

The Path Forward: Unveiling the Benefits of Biking and Walking Infrastructure

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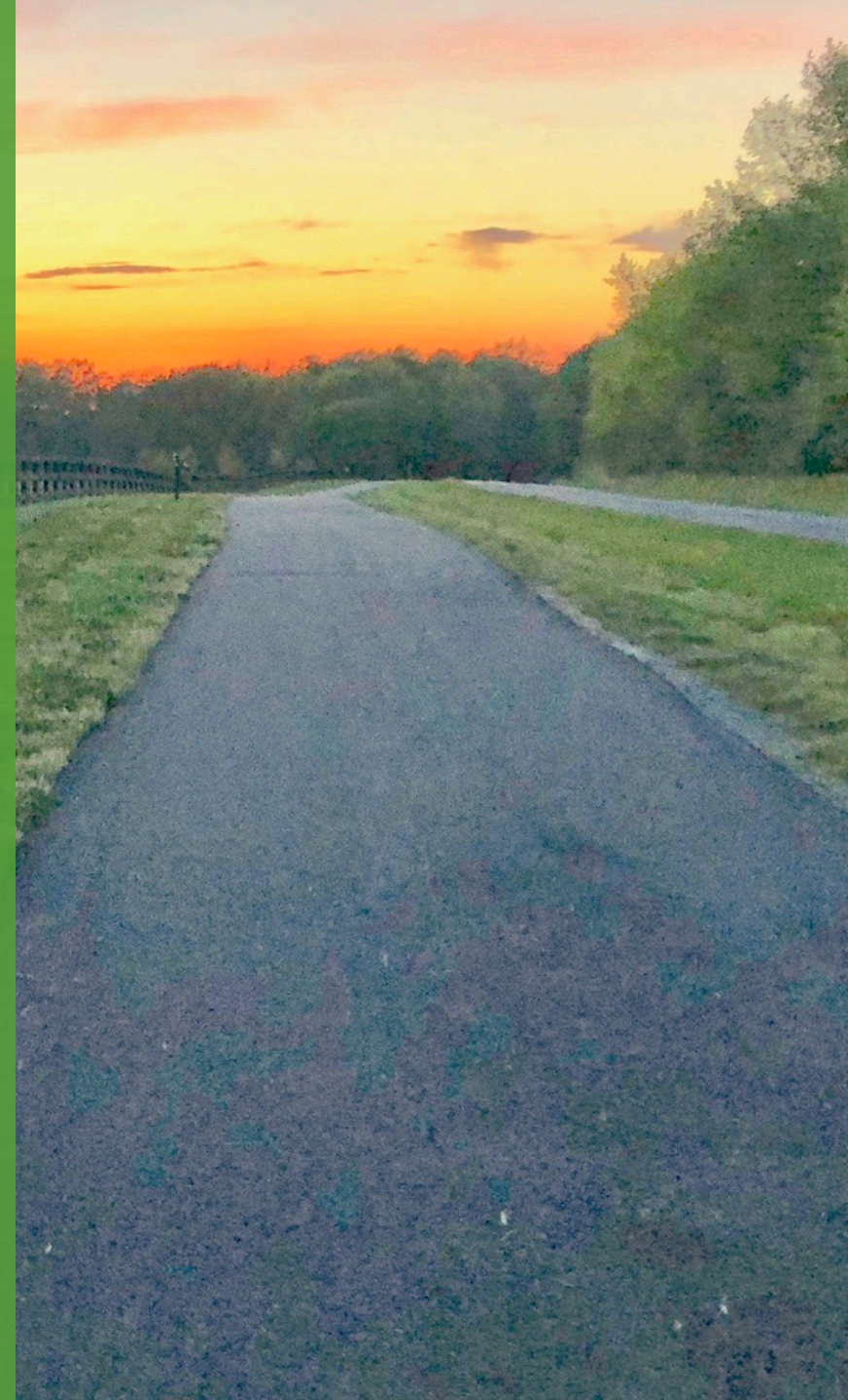
Virginia Capital Trail Foundation

Mission Statement:

The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation exists to protect, promote, and enhance the Virginia Capital Trail, and to serve as a resource, community builder, and connector to other trails throughout the Commonwealth.

What is the Capital Trail?

- 51.7 mile paved, protected, multi-use trail
- Richmond to James City County/Williamsburg
- Average yearly trail counts, 800,000 to 1m
- Cost \$72m



Virginia Capital Trail Foundation

- Unified Voice of the Capital Trail
- **Programs:** Trail Ambassador, Adopt-a-Trail Program, Outdoor Equity Fund, and Trail Clean-ups
- **Events:** Cap2Cap Bike Ride, Cap Trail 10m/5k, and Summer Challenge
- Amenities
- Trail Advocacy
- Trail Promotion and Marketing
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Trail Etiquette Campaigns

The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation exists to protect, promote, and enhance the Virginia Capital Trail, and to serve as a resource, community builder, and connector to other trails throughout the Commonwealth.

