Greater Prince William TRAILS COALITION

November 5 Trails Master Plan Meeting

The **Trails Master Plan** will guide trails development in Prince William County for the next 10 years. Last opportunity to provide input will be November 5, 7:00-8:30pm at the **Pat White Center** in Ben Lomond Park.

You can also submit comments **online** until November 5. If the survey questions are not sufficient for your input, send recommendations directly to **trails@pwcgov.org**

The Department of Parks and Recreation will finish the Trails Master Plan in another two months and send it to the Board of County Supervisors for adoption. Among other things, the plan will define the route of the **Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail** in Prince William County.

How Many Miles of Trails Are Planned? At What Cost?

The Prince William County Department of Parks and Recreation **anticipated** in June 2025 that the county would build an additional 125 miles of recreational trails, 14 boat launches, and 291 miles of "active mobility" trails (shared use paths and bike route).

The county's **Trails Master Plan**, now being developed, will define routes and provide cost estimates. Then trail projects can finally be considered for the county's **Capital Improvements Program**.

The road projects in Prince William County's **2040 Mobility Chapter** are estimated to cost $7 billion. There was no cost estimate for the county's trails projects listed in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. *(**Sidewalks** are tracked separately by the Prince William Transportation Department, and are not included in the Trails Master Plan.)*

At the regional level, the 2024 **Northern Virginia Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Study** by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) identified nearly 5,000 lane miles of planned-yet-unfunded bicycle and pedestrian facilities among the already-adopted transportation and Comprehensive Plans for all Northern Virginia localities.

The estimated cost in 2022 to build those identified but yet-unfunded facilities is $9 billion, if undertaken as standalone construction projects. Many of the expensive shared use paths are incorporated into planned road projects, and not intended to be constructed separately.

For context, cost of the mostly road and transit projects in the **TransAction plan,** published in 2022 by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA,) is $75 billion.

Estimated $$$ for Bike/Pedestrian Projects in Visualize 2050 and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Public comments are invited on the **Visualize 2050** Constrained Long Range Plan and the **Transportation Improvement Program** (TIP) until November 21. The two plans are developed by the 24 jurisdictions in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) and the Transportation Planning Board (TPB).

These two regional plans are created separately from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) **TransAction** plan and the state **VTrans** plan. The NVTA and state plans are aspirational. In contrast the Visualize 2050 and TIP are financially constrained, and list only projects for which funding is expected. Not all projects are aligned in the different plans or with the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) of local jurisdictions - yes, it's confusing...

The draft FY2026-2029 TIP identifies projects for which funding is anticipated within the next four years. For Prince William County, only one bike/pedestrian project is included in a list of 34 projects with $2.6 billion in total estimated costs. $899,417 (just 0.03% of the county's total TIP funding) is for the **Token Forest Drive Sidewalk** project.

No specific bike/pedestrian projects are in the TIP for Manassas; the city prioritized transit and road proposals (with sidewalks). The 7 studies for Manassas Park include bike/pedestrian components, such as:
$619,392 - **Manassas Park Trails Construction**
$356,673 - **Mathis Avenue Extension**
$270,000 - **VRE Manassas Line Trail: Landmark to City of Manassas Study**
$200,000 - **Blooms Park Access Study**
$100,000 - **Kirby Street Extension Study** (connecting to a possible trail on UOSA sewer line)

The Constrained Long Range Plan/Visualize 2050 (2025-2050) identifies 329 projects costing **over $78 billion** expected to be funded by 2050. The plan includes maps of **future pedestrian,**

bicyclist, and micromobility improvements, as well as the **future railway and bus transit network** and the **future roadway network**.

Many individual bike/pedestrian projects are lumped together in one budget item, **Construction: Transportation Enhancement Byway Non-Traditional**. The draft plan does not list those separate bike/pedestrian projects or identify the jurisdiction in which they might be constructed. That item is for $394,233,399, which is 0.5% of the total $78 billion in Visualize 2050.

Nearly $3 billion for 52 projects are identified in Visualize 2050 for **Prince William County**. The 8 bike/pedestrian projects would cost $252 million, which is 5% of total funding. In addition, proposed new roadways such as the **Euclid Avenue Northern Extension Study** would also include bike lanes, sidewalks, and/or shared use paths as well as new pavement for cars/trucks.

