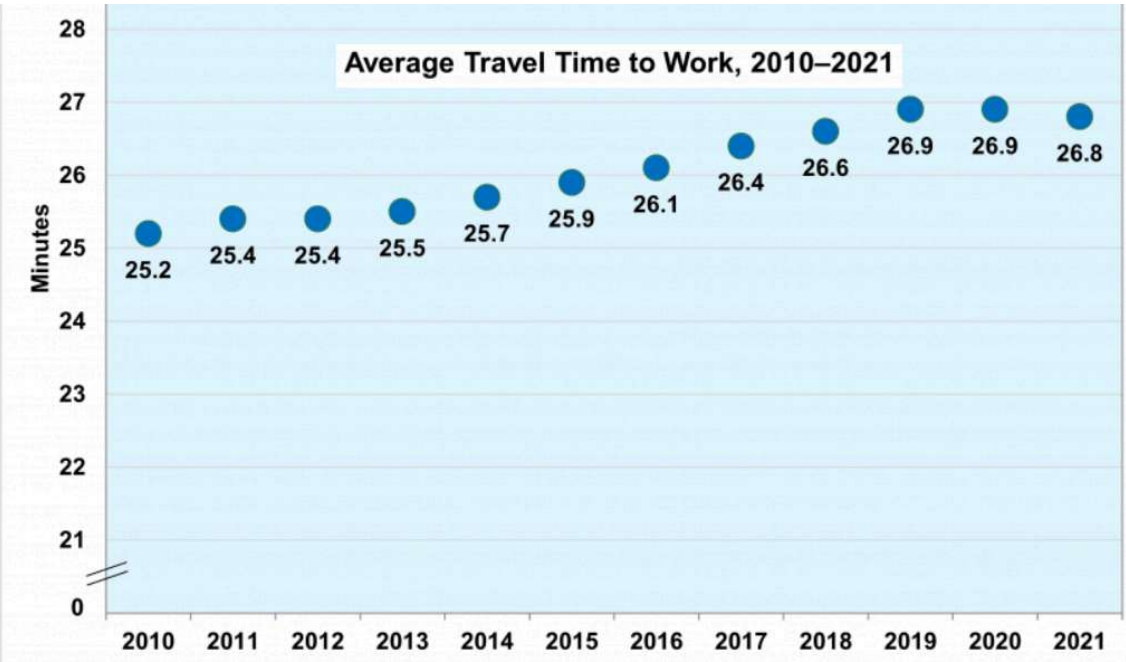
- Trails, Greenways, and Blueways
- Conservation Challenges and Opportunities
- Community Partnerships
- Best Practices for Easement Holders

If you want to submit a proposal for a session, they are **due November 10**.

In Other News…

- The Action in the Community Through Service (ACTS) 12th annual "**IWalk for ACTS 5K Run/Walk and Family Festival**" is this Saturday, October 7, at Stonebridge at Potomac Town Center. Run/Walk begins at 8:30am, Family Festival at 9:00am. There is still time to participate in the run/walk, volunteer for the event, or make a modest donation to ACTS.
- Ranger-guided **Fall Foliage Hike** at Prince William Forest Park will be October 14 from 10:00-11:30am. Explore the 1.4 mile long Laurel Loop Trail, starting at the Visitor Center. On October 22, **Fall Foliage Fun** will start at 10:00am with a walk to learn about some of the tree species in the park, followed by fall foliage-themed arts and crafts until noon.
- **Loudoun County Parks, Recreation and Community Services** (PRCS) has a **survey seeking input** from county residents regarding the naming and branding of the planned countywide **Linear Parks and Trails** (LPAT) system. Those completing the survey will see two options for attending an online workshop on Thursday, October 19.
- **Complete Streets Power Hours** have started. These are a monthly forum sponsored by **Smart Growth America**. The sessions are designed to connect with colleagues, share best practices, and discuss what local, state, and federal policy changes are needed to make Complete Streets the rule, not the exception.
- "*In 2021, more than 880,000 e-bikes were sold in the U.S., compared with 608,000 electric cars and trucks*." From **Lithium-ion battery fires are a growing public safety concern – here's how to reduce the risk** (*The Conversation*, September 26, 2023)
- E-bikes are an equity solution. See **Study: How Low-Income People Really Use Micromobility** (*Streetsblog*, September 20) and **The Rising Costs of Owning a Car** (*New York Times*, September 22), which reports "*The average annual cost of ownership is up more than 13 percent from last year to more than $12,000, or just over $1,000 a month...*"
- The Virginia Conservation Network has identified **Saving Pedestrian Lives** as a priority issue for the 2024 General Assembly because "*2022 saw a significant increase in pedestrian fatalities in Virginia. This 36% increase in deaths over 2021 claimed 46 more lives and is among the worst pedestrian fatality rates in the entire nation.*"
- Strong Towns video, **We Keep Losing The Battle Against Traffic. Is This Inevitable?** explains in 13 minutes "induced demand" amd "predictable

variability"… and why bike/pedestrian infrastructure can be a more tax-effective investment to increase saisfaction with mobility.



National average from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010–2021,
5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, S0801

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