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# Greater Prince William TRAILS COALITION

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## Mid-June 2026 Newsletter

see more at our [calendar](#), [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page.



### Hybrid Quarterly Meeting on June 25, 10:00-11:30am

Come and meet with fellow trail planners, managers, and advocates at our Quarterly Meeting on June 25, 10:00-11:30am. We gather in-person at GMU's **Potomac Science Center**, and via Zoom as well. **Register** to get Zoom link.

We'll be introduced to **Girls on the Run** to see how we can partner to promote trails in Greater Prince William. We'll get the latest news regarding funding and implementing Pathways 2035, the **Countywide Trails Master Plan**. (That 10-year plan is now scheduled to go to the Prince William Board of County Supervisors for approval in September.)

In contrast to the **Statewide Multiuse Trails Plan** just released by the Virginia Department of Transportation, the county plan takes a comprehensive, integrated approach. The county plan,

“Pathways 2035,” includes and prioritizes both recreational and active mobility trail segments; its scope and vision is not constrained by bureaucratic silos.

We will also release the draft action plan for the Greater Prince William Trails Coalition. Yeah, we schmooze - but we schmooze with a purpose; we are volunteers with an agenda. One topic: identifying the “low hanging fruit” trail segments which can be constructed with minimal funding and delay, particularly with volunteer help.

Project Title	Total Project Cost	Requested NVT Funds	Recommended Funds
Van Buren Road North Extension: Route 234 to Cardinal Drive <sup>1</sup>	\$ 191,005,800	\$ 179,005,800	\$ 179,005,800
Route 15 Railroad Overpass and Improvements Project	\$ 80,000,000	\$ 65,000,000	\$ 65,000,000
Old Bridge/Gordon Boulevard Intersection Improvements	\$ 94,456,481	\$ 56,000,000	
Dale City Transit Priority Project	\$ 50,080,000	\$ 6,000,000	\$ 6,000,000
Route 234 Trail at Innovation Park	\$ 45,000,000	\$ 45,000,000	\$ 45,000,000
Manassas VRE Line Rail-with-Trail: Downtown Manassas to Bull Run Trail (Phase 1) <sup>2</sup>	\$ 30,534,594	\$ 30,265,994	\$ 30,265,994

## Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVT Poised to Allocate Over \$75 Million (Yes, **\$75 million...**) in Funding for Local Trails

On **July 9**, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVT) could approve a **staff recommendation** to allocate \$45 million for the **Route 234 Trail at Innovation Park** and an additional \$30.2 million for the **Manassas VRE Rail With Trail** project.

Between FY2014-2031, NVT has allocated almost \$4.5 billion for 153 projects.. NVT notes the latest (FY2026-2031) funding round includes the “*Highest amount and percentage of bike and pedestrian projects (9 projects, 43% of total) and funding (\$165 million, 21% of total) ever in one funding cycle.*” Prince William County and the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park submitted **six projects** for this funding cycle.

The Route 234 Trail at Innovation Park includes a shared use path between Route 28 and Sudley Manor Drive, with a pedestrian bridge over Prince William Parkway at Discovery Boulevard. The bridge was proposed six years ago in the **Innovation Park Small Area Plan**.

The \$45 million Route 234 Trail at Innovation Park will be a partial retrofit - Prince William Parkway was built in the 1990’s from Brentsville/Dumfries Road to I-66 without a parallel shared use path.

Today, the Prince William County transportation staff routinely include active mobility trails in new road projects, including intersection improvements and interchanges. No funding had been identified yet to build a shared use path from Route 28 in the other direction to the Brentsville interchange. East of the Brentsville interchange, an almost-complete paved shared use path exists along Route 234 to I-95 at Dumfries.



## Acquiring Property Rights for the Public to Use Trails

As described in **Most of Sperryville River Trail closed** (May 31, *Rappahannock News*), the Sperryville Community Alliance built a 1.5 mile trail along the Thornton River based on an informal agreement with landowners. That trail became very popular for local residents and visitors, but new property owners have closed it.

To avoid such a problem, Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park have purchased land or acquired proffers and legal rights-of-way (easements for public travel across private property) for “recreational” and “active mobility” trail segments.