OVER 1 MILLION

ANNUAL TRAIL USAGE COUNTS

\$93M FOR MULTI-USE TRAILS

- PLANNING & FUNDING FOR GREEN SPACES
- CONSTRUCTION OF NEW MULTI-USE TRAILS
- DEVELOPING A REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORK
- EXPANDING EXISTING TRAIL SYSTEMS
- BUILDING CONNECTORS & LINKING COMMUNITIES

SUPPORTED HISTORIC FUNDING IN VA STATE BUDGET

OVER 700 VOLUNTEERS

TRAIL AMBASSADORS

11,287 MILES
546 TRAIL REPORTS
AVERAGE OF 46 REPORTS PER MONTH



SECOND ANNUAL CAPITAL TRAIL OUTDOOR EQUITY FUND



FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS THAT BUILD EQUITY AND ACCESS IN
OUTDOOR RECREATION THAT UTILIZE THE CAPITAL TRAIL

\$27,000+

350+

BAGS OF LITTER
REMOVED FROM
OUR COMMUNITY



65

TRAINED AMBASSADORS

1,180+

VOLUNTEER HOURS



Anti-Litter Program ADOPT-A-TRAIL

488 VOLUNTEERS

245 HOURS | 311 BAGS



NEW FITNESS & EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS



- POP-UP REST STOPS
- HISTORY WALKS
- BASIC BIKE MAINT/REPAIR
- GROUP RIDES
- SKATE CLINICS
- COLD/HOT WEATHER RIDING & RUNNING CLASSES

OVER 731 PARTICIPANTS

4TH ANNUAL

ROCKETTS LANDING CAP TRAIL 10 MILE / 5K

PRESENTED BY DOMINION ENERGY

461

RUNNERS & WALKERS
OF ALL AGES



3RD ANNUAL

CAP TRAIL SUMMER CHALLENGE PRESENTED BY ATLANTIC UNION BANK

217

29% FROM OUTSIDE THE LOCAL AREA

RUNNERS
WALKERS
CYCLISTS
ROLLER & INLINE SKATERS



17TH ANNUAL

CAPCENTER CAP2CAP PRESENTED BY DOMINION ENERGY

1,438

CYCLISTS

189 OUT OF STATE PARTICIPANTS



13% FROM OUTSIDE THE COMMONWEALTH

USAGE COUNTS BY JURISDICTION

CITY OF RICHMOND	499,064
HENRICO COUNTY	340,364
JAMES CITY COUNTY	178,337
CHARLES CITY COUNTY	107,914

SOCIAL CHANNEL ENGAGEMENT

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS	12,095 (▲ 8%)
INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS	6,641 (▲ 11%)
TWITTER FOLLOWERS	2,376 (▲ 3%)
NEWSLETTER REACH	30,500+ (48% open rate)
ANNUAL WEBSITE VIEWS	195,250+





Virginia Capital Trail Timeline

- 1975: Route 5 becomes Virginia's second Virginia Byway.
- 1999: Feasibility study recommends a multi-use trail along Route 5.
- 2004: Formation of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation.
- 2005: Groundbreaking for the Greensprings-JCC section.
- 2015: Grand opening of the entire Virginia Capital Trail, presided over by Governor Terry McAuliffe.

Factors to Success

1. **Initial Champions:** Elected officials and business leaders supported the trail concept.
2. **Sustainable Foundation:** A 501(c)3 foundation was established to maintain momentum.
3. **Dedicated Staff:** A full-time staff member drove daily progress on the trail project.
4. **Local Government Integration:** Seamlessly integrated with local governments and their planning needs.
5. **VDOT Ownership:** Most trail property was owned by VDOT, with existing rights-of-way.

Factors to Success

6. **Strategic Building:** Construction started at both ends to ensure completion in the middle.
7. **Deadline Boost:** Hosting the 2015 UCI Road World Championships provided a significant milestone.
8. **VDOT Engagement:** VDOT remained actively engaged, handling trail maintenance.
9. **Ongoing Marketing:** Sustained engagement through events, promotions, PR, trail cleanup, ambassadors, and advocacy.
10. **Foundation Team:** The Foundation currently employs four full-time staff members.

Why Bike/Pedestrian Infrastructure Matters?

Public Health

Safety

Connectivity

Environmental Impact

Economic Impact

Improved Public Health



Reduce obesity rates and promote active lifestyles.



Decrease cardiovascular diseases and other health issues.



Enhance mental well-being through outdoor activity.

