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Greater Prince William TRAILS COALITION

August 2026 Newsletter

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Then and Now:

A heavy rainstorm in July washed a bridge in Broad Run Linear Park off its abutments. It stayed intact, as designed. Before the end of the month, the Department of Parks and Recreation had moved it back into place.

What Happened in July?

From the July 28 meeting of the Trails and Blueways Council (TBC):

- The **Nokesville-Bristow 230kV electrical transmission line** will not be routed through Broad Run Linear Park. Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) decided no county land could be used for that transmission line.

- Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) has recommended one project, Powells Creek Crossing, for BOCS to include in 2027 legislative agenda request for state funding for trails.
- DPR and Public Works are now coordinating future trail development in **stream restoration projects**, which reshape stream channels and create opportunities for pathways.
- Ribbon cutting for new bridge over Rocky Branch is scheduled for September 14.
- Contractor has been chosen for extension of Neabsco Boardwalk into Metz Wetland, adding 700' of boardwalk and a 20' bridge.
- **1-mile segment** of Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST) through Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge, costing nearly \$4 million, should be completed in September.
- Public stakeholder meeting for Powells Creek Crossing is anticipated in October.
- Geotech work for bridge construction on Jefferson Park Connector is scheduled for first week in August.
- Design for developing Sinclair Mill units at Doves Landing Regional Park is 90% complete. Federal review of bridge over Long Branch for floodplain/floodway impacts is not expected to be completed until mid-2027. Similar review is still delaying bridge replacement at Andrew Leitch Park.
- DPR has determined that building about 1 mile of trail from Dale City Recreation Center upstream in Neabsco Greenway will require a bridge over Neabsco Creek rather than a fair weather crossing. Location of trail to cross Delaney Road awaits a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) decision.
- Proposed **Merrimont Subdivision** includes a proffer for trail along Broad Run, with reservation of land for future extension downstream to connect to Sudley Manor Drive.
- Proposed **Buckland Preserve** development includes about 1 mile of trail with boardwalk through wetland area, which general public would be allowed to use.
- Members of the TBC from each magisterial district are identifying two "low hanging fruit" projects which volunteers could help build. DPR expects volunteer projects could be modeled on current waivers used for work days with groups such as Boy Scouts, without excessive insurance constraints. BOCS will be asked to approve a template for such projects so DPR can authorize them individually.
- **Davis Ford Park Master Plan** will be completed in about a month, then sent to BOCS for approval. DPR will propose using current entrance to build a new parking lot away from sewage pump station. A 0.4 mile accessible stone dust trail will have benches, covered picnic tables, overlook, and small pavilion. Four fitness stations are planned along 1-mile natural surface trail. No connection to River Forest Drive was included in the plan. New Department of Transportation and Capital Construction (DTCC) will use the Master Plan to finalize design and build facilities.
- Next meeting of the PHNST subcommittee of the Trails and Blueways Council will be August 19, 2:00pm at the **Hellwig Administrative Building**
- **Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts** (MORE) has installed wayfinding signs in Andrew Leitch Park.



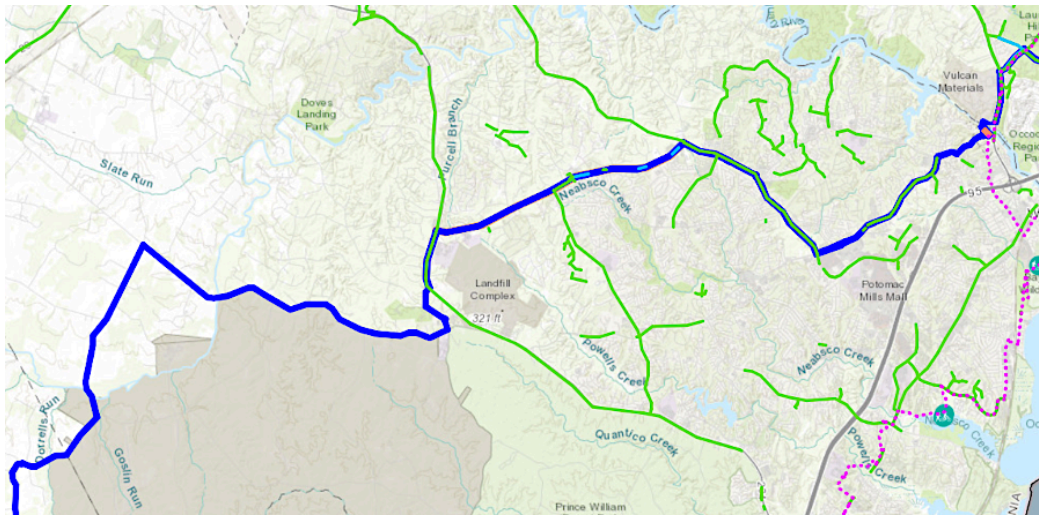
Woodbridge is building a new homeless shelter. Just don't try to walk there.

