

Fall Line Trail Management: A Resource Guide

Central Virginia Transportation Authority

Fall 2024

Background

The Central Virginia Transportation Authority (CVTA) Technical Advisory Committee requested that staff collect and prepare information to guide discussions with the CVTA TAC regarding Fall Line Trail management. While the long-term management of this regional multi-use facility is critically important, the CVTA recognizes it is a funding agency and does not have the authority to make decisions regarding facility management. Rather, facility management will be a decision between the trail owner and each locality.

The following report gathers and summarizes all materials that have been requested by the CVTA Technical Advisory Committee and can serve as a foundation for future regional conversations regarding the management of the Fall Line Trail.

1.0 Central Virginia Regional Trails Management Responsibilities (September 2024)

This document was produced by staff for the CVTA TAC (see Appendix A) and shared with the Fall Line Trail Working Group at the September 4, 2024, meeting. The document outlines key responsibilities for a coordinating organization (backbone organization) to consider including:

- Operations & Maintenance
- Development & Implementation
- Program Evaluation & Reporting
- Community Engagement
- Volunteer Coordination
- Event Management
- Data Collection & Management

1.1 Working Group Member Response to Central Virginia Regional Trails Management Responsibilities Document

Working group members were asked for feedback on the Fall Line Trail Management Responsibilities Report. Two members provided suggestions on additional information that could be added to the management responsibilities. Highlights of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF) and Sports Backers comments are below:

Virginia Capital Trail Foundation summary of comments (see Appendix B for full response)

- A breakdown of mileage that will be maintained by VDOT, per locality
- A maintenance plan should be established to clarify who will be responsible for the following:
 - Graffiti removal
 - Drainage issues along the trail
 - Snow removal
 - Removal of tree branches
 - Distance from treated surface to be maintained and clarity on VDOT/locality responsibility
 - Regarding Amenities:
 - Establish who will own installed amenities on VDOT right-of-way sections
 - Establish who will review amenities for conformance with state and federal requirements and the Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Sets design standards for the trail
 - Regarding Trail Signage:
 - Establish if VDOT will review wayfinding signage for MUTCD conformance
 - Provide guidance on wayfinding signage in different sections of the trail and who will be responsible for funding, installation, and consistency
 - Establish signage design and safety standards for the trail

Sports Backers Summary of Comments (see Appendix C for full response)

- The draft is fairly effective and comprehensive. With a few additions and some thought toward organizational qualifications and key performance indicators, it is a proper basis future manager applicants
- Safety is not mentioned in the draft
- This future organization should authentically promote the Fall Line Trail. The Fall Line Trail will only be transformative if we build it and develop around it with the right mix of expertise, authenticity, and enthusiasm
- Develop and update maintenance breakout along corridor to delineate varying agencies responsible for each task
- Fall Line Vision Plan has been a platform to incorporate localities' projects into Sports Backers' annual work plan
- Further promote existing relationships with organizations like Capital Trees and Venture Richmond, who either do maintenance directly or manage contracts such as Clean and Safe

2.0 Management Agreements and Reports

During CVTA TAC discussions, it was noted that several agreements and reports exist that may guide future discussions for the management and maintenance of the Fall Line Trail. Those management agreements and reports are summarized below and included in full for reference as appendices. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) enters into management agreements with localities or nonprofits regarding the management of bicycle and pedestrian trails (shared-use paths) throughout the Commonwealth.

2.1 Memorandum of Agreement for Virginia Capital Trail (2017)

This Memorandum of Agreement dated April 5, 2017 (see Appendix D) provides for the cooperation between the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the non-profit Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF) for the promotion, use, operation and maintenance of the Virginia Capital Trail. This MOA was established after the completion of the facility and supersedes two previous agreements.

- MOA establishes VDOT as the lead public agency responsible for operations and maintenance and VCTF as the preeminent non-profit responsible for the promotion and enhancement of the trail and the independent advocate
- MOA states the organizations will coordinate and collaborate in the following areas:
 - Establishment of Virginia Capital Trail Advisory Committee
 - Committee will provide input towards operations, perpetual maintenance, promotion and enhancement of Capital Trail
 - Meet quarterly
 - Consists of representatives from VDOT, VCTF and each locality the trail passes through
 - Advocacy, Education and Communications
 - Sets standards for communication and keeping each party informed of media efforts
 - Right to Place Signs and Amenities
 - Establishes guidelines and procedures for placement
 - Maintenance and Ownership of the Trail and Amenities
 - VDOT will maintain the trail and amenities
 - Maintenance needs are reported to the VDOT Customer Service Center
 - Sponsorship
 - VCTF is authorized to recognize private sponsors that fund amenities
 - Adopt-A-Trail
 - Establishes a program to offset maintenance costs
 - VCTF Sponsored Trail Events
 - Event must follow VDOT's land use permit process
 - Permits will be issued at no fee (to the extent allowable under law and regulation)