The county now faces a major challenge in acquiring rights-of-way for the 300 miles of new trails proposed in the draft 10-year master plan for trails, **Pathways 2035**. *Proposed* segments for recreational trails (typically natural surface paths in parks and greenways) and many of the active mobility segments (typically paved shared use paths) will require negotiating with property owners.

For example, completing Segment 8 of the Occoquan Greenway linking Clipper Drive to Union Street in the Town of Occoquan will require obtaining authorization to cross private land. The two key parcels are owned by the Thousand Oaks Townhome Association (*see above*) and the Lake Ridge Parks and Recreation Association (LRPRA).

Acquiring the rights to build *proposed* recreational trail segments will require hiring additional staff and contractors with land acquisition expertise. The Department of Parks and Recreation has long experience in negotiating for trail routes through the proffer process with developers - but has never been staffed to conduct land acquisition through the survey, appraisal, negotiation, and purchase process.

Some trail segments are “low hanging fruit” opportunities that will not require delaying construction until property rights are acquired. On recreational segments labelled in Pathways 2035 as *planned*, rights for public use have already been acquired through previous land purchases or

proffers. However, additional county staff will be needed to oversee volunteers willing to construct as well as maintain trails.

Acquiring legal access for building the planned 200 miles of new active mobility trails will be less of a challenge. Road projects now include acquiring the space needed for a shared use path along with the paved road. Acquiring rights for active mobility trails has become part of the standard process for acquiring land for roads.

In contrast to the Department of Parks and Recreation, the county's transportation staff often uses condemnation when acquiring land. Maintaining active mobility trails after completion is also managed differently. Once a new road is inspected and accepted into the state highway system, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) assumes responsibility for the paved active mobility trail as well as for maintaining the road.

Acquiring the legal rights for public trails that connect communities requires cooperation among developers, residents and Home Owner Associations (HOA's). Different units of local government, including the offices responsible for planning, permitting, recreation, and transportation, will be involved.

Most rezonings now include a proffer for the public to use trails around new housing units. Major new subdivisions along Vint Hill Road in Prince William County have proffered extensions of the Broad Run Trail and a new trail along Kettle Run.

Rezoning proffers now usually require developers to build new public trail segments, but sometimes proffers include just the right for the government to build a trail later. After construction, local government agencies become responsible for maintenance (including bridge replacement) for public trail segments which are not within the VDOT right-of-way.

Not all trails proffered in rezonings are public. Some large subdivisions such as Braemar built private internal trails that connect to the public trail network. Developers recognize that trails increase property values.

There is one major public trail in Prince William County where the public right-of-way could expire. The Lake Ridge Parks and Recreation Association (LRPRA) has generously granted easements for segments of the Occoquan Greenway which cross LRPRA property. The original lease was for 20 years (2014-2034). Amendment 2 to the lease added 10 years; it is now 30 years (2014-2044).

There are many trail segments in Pathways 2035 routed underneath powerlines or on top of water/sewer lines. That land is not automatically available for a public trail, even when a service road appears immediately suitable. Property rights acquired for public utilities typically include just the right of access for maintenance, but not for public hiking/biking.

The right for the general public to walk/bike on utility easements for recreational use still needs to be acquired. The workload for deed research, appraisals, negotiations, and legal review will be substantial. For the Board of County Supervisors to implement the Pathways 2035 plan, new staff resources will have to be included in the budget.