Safety



Reduced vehicular traffic,
leading to fewer accidents.

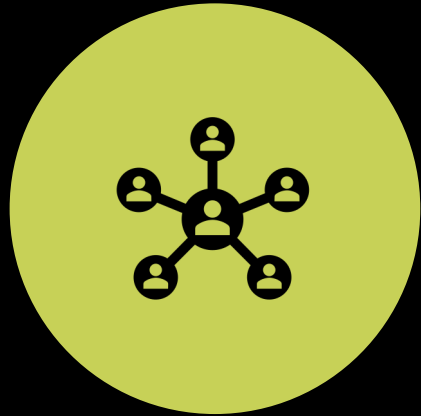


Safer streets for pedestrians
and cyclists.



Encourage families to explore
the neighborhood together.

Social Connectivity



FOSTERING A SENSE OF
COMMUNITY BY PROMOTING
INTERACTIONS.



INCREASING SOCIAL INTEGRATION
AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.



CREATING SPACES FOR PUBLIC
EVENTS AND GATHERINGS.

Reduced Environmental Impact



Decreased air pollution and carbon emissions.



Preservation of green spaces and reduction of urban sprawl.



Contributing to a more sustainable and resilient city.

Economic Benefits: Boosts Local Businesses



INCREASED FOOT TRAFFIC LEADS TO
HIGHER SALES FOR LOCAL SHOPS.



ENCOURAGES MORE FREQUENT
VISITS AND LONGER STAYS IN THE
AREA.



DEVELOPMENT OF A VIBRANT AND
ATTRACTIVE COMMERCIAL
ENVIRONMENT.

Economic Benefit: Tourism and Recreation

Attracts tourists interested in exploring the city by foot or bike.

Creates opportunities for guided tours and bike rentals.

Supports the growth of the hospitality and leisure sectors.



Economic Benefit: Property Values and Real Estate



PROXIMITY TO BIKING AND
WALKING PATHS CAN INCREASE
PROPERTY VALUES.



DEMAND FOR PROPERTIES IN AREAS
WITH SUCH INFRASTRUCTURE RISES.



ATTRACTION FOR REAL ESTATE
DEVELOPERS TO INVEST IN THESE
AREAS.

*Virginia
Capital Trail
Economic
Impact
FY2018-19:*

\$8.9 Million added
to Virginia's
economy

99 full-time
equivalent jobs
supported

\$3.6 Million in
associated wages

\$613,000 in state
and local tax
revenue

Almost 4 % increase
in property values
that border the trail

Overcoming Challenges

Here are just a couple...

Public Perception and Cultural Shift



AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS: LAUNCH PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS THAT HIGHLIGHT THE BENEFITS OF BIKING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE, ADDRESSING MISCONCEPTIONS AND PROMOTING THE POSITIVE IMPACTS ON HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND COMMUNITY.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: ENGAGE LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS BY ORGANIZING WORKSHOPS, TOWN HALL MEETINGS, AND FOCUS GROUPS. THIS FOSTERS A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP AND EMPOWERS RESIDENTS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DESIGN OF INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SUITS THEIR NEEDS.



PROMOTE INCLUSIVITY: ENSURE THAT BIKING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE CATERS TO PEOPLE OF ALL AGES, ABILITIES, AND BACKGROUNDS. DESIGN FOR ACCESSIBILITY BY INCLUDING FEATURES SUCH AS RAMPS, AND BRAILLE SIGNAGE.

Maintenance and Sustainability



LONG-TERM PLANNING: DEVELOP MAINTENANCE PLANS ALONGSIDE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS TO ENSURE THAT PATHS, LANES, AND FACILITIES ARE KEPT IN GOOD CONDITION. REGULAR MAINTENANCE PREVENTS DETERIORATION AND ENHANCES USER EXPERIENCE.



USER FEEDBACK LOOPS: ESTABLISH CHANNELS FOR USERS TO REPORT ISSUES OR SUGGEST IMPROVEMENTS.



GREEN INITIATIVES: INTEGRATE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES INTO INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN, SUCH AS USING ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY MATERIALS, INCORPORATING RAINWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS, AND PLANTING NATIVE VEGETATION ALONG PATHS AND LANES.

Other Challenges To Mention:

Drainage and Erosion Control:
Preventing erosion and water pollution.

Permitting and Regulations:
Navigating complex regulations.

Funding and Resources: Securing equipment and labor.

User Conflicts:
Balancing diverse user preferences.

Land Ownership and Access:
Negotiating land-use agreements.

User Education:
Promoting responsible trail use.

Gentrification and Development

Budget Constraints:
Maximizing limited resources.

Cultural Preservation:
Protecting historical sites.

How to Advocate?