2.2 Memorandum of Agreement for Fall Line Trail (2022)

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated February 28, 2022, (see Appendix E) provides for the cooperation between the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Henrico County for the construction, operation and maintenance of Fall Line Trail. The agreement recognizes the Ashland to Petersburg Trail Study as the basis for the establishment of the trail.

With this MOA, the parties agreed to the following:

- Division of maintenance responsibilities is based on agency controlling ROW or ownership: VDOT, Henrico County or private
- Establishes fiscal responsibility for the costs of maintaining portions of the trail as determined by the ROW or ownership
- Establishes general expectations regarding maintenance of Fall Line Trail, acknowledging that subsequent agreements may be necessary to provide more details on the terms and conditions related to maintenance of the trail
- Parties agree Henrico County has the right to perform maintenance on locality-owned facilities within or adjacent to the easements for the trail, and if necessary, will provide public notice for any necessary closures of the trail
- The agreement establishes guidance from state and federal law and regulations and Commonwealth Transportation Board policies.

2.3 Virginia Capital Trail Sponsorship and Maintenance Report (2020)

A report (see Appendix F) was produced in 2019 by the Secretariats of Transportation and Natural Resources per the request of the General Assembly to assess the feasibility and cost of transferring the maintenance and sponsorship of the 52-mile Virginia Capital Trail from VDOT to DCR. The report provides a detailed history of the project, including funding for construction, the formation of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF) and the relationships and agreements between VDOT, the VCTF and the localities for day-to-day operations and maintenance. The report states that the partnership for the Capital Trail can be broken down into the following responsibilities by organization:

- Virginia Capital Trail Foundation – core functions include day-to-day trail operation
 - Volunteer recruitment and development
 - Marketing
 - Donor solicitation
 - Stakeholder contact
 - General administration of the Capital Trail

- VDOT – primary maintenance provider through three maintenance area headquarters
 - Maintenance support
 - Litter Removal
 - Mowing
 - Tree removal
 - Debris removal
 - Patching of asphalt
 - Signage replacement
 - Bridge crossing and inspection
 - Drainage inspection
- Localities – some trail and trailhead maintenance
 - James City County – MOU with VDOT and VCTF
 - Mows portion of trail
 - Litter pickup
 - Local law enforcement patrol
 - Assumes maintenance responsibilities (not replacement costs) for amenities
 - City of Richmond and Henrico County – less formal agreements
 - Maintains portion of trail and trailhead through the parks and recreation departments, including
 - Mowing
 - Debris removal
 - Litter clean up
 - Portable toilets
 - Amenities

The report estimates a total annual cost of \$378,554, or \$7,280 per mile was spent in FY 2019 for the cost of administration, operation and maintenance of the Virginia Capital Trail. This estimate was based on compiling data from numerous stakeholders and reflects a reactive and as-needed approach to maintenance and does not reflect preventative measures.

The report also provides operating and maintenance costs of the New River Trail as a comparison. This facility is operated by DCR as a state park. The New River Trail is a 57-mile linear park with a gravel trail on an abandoned railroad right-of-way (the report acknowledges this is not a perfect reflection of the Capital Trail, but rather a strong parallel). While this facility also crosses through multiple localities, the administration, operating and maintenance costs are borne by a single state agency with nine full-time employees and 22 seasonal staff. DCR estimated the total annual cost for the New River Trail is \$661,010 or \$11,597 per mile. When factoring in the unique conditions of the Capital Trail (paved surface, trestle redecking, bridge and major crossing repair), DCR estimated a cost of \$20,807 per mile for that facility.

The report concludes with the following recommendations:

1. Maintenance and sponsorship of the Capital Trail should stay with VDOT and VCTF
2. DCR should lend its linear park planning expertise and provide technical assistance in developing a Virginia Capital Trail master plan
3. General Assembly should establish a dedicated fund for future capital and ongoing maintenance and operational costs of active pedestrian and commuter multi-use paths operated by VDOT
4. Reciprocal law enforcement agreements should be established between VDOT and Capital Trail jurisdictions. Or amend code of Virginia to allow state and local police to issue tickets along the full length of the trail

While the goal of this document was to provide guidance regarding which agency should be the sponsor of the Virginia Capital Trail, it also provides examples of management models and relationships, including both day-to-day, as well as long-term planning and recommendations for potential management changes.