# Mobility: Major Projects & Initiatives



Project/Initiative	Completion Timeline	Project/Initiative	Completion Timeline
1. DCSM Section 600 - Implement DCSM Section 600 (Transportation) Update	FY27 (Under Review)	7. Transit Outreach Programs (OmniRide) - Conduct and coordinate transit outreach	Ongoing/ Annual
2. Technology and Transit Networks -Integrate technology and transit networks. Identify and coordinate plans.	FY27 (Ongoing)	8. Mobility Branding - Promote mobility branding and communication	Ongoing/ Annual
3. Proffers review – Review database of transportation proffers to identify how proffers can address future mobility needs. Identify new developer proffer policy and guidance.	FY27 (Ongoing)	9. Alternative Communications - Leverage technology and use of digital platforms	FY26 (Ongoing)
4. Planning coordination – Improve coordination between the Planning Office and DOT to meet future mobility needs of the County.	FY27 (Ongoing)	10. VRE Step-Up Program Reinstatement – Program to allow VRE passengers to ride overlapping Amtrak Routes for no additional charge	FY26 (Completed)
5. Sustainability coordination - Improve coordination between Transportation and the Office of Sustainability	FY27 (Ongoing)	11. Zero Fare Local Transit-OmniRide / ages 18 and Under Free on VRE – Continuation of zero fares for local OmniRide transit routes and free fares on VRE for 18 and under passengers	Ongoing/ Annual
6. Establish transportation project prioritization process – Develop a formal process to prioritize mobility projects in the Comp Plan and Small Area Plans	FY27	12. Explore Paratransit Alternatives – Identify Paratransit Opportunities based on update to OmniRide’s TSP	FY28
7. Establish funding process through grant development – Develop a process to determine how we prioritize and program projects through funding opportunities	FY27	13. Comprehensive Traffic Safety Action Plan Development of Comprehensive Traffic Safety Action Plan and apply for first Action Grants (Capital)	FY26 (Completed)

## Strategic Plan Update: Prince William County

On June 9, the **Strategic Plan update** to the Prince William Board of County Supervisors included a section on mobility.

Goal #4 in the **FY25-28 Strategic Plan** is *“Foster an inter-connected and accessible transportation network that advances the County’s mobility infrastructure, broadens transportation choices, and enhances safety.”*

Key Accomplishments cited for *Objective 1: Enhance connectivity through transit-oriented development and improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure* in the June 9 report included:

- All active major projects include bicycle/pedestrian components. As of May 2026, there are 26 active mobility projects that include bike/ped components as part of overall design. *[Paved shared use paths alongside a road project, such as the new Sudley Road/Prince William Parkway interchange, are “bike/ped components.”]*
- An update to Section 600 (Transportation) in the **Design and Construction Standards Manual** (DCSM) will include new bicycle/pedestrian standards.

# Upcoming Priorities or Milestones



	Project/Initiative	Completion Timeline	Milestone
1	Automated Traffic Enforcement Program – Red Light Cameras	FY29 (Ongoing)	Initial intersections to go live Summer 2026
2	Develop and distribute Mobility Annual Report	FY26	Draft being reviewed. Finalized report to be distributed Summer 2026
3	Develop working group focusing on bicycle and pedestrian efforts	FY26	Developing process to identify external members

## What Are the Priorities for Funding Trail/Roadway/Transit Projects in Prince William County?

Aware of a safety issue on a bike path? See a need for altering an existing intersection or sidewalk? Got a priority for what mobility projects should be funded next - including those identified in the active mobility list of [Pathways 2035?](#)

Prince William County is seeking public comments related to mobility projects. You can [put a pin on the map](#) and add your priorities/comments, plus see what others have said.

The county launched a [Enhancing Transparency and Public Participation in Transportation Program](#) in 2023. The Transportation Department (morphing on July 1 into the Department of Transportation and Capital Construction) now holds a Spring and Fall [open house](#) to discuss a wide range of projects, including plans for new active mobility trails, safety improvements, and trail maintenance.

As noted on p.273 of the [FY27-32 Capital Improvement Program](#) (CIP), “DOT worked with the Transformation Management Office to create a Community Outreach Plan geared towards improving community engagement.”

For the past few years, the Transportation Department has actively participated in the monthly [Trails and Blueways Council](#) meetings and provided detailed updates on projects that involve bike/pedestrian connectivity. The county’s transportation and recreation staff work effectively together to coordinate proposals.

To enhance public engagement beyond staff coordination, two new advisory groups have been launched. The Transportation Funding Advisory Group first met on June 9. Monthly meetings will eventually shift to quarterly gatherings.

Active Prince William and Trails and Blueways Council are representing the general public. Other members of the advisory group represent various county departments and external transportation

agencies such as Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), OmniRide, and Virginia Railway Express (VRE).