Funding for **three** of the bike/pedestrian projects in Visualize 2050 is identified separately from associated road expansion projects, as if they would be constructed independently from the roads:
$60,000,000 - **Route 234 Trail**
$45,000,000 - **VA 29 (Lee Highway) National Capital Network Trail (Fauquier County Line to Route 705)** (a separate **$80 million** project would widen part of Route 29)
$35,000,000 - **Graham Park Road Diet**
$30,000,000 - **Bull Run Trail** (1/3 of route is associated with widening Balls Ford Road to 4 lanes)
$30,000,000 - **Hoadly Road Trail**
$30,000,000 - **Wellington Road National Capital Network Trail** (separate **$70 million** and **$110 million** projects would widen Wellington Road)
$12,000,000 - **VA 234 Crossing over I-95**
$10,000,000 - **Dale Boulevard Trail over I-95**

2026 Virginia Land Conservation & Greenways Conference (VaULT)

The annual VaULT gathering is the closest thing to a statewide trails conference in Virginia. In 2025 members of the Greater Prince William Trails Coalition, Trails and Blueways Council, and Department of Parks and Recreated presented a panel discussion on “How to Kickstart a Trails Program.”

The 2026 conference will be April 27-29 in Newport News. All those interested in trails are welcome.

The deadline for submitting proposals for 2026 presentations is November 10. Registration will open in February.

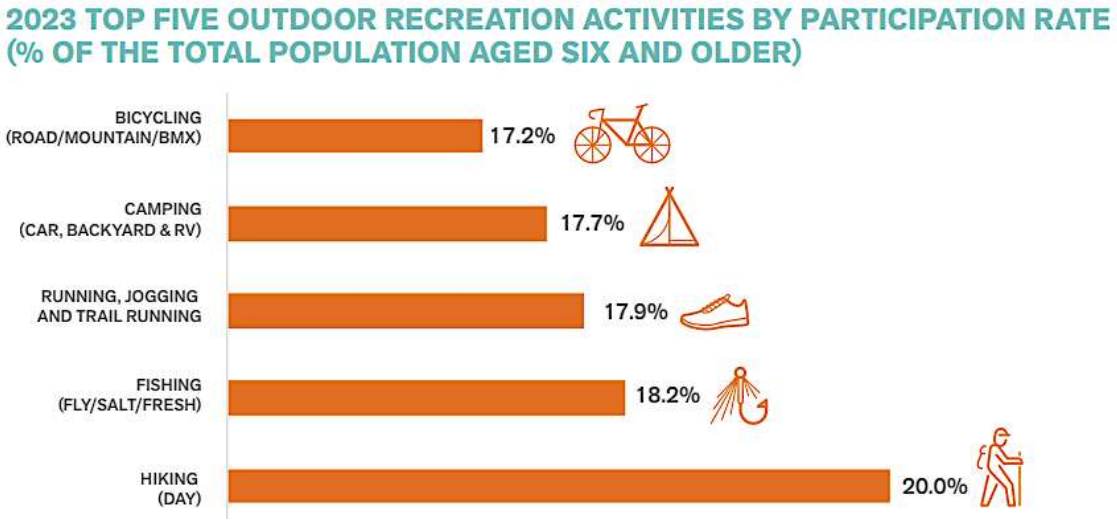
Only Trail In Prince William County With an Elevator - or Two

About one mile of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST) is under construction between the CSX railroad tracks and the Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge.

Trail segment will connect to the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) station at Rippon, where hikers can take an elevator to the bridge across the tracks. Another PHNST segment south of Powell’s Creek may utilize the elevator at the Potomac Shores VRE station - hikers might take two elevator rides...

Construction of the boardwalk components on the Featherstone segment of the PHNST has been delayed. The helical piers to support the boardwalk in wet areas need to be sunk deeper than originally planned.

In Other News…



- The national **2024 Outdoor Participation Trends Report** says "*At a 57.1% participation rate, a larger share of all Americans participate in outdoor recreation than see a movie in a theater (43%), possess at least an associate degree (52.5%), or eat breakfast daily (35%).*"
- **State Trails Advisory Committee** (STAC) Fall Meeting will be on November 5 from 1:00-2:30pm. Managing e-bikes is an agenda item, with a "lessons learned" report from City of Virginia Beach. To get an invitation, send an e-mail to **PlanningResources@dcr.virginia.gov** with "STAC meeting request" in the subject line.
- The Fall 2025 issue of **Regional Trails News & Updates** from the Northern Virginia Regional Commission is now available.
- Applications for the **Trails Capacity Fund** grants can be filed in December. Projects that address trail maintenance needs are prioritized. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) maintains a list of **funding opportunities**.
- WETA broadcast From Rails to Trails on October 18, including stories of the Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD) Trail. You can **see it online**.

the Wellington Road sidepath in Manassas is finished, except for the crossing of Norfolk Southern tracks

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