2.4 Fall Line Trail White Paper (PlanRVA, June 2024)

The purpose of this white paper (see Appendix G) is to provide examples of regional trail management that have been implemented around the country. The options listed in the study are intended to be a resource as responsible parties take steps to move forward with management agreements and policies.

The white paper provided examples of five potential management options for the Fall Line Trail and include in-practice examples of each:

1. Foundation/Non-Profit
 - a. Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (Richmond)
 - b. Sports Backers (Richmond)
 - c. Maymont Foundation (Richmond)
 - d. PATH Foundation (Atlanta)
2. Authority
 - a. Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks, Northern Virginia)
3. Coalition
 - a. Circuit Trails Coalition (Philadelphia)
 - b. Great Trails State Coalition (North Carolina)
4. Conservancy
 - a. Great Allegheny Passage (GAP)
5. Department of Transportation
 - a. Florida Shared-Use Non-motorized (SUN) Trail Program

3.0 Fall Line Trail Miles Per Jurisdiction (2024)

The Fall Line Trail is a planned 43-mile, paved, shared-use path that will serve the Richmond region as the north-south spine of a developing active transportation network. The Fall Line Trail will pass through seven jurisdictions (north to south): Town of Ashland, Hanover County, Henrico County, City of Richmond, Chesterfield County, City of Colonial Heights and City of Petersburg. The data presented by VDOT provides mileage through each of the jurisdictions, including which sections will be constructed and maintained by VDOT.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) provided a map (see below) that illustrates simple long-term maintenance expectations for each jurisdiction along the Fall Line Trail. The map identifies the responsible party for maintenance and gives an overall split of 31 miles of trail under VDOT maintenance and 12 miles of trail under local maintenance.

Additional work needs to be accomplished to properly illustrate more detailed responsibility. The sections displayed in the VDOT map do not correspond to the adopted segments of the Fall Line Trail. Other data that should be included is an understanding of the maintenance responsibilities and notation of the expected right-of-way for each segment.

October 2024 Draft Fall Line Trail - Maintenance Responsibilities

Map Notes:

This is the Draft (October 2024) version of the Fall Line Trail (FLT).

VDOT Maintained - 31 miles
Locally Maintained - 12 miles

The FLT that is within Patton Park will be maintained by the locality (City of Petersburg) and not VDOT.