Benefits: Highlight the numerous benefits of trails, such as health, economic, and environmental advantages.

Community Vision: Create a clear vision for your local trail or trail system.

Engage Locally: Collaborate with local government, organizations, and businesses.

Funding: Identify funding sources, grants, and fundraising options.

Public Awareness: Raise community awareness through events and media.

Advocacy Campaigns: Mobilize support with letters, social media, and calls.

Maintenance: Stress the importance of ongoing trail maintenance.

Policy Change: Advocate for policy changes when necessary.

Patience & Persistence: Acknowledge the importance of perseverance.





Virginia Trails Alliance

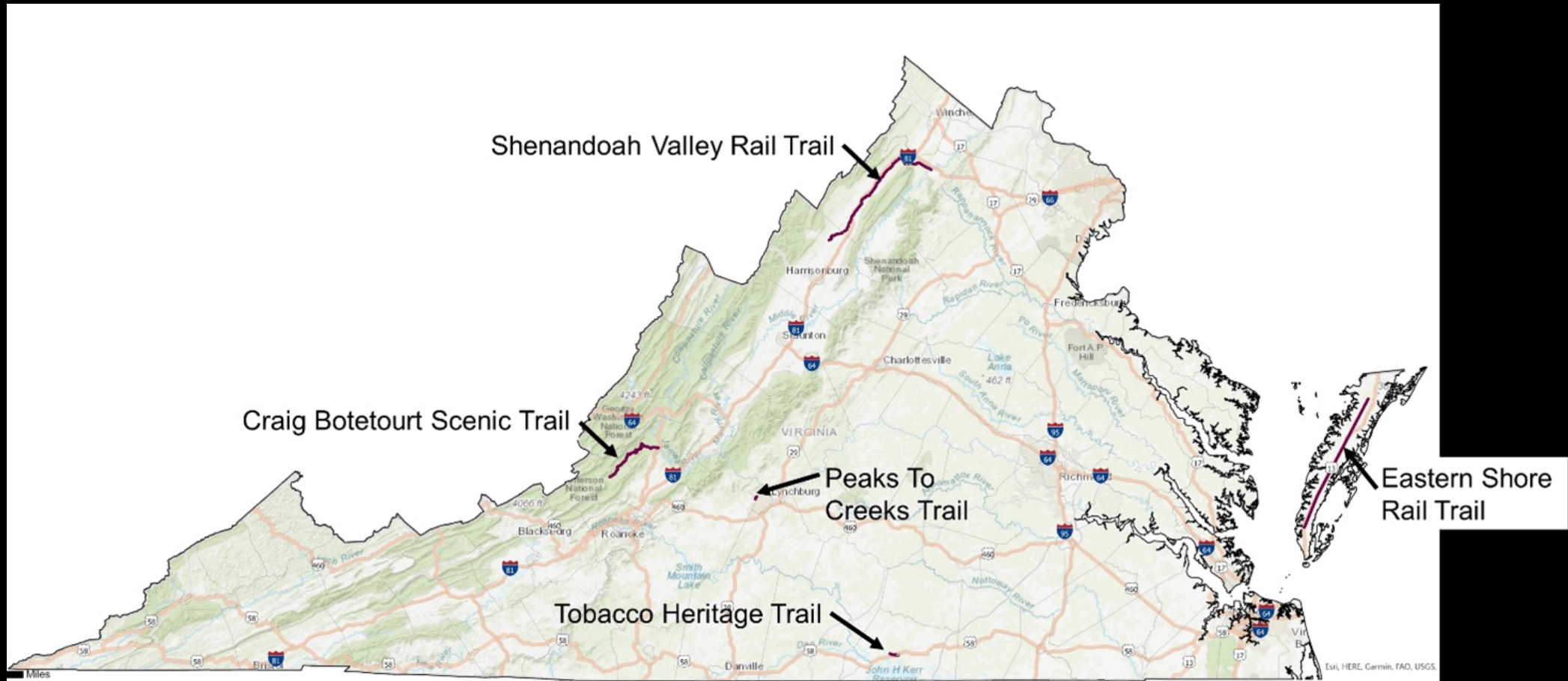
We are an alliance advocating for quality trail systems that benefit all citizens and visitors of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Office of Trails

- Developing a Statewide Trails Plan that will help inform the development of connected, safe, and accessible trail networks throughout Virginia.
- Developing a trails clearinghouse or “Trails Resource Hub” to serve as a one-stop-shop for trails related.
- Supporting VDOT Districts with implementing the five General Assembly identified trails.
- Collaborating with other VDOT Departments and State, Regional and Local Agencies.

Resource: https://www.virginiadot.org/programs/virginia_state_trails_office.asp

Five General Assembly Identified Trails





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