On July 15, Greater Greater Washington published [this article](#) from Kevin Parker of the Prince William Conservation Alliance.

The article includes “*The emergency shelter and resource center, which broke ground this March, has attractive renderings on the architect’s website. It shows a bike rack and four bikes lined up in front*” (see above).

The homeless “navigation center” helps people navigate social service programs, but clients trying to physically walk/bike to the site risk their lives. Local buses used to stop next to the new shelter site. Now they stop a mile away down Telegraph Road.

There’s more at *Potomac Local* - [**New Woodbridge Parking Garage Still Empty, Hard to Reach on Foot or Bike.**](#)



Bike Route 1 across Prince William County

At the State Level...

After the annual **Virginia Land Conservation & Greenways Conference** (VAULT) in Newport News this past April, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) circulated a survey to gather responses to a proposal for a statewide trails meeting.

State code regarding DCR calls for a **statewide system of trails** that are “scenic” or “recreational,” and “limited to foot, horse, or nonmotorized bicycle use.” A statewide **trail action plan** was completed in 2009.

DCR's **State Trails Advisory Committee** (STAC) has been meeting twice each year since 2015. However, the authorization for STAC **expires** at the end of 2026.

STAC was tasked by the General Assembly to provide recommendations regarding:

- (i) *options to close the gaps in a statewide system of trails as described in **§10.1-204**;*
- (ii) *creative public and private funding strategies and partnerships to leverage resources to fund the development of trails;*
- (iii) *integrated approaches to promote and market trail values and benefits;*
- (iv) *the development of specialty trails, including concepts related to old-growth forest trails across the Commonwealth;*
- (v) *strategies to encourage and create linkages between communities and open space;* (vi) *strategies to foster communication and networking among trail stakeholders;* (vii) *strategies to increase tourism and commercial activities associated with a statewide trail system;*
- (viii) *strategies to enhance the involvement of organizations that promote outdoor youth activities, including the Boy Scouts of the U.S.A. and Girl Scouts of the U.S.A. and the 4-H program of the Virginia Cooperative Extension; and*
- (ix) *other practices, standards, statutes, and guidelines that the Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation determines may enhance the effectiveness of trail planning across the Commonwealth, including methods for receiving input regarding potential trail impacts upon owners of underlying or neighboring properties.*

The **State Trails Office** was established in the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) in 2022. That office, which will continue past 2026, **released** the **Statewide Multiuse Trails Plan** in May. The VDOT trails plan focused on paved shared use paths intended primarily for active mobility, rather than recreation. The State Trails Office has recently added trails data from DCR to the VDOT trails **map**.

In Prince William County, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the Department of Transportation and Capital Construction (DTCC) have partnered to create a single, comprehensive **Countywide Trails Master Plan** (Pathways 2035). It includes both active mobility and recreational trails. DPR focuses on recreational trail segments and DTCC focuses on active mobility trail segments, but county supervisors will be asked in September to approve a single, coordinated trails plan.

The Greater Prince William Trails Coalition (GPWTC) **response** to the DCR survey, like that from the **Virginia Trails Alliance**, highlighted the benefits of having various agencies and organizations gather together to coordinate activities.