The Transportation Funding Advisory Group is intended to coordinate funding submissions, starting by compiling a list of the various funding sources and timelines. The group will also be involved in prioritizing transportation projects. Pathways 2035, once approved by county supervisors, is the obvious starting point for prioritizing funding for recreational and active mobility trails in the FY28 budget.

The most recent Strategic Plan update to the Board of County Supervisors (*see above*) referenced a new working group focusing on bicycle and pedestrian efforts. How will that group relate to Trails and Blueways Council and the new Transportation Funding Working Group is to be determined.

What's the problem to be solved with the enhanced coordination?

Prince William County has 15 pages of roadway projects in the **Mobility Chapter** of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan with an estimated cost of \$7 billion. However, no priorities are identified for the public until grant applications need to be approved by the Board of County Supervisors. Typically initial applications are approved via the Consent Agenda, before Citizen's Time when people might offer comments on project priorities.

The county's CIP includes funding for approved projects through FY32 with over \$540 million for mobility projects. However, whatever new projects that will need funding starting in FY28 are not identified. The only specific transportation project with funding identified in the CIP beyond FY27 is the **Fraleley Boulevard Widening - Route 1** (Brady's Hill Road to Route 234).

The CIP does include Transportation & Roadway Improvement Program (TRIP) funding. That consists of \$450,000 per year for each of the seven magisterial districts for construction of small-scale capital improvements. TRIP funding could be used for trail projects.

In contrast to roadways, Pathways 2035 will offer a clue about project priorities. The highest priority recreational and active mobility trail segments for construction by 2035 will be identified in Tier 1. Lower-priority projects will be listed as Tier 2 and Tier 3.

## DECEPTIVE PRODUCTS & BEHAVIOR

- E-motos are **NOT** electric bicycles due to excessive motor power, top speed capability and/or lack of operable pedals
- Sellers deceive the public with electric bicycle features like pedals and a “factory setting” or easily switchable mode limiting speed to 20mph
- Sellers state the vehicle is for “off-road use only” often with numerous legal disclaimers - but show it being used on public roads in advertising
- Social media advertising, sponsored “reviews” and brand labeled user groups demonstrate the product’s excessive power and speed and show it being used illegally on public roads - *and by children*



### E-Motos vs. E-Bikes

People for Bikes offered a webinar on June 3 to illuminate how different states are regulating electric motorcycles (“e-motos” with motors exceeding 750 watts). E-motos can exceed the speeds of Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3 e-bikes.

E-motos are now being marketed to children and juveniles with claims they are e-bikes, but with the extra capabilities - and risks - of mopeds/motorcycles.

Closer to home, *Prince William Times* reported on June 2 (**Town of Haymarket weighs regulating e-bikes and scooters (Prince William Times)**)“ that the Haymarket Town Council is considering restrictions on e-bikes: “*The June 1 public hearing was the first the town held on the new ordinance. A second is set for June 23. The town council will hold a work session on the ordinance on June 29 and expects to vote on the measure in July...*”

Virginia Beach has many similarities with Prince William County. Local officials there are exploring speed limits and licensing requirements that would require action by the General Assembly - see **As Virginia Beach wrestles with e-bike rules, many suggestions fall to the state** (WHRO, June 11). The Virginia General Assembly in 2026 passed **HB1120** and created a Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles **work group** to identify potential action at the state level.

People for Bikes is focused on getting the distinction between e-bikes and e-motos recognized, with regulations appropriate for the separate types of motorized bicycles. Selling a product that exceeds the capacity of an e-bike, while advertising it as a form of an e-bike, would become consumer fraud.

In January, New Jersey enacted a **restrictive law** that requires registering and getting a driver’s license to ride any e-bike, and to have insurance for Class 2 and Class 3 e-bikes. Some California officials are threatening to **prosecute parents** who provide an e-moto to children for illegal use.

The Greater Prince William Trails Coalition website has **more details** regarding bike, e-bike, and e-moto laws in jurisdictions south of the Occoquan River.