Legend

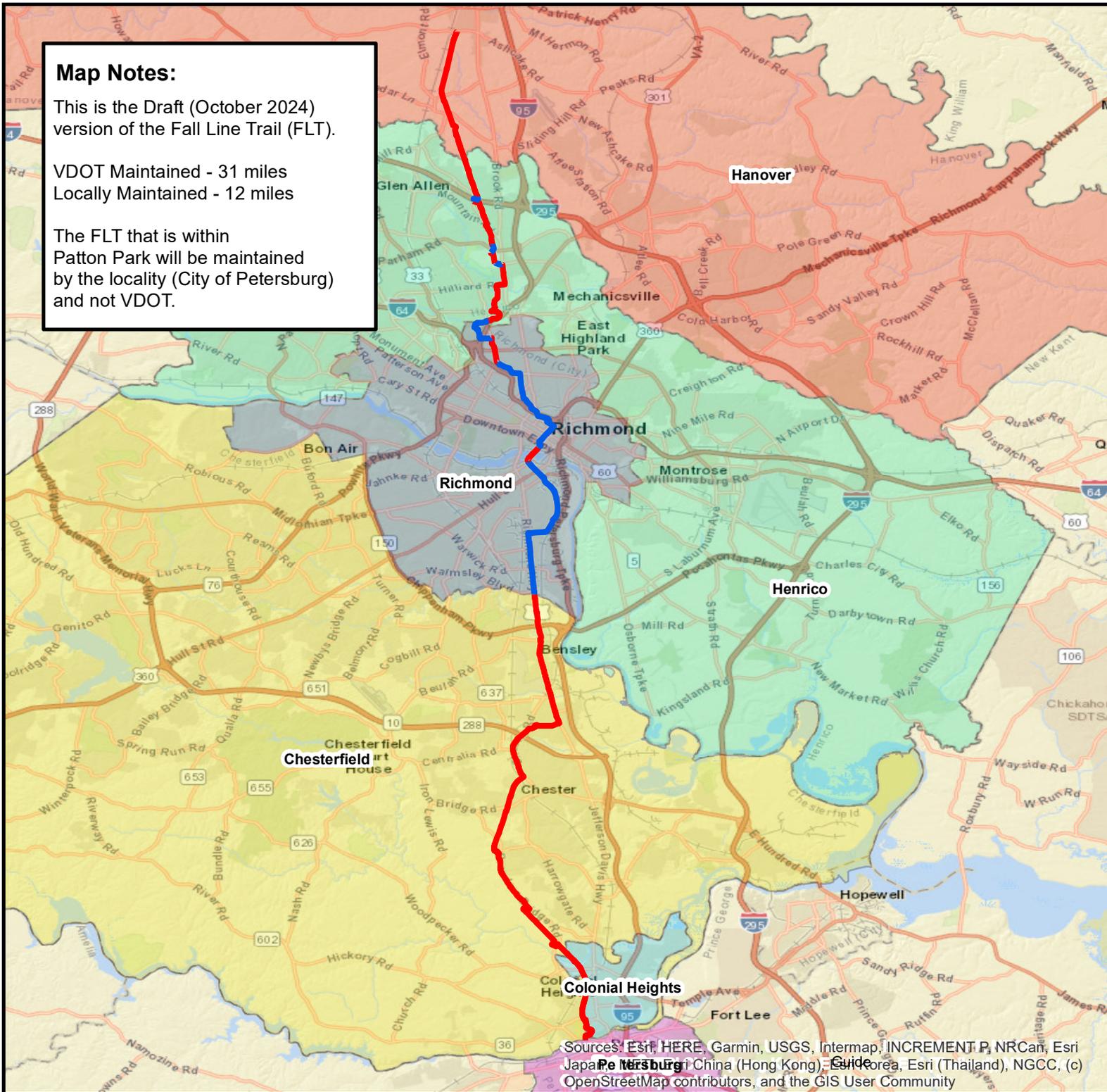
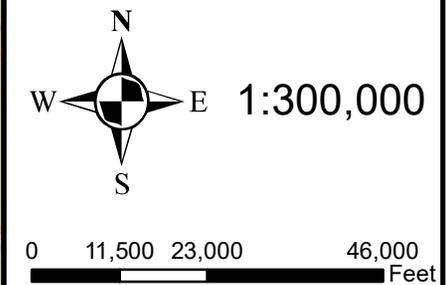
Fall Line Trail Maintenance Responsibility

- Locality
- VDOT

Localities

Name

- Chesterfield County
- City of Colonial Heights
- Hanover County
- Henrico County
- City of Petersburg
- City of Richmond



Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, Swire, Nippon, China (Hong Kong), Swire, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Central Virginia Regional Trails Management Responsibilities

Mission / Vision

Act as the regional coordinating organization (backbone organization) to ensure consistency and coordination of the Fall Line to provide an optimal user experience, including trail design, construction, operation, maintenance and programing.

1. Operations & Maintenance:

- a. Coordinate with VDOT and localities on maintenance and law enforcement of the built sections of the Fall Line
- b. Coordinate with localities and private sector partners to maintain associated right-of-way and amenities
- c. Work diligently to identify and cultivate financial resources to fund ongoing maintenance and operations of the entire trail system

2. Development & Implementation:

- a. Develops resources sufficient to ensure the financial health of the organization.
- b. Advocate for establishment of a State Trails Office maintenance reserve through the General Assembly
- c. Coordinate the planning, execution, and evaluation of programs, including community teams, trail ambassadors, clean-ups, and other programs as identified
- d. Collaborate with locality staff, stakeholders, and state/federal partners to define program objectives, milestones, and outcomes.
- e. Monitor program progress, track milestones, and adjust plans to meet goals and deadlines.
- f. Coordinate with volunteers and partner organizations to ensure smooth implementation of program goals and objectives.
- g. Coordinate with locality and regional communications partners and create marketing materials related to programs which may include flyers, newsletter articles, social media posts or events, and website editing.

3. Program Evaluation and Reporting:

- a. Develop metrics and evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness and impact of programs.
- b. Collect and analyze data, prepare reports, and present findings to locality partners and community stakeholders.
- c. Utilize evaluation results to identify areas for improvement and make recommendations for program enhancements.