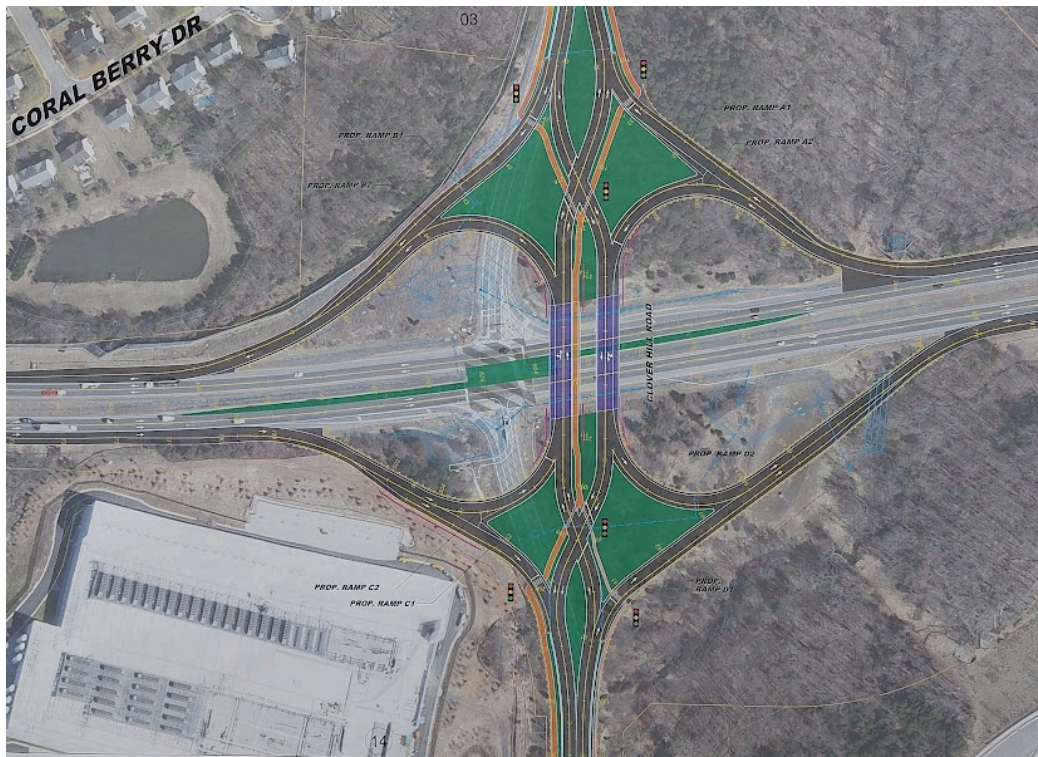
The GPWTC response suggested specific topics for discussion at a statewide meeting, with a recommendation that most of the time be dedicated to discussion plus some decisionmaking. The presentations of information needed for constructive discussion, which traditionally fill up most of the time at conferences, could occur in an online meeting a week earlier.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has issued the **Summer 2026 Active Transportation Newsletter**. It highlights that VDOT has released its **Virginia Statewide Sidewalk Inventory** showing all VDOT, local, and private sidewalks. The map displays the location of 27,000 miles of sidewalks and 69,000 crosswalks.

More information is available on the **Statewide Active Transportation Map Hub** and the **Virginia Roads** site.

The **Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee** (BPAC) met on July 28. VDOT is developing an Active Transportation Policy Plan to update and combine outdated bike/ped plans.

Based on the Virginia Statewide Sidewalk Inventory, VDOT's District offices will determine where that state agency is responsible for maintenance of shared use paths. In the future, VDOT may develop cost estimates and budget requests for maintenance of those shared use paths.



Prince William Parkway-Clover Hill Road Interchange Design

The Prince William County Department of Transportation and Capital Construction (DTCC) held a public meeting on July 30 to reveal a new diverging diamond interchange design, similar to the interchange built at Balls Ford Road. Expected traffic increase to Washington Manassas Airport, once commercial passenger service begins, triggered the replacement of the previous “bow tie” design.

A bridge will carry Clover Hill Road over Prince William Parkway, replacing the at-grade intersection. The new design includes a shared-used path on both sides of Clover Hill Road on the Godwin Drive side of the parkway. On the airport side of the parkway, there will be a shared use path on just one side of Clover Hill Road.

In contrast to how the Brentsville Interchange was built, space has been included underneath the planned Clover Hill Road bridge to allow for a planned (but unfunded) shared use path parallel to the Prince William Parkway. The reserved space is on the Godwin Drive side of the parkway, identifying the location of any future shared use path along the parkway between Brentsville-Clover Hill Road.