# VIRGINIA'S ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW



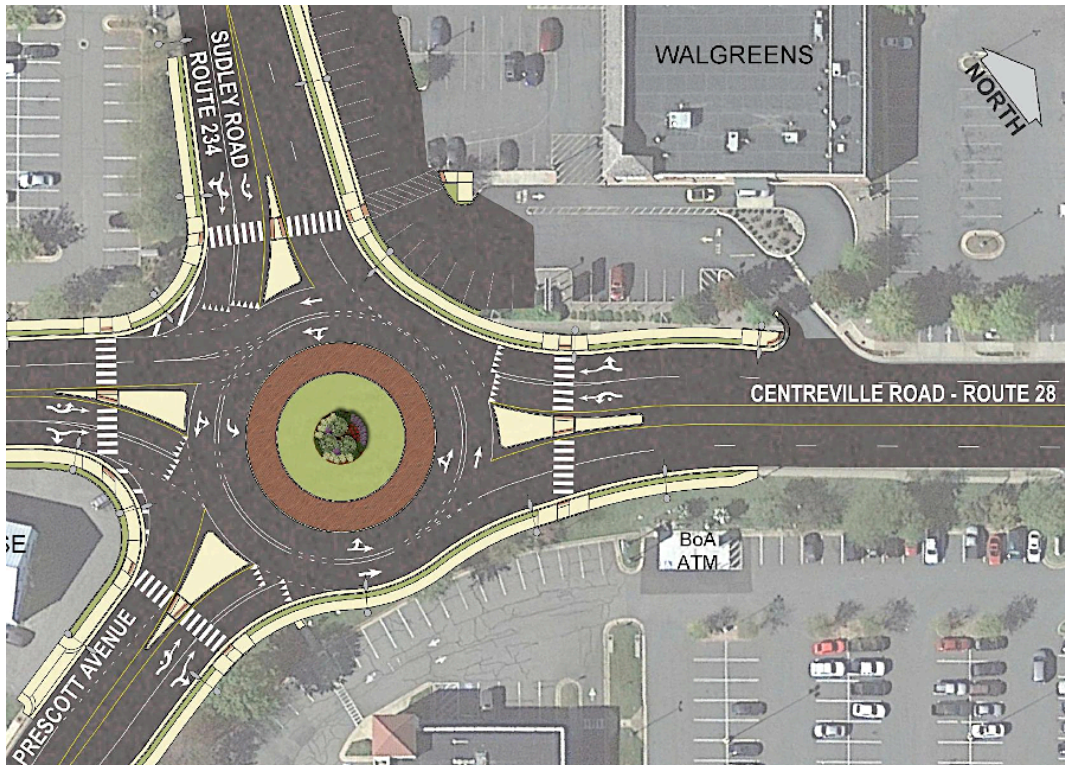
## VIRGINIA'S ELECTRIC BICYCLE LAW FOR THE ROAD

- › Electric bicycles are regulated like bicycles. The same rules of the road apply to both electric bicycles and human-powered bicycles.
- › Electric bicycles are not subject to the registration, licensing, or insurance requirements that apply to motor vehicles.
- › Virginia designates three classes of electric bicycles:
  - Class 1: Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20 mph.
  - Class 2: Bicycle equipped with a throttle-actuated motor, that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 20 mph.
  - Class 3: Bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and that ceases to provide assistance when the electric bicycle reaches 28 mph.
- › Electric bicycles may be ridden on bicycle lanes and multi-use paths where bicycles are permitted.
- › You must be 14 years or older to operate a Class 3 electric bicycle. All operators and passengers of Class 3 electric bicycles must wear a helmet.
- › A city, town or state agency that has jurisdiction can restrict where electric bicycles are allowed. When in doubt, check for local rules and regulations.

\*The following Virginia laws are referenced: VA, Code § 46.2-100; § 46.2-904.1; § 46.2-908.1; § 46.2-906.1.

## Recent Blog Posts on GPWTC Website

- **Occoquan Greenway Trail – Short Reroute on Segment 3**
- **Walk and Talk Wellness Guided Group Walk (July 1, 9:00-10:00am at Chinn Park)**
- **What Are the Local E-Bike Requirements?**
- **Planning the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST) Through Lorton**



## Bike/Pedestrian Progress in Manassas

The city is starting construction of a **two-lane roundabout** to replace the traditional intersection at Centreville Road, Sudley Road, and Prescott Avenue.