4. Community Engagement:

- a. Facilitate stakeholder engagement meetings to foster effective communication among partners and ensure alignment with the vision and goals of the Fall Line.
- b. Foster and grow current and new relationships with trail users, community groups, local government agencies, and other stakeholders and partners.
- c. Provide support in reporting and organizing maintenance concerns to locality staff, state partners, and community stakeholders.
- d. Provide assistance in monitoring and executing the addition of amenities along the Fall Line.
- e. Organize and participate in community events, workshops, and public meetings.
- f. Collaborate with locality staff to develop and distribute program-related communications, mapping, newsletters, and social media content.

5. Volunteer Coordination:

- a. Recruit, train, and supervise volunteers for program-related activities, including educational events and community outreach.
- b. Provide guidance and support to volunteers, ensuring a positive and rewarding experience.
- c. Maintain volunteer records and recognize volunteer contributions.

6. Events:

- a. Develop, coordinate and manage the logistics of special events, including a permit system for event organized by other parties
- b. Manage volunteer coordination for special events.

7. Other:

- a. Install, maintain, gather, and upload data from trail counters along the trail network.

Virginia Capital Trail Foundation Comments on Fall Line Management Responsibilities

(Comments received via email from Virginia Capital Trail Foundation)

Maintenance Plan should clarify who will be responsible for the following in each section (explicit outlining of this will prove better long term maintenance than implicit)

- Graffiti removal
- Drainage issues along the sides of the trail (water pooling that may damage the gravel embankment of the trail but is not actually on the asphalt of the trail)
- Snow removal
- Removal and tree branches a)overhanging the trail or b)not overhanging, but blocking view for trail crossings
- How many feet from the asphalt does a structural issue need to be to fall under locality responsibility and not VDOT's

Amenities

- Who will own installed amenities on VDOT right of way sections? If a localities funds it and installs it, will they own it or will VDOT own it?
- Who will review amenities for conformance with state, federal requirements and ADA?
- Will there be design standards for the trail? Who will develop and review these?
- In the presentation you listed the Parks and Recs departments of each locality being responsible for amenities, even on VDOT right of way sections. This will differ from Capital Trail?
- From VCTF's MOU with VDOT: "VDOT and VCTF agree that once amenities are installed, they become property of VDOT and the responsibility for maintaining these amenities shall become VDOT's at that time."

Signage

- Will VDOT review wayfinding signage for MUTCD conformance?
- Will wayfinding signage in different sections be purchased and installed by localities? if so, how will cohesiveness be ensured?
- Will there be signage design and safety standards for the trail? who will develop and review these?
- From VCTF's MOU with VDOT: "The parties agree that the MUTCD and Virginia Supplement establish minimum standards and that additional criteria may be applied to signage along the trail to ensure a visual experience for visitors commensurate with the Trail's stature and character."

Sports Backers comments – October 24, 2024



Broadly speaking, this draft is fairly effective and comprehensive. With a few additions and some thought toward organizational qualifications and key performance indicators, it is a proper basis for future manager applicants.

Below, **orange** text signifies additions or comments. **Blue** is context related to Sports Backers' work in this area.

A new category is added at the bottom: the need for this organization to effectively promote the Fall Line. The Fall Line will only reach its transformative potential if we build the trail and develop in the trail corridor with the right mix of expertise, authenticity, and enthusiasm. The Fall Line is bigger than the Virginia Capital Trail in every way except length, and it takes a special approach to deliver on its economic development, community impact, and active transportation promise.

Safety is not mentioned anywhere in the draft. It has been added under 2) Development.

Central Virginia Regional Trails Management Responsibilities

Mission / Vision

Act as the regional coordinating organization (backbone organization) to ensure consistency and coordination of the Fall Line to provide an optimal user experience, including trail design, construction, operation, maintenance and programming.

1. Operations & Maintenance:

- a. Coordinate with VDOT and localities on maintenance and law enforcement of the built sections of the Fall Line
 - **Develop and update maintenance breakout along corridor to delineate varying agencies' responsibilities for each task.**
 - **Sports Backers has extensive relationships with law enforcement and first responders, in large part due to major events, throughout the Fall Line focus area, as well as VDOT Central Office and Richmond District and locality agencies overseeing transportation, parks, public works, schools,**

and economic development. We have industry-leading logistical expertise and understand locality event requirements that seek permitted use of public space, administrative support, and on-site personnel.