A description of the project will be added to the DTCC [projects page](#). Some details were provided in a news article, [**Public meeting this week for Prince William Parkway-Clover Hill Road interchange project**](#) (*InsideNOVA*, July 27).

Funding for the interchange is being requested through the **Smart Scale** process of the Commonwealth Transportation Board; that decision is scheduled for early 2027. Once full funding is assured, construction could be completed in about five years. DTCC is likely to use the design-bid-build process for this project.

Comments from **Active Prince William** were specifically requested at the public meeting to ensure bike/pedestrian needs had been addressed. Several people highlighted the need to ensure safety for pedestrians crossing Clover Hill Road, including designing the off ramps from the parkway to slow down cars before they reach the crosswalks.

Follow-up comments will include:

- traffic calming features in design are welcomed
- coordinating with City of Manassas should connect shared use paths in the project with painted bicycle lanes on Godwin Drive, beyond the roundabout
- sharrows in roundabouts would provide additional visual friction, encourage reduced vehicle speeds, and increase driver awareness
- to use the space reserved underneath the bridge for a shared use path, intersection design should include box culverts for future trail to go underneath exit/entrance ramps to Prince William Parkway. Cars travel at high speed on those ramps, so at-grade crossings would be dangerous.

The deadline to provide comments on the new design (via e-mail to MTabor@pwcgov.org) is August 12.



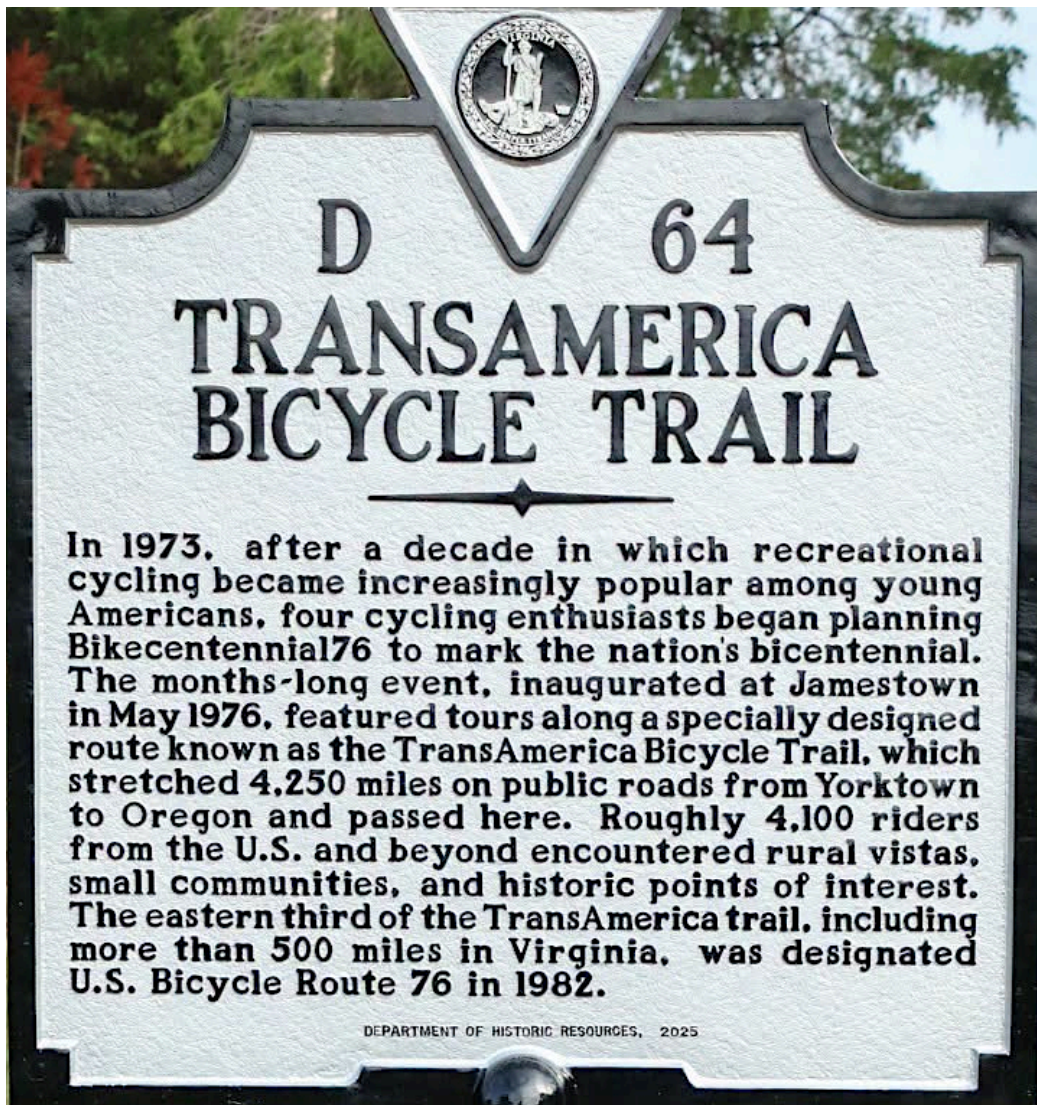
Do You Know: Where Is This Trail?