Primary objective is to enhance the flow of vehicles. Space is limited, and no new shared use path was incorporated in the design. The roundabout does include connected sidewalks with refuge islands for crossing lanes of traffic

The trail from the new Ashberry development to Baldwin Park and the Manassas Museum is now open, including the bridge over Winters Branch (*below*).



### “Walk & Talk Wellness” Guided Group Walk - July 1

The **Prevention Coalition of Greater Prince William** and its partners are sponsoring a guided group walk led by Prevention Specialists, a Master Naturalist, and community partners on July 1, 9:00-10:00am. Meet at the Pavilion to the left of the **Chinn Aquatics & Fitness Center**.

Walk will be on gentle terrain. Get more details and **register online**.

Walk & Talk Wellness is a simple yet powerful initiative that brings together movement and meaningful conversation to support whole-person health. Rooted in the 8 Dimensions of Wellness, this initiative highlights how physical activity, like walking with others, can naturally enhance emotional well-being by reducing stress, improving mood, and fostering connection.



*Wallace (on leash) on June 14 Second Sunday hike at Prince William Forest Park*

## Prince William Forest Park Update

Prince William Forest Park is still planning to use funding from the Prince William County Tourism Department to complete an archeological survey of the route of the Washington-Rochambeau Trail through the park.

Transfer by the county of **Transient Occupancy Tax** funds, which have been collected from **RV campers** in the Federal park, will occur sometime after FY27 starts on July 1.

The archeological study is needed before requesting Federal funding to build a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST) through the park along the **route of the march** by French and American armies on the way to Yorktown in September, 1781.

With county support, there may be time for the National Park Service to complete this segment of the PHNST before the 250th anniversary of the **battle of Yorktown** in five years.



### ***Do You Know: Where Is This Trail?***

Guess first - then see the answer.

### **In Other News...**

- **Leopold's Preserve in Prince William named a National Recreation Trail** (*InsideNOVA*, June 8) The Secretary of the Interior added the 7-mile trail system to the list of nearly 1,300 trails designated by the Federal government as a **National Recreation Trail**.
- Potomac Appalachian Trail Club reports that the **Appalachian Trail Guide to Maryland and Northern Virginia with Side Trails, 19th Edition** has just been published.
- The **Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee** of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments will offer a virtual **WebEx** Regional Micromobility Workshop on June 30, 1:00-3:00pm. Speakers will discuss “dockless mobility” in the region.  
Webinar number: 2436 707 5367  
Webinar password: zSCMGcwS722 (97264297 when dialing from a phone or video system)
- Leesylvania State Park is now taking **same-day reservations** on weekends and state holidays through September. “*As long as there are still available spots, you may make your reservation up until noon the day of your visit.*”
- **What the BUILD America 250 Act Means for Bikes, Trails, and U.S. Transportation Funding** (People for Bikes) In the US House of Representatives the proposed law (**H.R. 8870**) now includes the Biking Instruction, Knowledge, and Education (BIKE) Act (**H.R. 4699**). If passed, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) grant funding could finally be used for bicycle education and safety programs and use **100% Federal funding** to upgrade bike lanes and greenways.
- Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve is offering an **Early Bird Hike** on June 20, 5:30-9:00am. “*Grab your coffee and binoculars - it's prime season to hear the musical morning songs of visiting passerines and other birds...*”

- **Elizabeth River Trail Foundation proposes new pedestrian bridge over Norfolk Southern tracks** (*The Virginian-Pilot*, June 8) "...a railroad contact said a bridge could potentially be built if it adhered to the long standards manual the railroad uses for public improvement projects." The \$8 million project would resemble the **Wendy Park Bridge**.
- **Belmont Bay Waterfront Redevelopment Approved** (*Woodbridge Gazette*, June 8) The Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail route passes through much of the area set aside for conservation.
- **Over a Thousand Bicyclists Roll Through Alexandria on Bike to Work Day 2026** (*Zebra*, June 16) "...for many in Alexandria, the commute is less about traffic jams and brake lights and more about sunshine, fresh air, and the open road and trail. And cheaper too."



*new trail along Cotton Mill Road, providing safe access to the Lake Ridge Marina, is almost completed*



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