Guess first - then [see the answer](#).

In Other News...

- **Prince William County Launches Department of Transportation and Capital Construction** (Prince William County, July 1) Two staff from the Department of Parks and Recreation transferred to the new department, which will manage large trail construction projects such as the Powells Creek Crossing.
- **Virginia Historical Marker placed on the TransAmerica Bicycle Trail** (Adventure Cycling Association Facebook post, July 3) *"As far as anyone knows, this is the first marker of its kind along the TransAm's 22 states."*
- **Capital Bikeshare's surprising all-time trends, future promise**, (Greater Greater Washington, July 8) *"...the Capital Bikeshare system solves one of the most challenging pieces of being a tourist in DC: Interest in visiting destinations that are too far to walk to comfortably, but not easily accessed by car."*

- **Virginia councilman goes viral campaigning for more sidewalks** (Axios, July 2) "It's the crosswalk a senior uses to get to the grocery store. It's the path a child walks to school, or the way a neighbor rolls a wheelchair."
- VDOT has **published** the comments received on the proposed conversion of 49 miles of the inactive Shenandoah Valley Railroad route into a trail, or restoring rail service with a trail. VDOT estimates a trail-only conversion to cost \$187 million. The rail-with-trail alternative would cost \$697 million. The General Assembly has committed \$35 million, primarily for land acquisition and corridor studies.
- **Charlie Cunningham, Mountain Bike Innovator, Dies at 77** (New York Times, July 10) "...if it had to do with mountain bikes and it was either invented or became popular before 2000, there is a good chance that Charlie Cunningham had either filed the patent, sketched a drawing, made a prototype or discarded the concept as fruitless."
- The Executive Director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWWCOG) highlighted the expanding network of trails in the DC-area in his July Collaboration in Action: video, **Making biking a top travel option**.
- **Vienna lands \$1M from state for future W&OD Trail visitor's center** (FFX Now, July 14) "The town and NOVA Parks announced in April 2025 that they were partnering on a visitor center to serve the approximately 3 million people who walk, bike and otherwise frequent the W&OD Trail."
- **Bike lanes and speed cameras disappear from the DOT's list of proven safety measures** (NPR July 16) "Safety advocates say they first noticed the change late last week, after the DOT announced more than \$1.7 billion in discretionary grants that included no funding for bike lanes or pedestrian projects." In a recent social media **post**, the Secretary of Transportation referred to "DEI bike lanes."
- **DOT cranks up its campaign to strip bike lane references from federal websites** (NPR, July 23) A US Department of Transportation spokesperson said in an official response "This is a common sense approach despite the Left's belief that everyone should ride a bike to their shoebox-sized apartment to eat crickets to achieve a phony climate agenda."
- The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) has issued its **2025 Annual Report**. "More than 30,000 people signed up for an event, joined an advocacy action, took a class, volunteered, or made a donation." East Coast Greenway also published its **2025 Annual Report**.
- **Trek voluntarily limits the speed of its eBikes in the U.S. and asks other brands to do the same** (Brujula Bike, July 26) "From now on, all electric mountain bikes that Trek markets in the United States will meet two requirements: Pedal assistance limited to 20 mph (32 km/h), No throttle."



"Everybody that rides a lot knows it's hard to maintain a bad mood on a bike..."
- Jacqueline Phelan, wife of Charlie Cunningham



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