- Sports Backers' Board of Directors has had strong Supervisor/City Council representation from Hanover, Henrico, Richmond, and Chesterfield for decades. A local state senator in the Fall Line area has served on our organization's board since 2020, and state administration leadership has also served from time to time. Sports Backers' board officially approved the organization's work on the Fall Line, then called the Ashland to Petersburg Trail, in 2017.

b. Coordinate with localities and private sector partners to maintain associated right-of-way and amenities

- Develop and update maintenance breakout along corridor to delineate varying agencies' and partner responsibilities for each task.
- Manage extensive contracts with service providers where appropriate throughout the corridor.
- We have existing relationships with organizations like Capital Trees, Venture Richmond, and Groundwork RVA, who either do maintenance directly or manage contracts such as Clean and Safe. We have the fiscal capacity to manage contracts, including pass through funds, to make many options work.

c. ~~Work diligently to (seems unnecessary)~~ Identify and cultivate financial resources to fund ongoing maintenance and operations of the entire trail system

- Sports Backers was integral to the establishment of the state trail budget and most recently secured \$7.5m for the Fall Line. We have strong General Assembly and state administration experience, including actively supporting the creation of the CVTA in 2020. Sports Backers has raised over \$1.2 million in private funding for Fall Line development, and we have raised over \$1 million additionally to establish our new headquarters along the Fall Line.

2. Development & Implementation:

a. Develops resources sufficient to ensure the financial health of the organization.

- Sports Backers has considerable fundraising capacity. Its annual budget is ~\$7 million, and sponsorship and development are \$3 million per year. Sports Backers has the fiscal expertise and capacity to manage multi-year pledges, long-term leases, forecasting earned revenue, and implementing major capital campaigns. Sports Backers receives non-departmental funding from and/or engages in contract work with more than half of the Fall Line's localities,

including such projects as Chesterfield’s Sports Tourism plan, extensive community engagement and support of locality development work, and event contracts.

- b. Advocate for establishment of a State Trails Office maintenance reserve through the General Assembly – this is perhaps more specific than it needs to be. An alternative could be to just say “Advocate for dedicated trail maintenance funds at the state level”
 - Sports Backers is uniquely poised to take on this legislative task given our leadership on the State Trails Office.
- c. Coordinate the planning, execution, and evaluation of programs, including community teams, trail ambassadors, clean-ups, and other programs as Identified
 - Sports Backers operates several major programs. Annually we utilize 8,000 volunteers, attract and serve over 50,000 event participants, distribute 100,000 newsletters, and have a database of over 250,000 individuals. We train dozens of volunteers in multi-week skill-building programs similar to ambassadors every year. Sports Backers has led Fall Line-specific programs and events, such as the Friends of the Fall Line, Fall Line Trailblazer, hikes, cleanups, tree plantings, tours, and highly attended biking and walking events. We are moving our headquarters and programming to our new office along the Fall Line in Henrico. Sports Backers advocate and engagement is unparalleled in the Richmond region and includes driving several thousand people to engage with Fall Line surveys and open houses dating back to 2019.
- d. Collaborate with locality staff, stakeholders, and state/federal partners to define program objectives, milestones, and outcomes, including establishing a management plan and safety analyses.
 - This is important. No applicant to seek this position will know everything that locality partners want to include in management and maintenance operations. Sports Backers’ work on the Fall Line Vision Plan has already established our role in helping localities think bigger about everything from landscaping and hard surface maintenance to procuring trailhead amenities and design choices.
 - This should specifically include “safety analysis”, which can comprise user conflicts, crossing conflicts, and crime. These data sets are thin nationally, and a commitment to building this dataset for this trail would benefit many, including in continual development of the Fall Line.
 - The Fall Line Vision Plan has been a platform to incorporate localities’ projects into our annual work plan, and more of this is expected as developments progress.
- e. Monitor program progress, track milestones, and adjust plans to meet goals and

deadlines.

- Sports Backers' strategic plan and annual work plans are highly oriented toward metric-based KPIs.
- f. Coordinate with volunteers and partner organizations to ensure smooth implementation of program goals and objectives.
- Sports Backers already partners with hundreds of organizations, schools, faith communities, and companies throughout the entire Fall Line corridor, including extensive relationships in Colonial Heights and Petersburg (and their neighboring localities). The Fall Line Vision Plan engaged over 100 stakeholders in local government, state government, and nonprofit partners who are already bought in to Fall Line programming and development. This extensive community development has already paid dividends in areas like Bryan Park where public support cannot be taken for granted.
- g. Coordinate with locality and regional communications partners and create marketing materials related to programs which may include flyers, newsletter articles, social media posts or events, and website editing.
- Sports Backers co-coordinated the renaming of this project to the Fall Line with Dotted Line and shared costs with Plan RVA. We designed the logo and brand identity pro-bono and in-house, now adopted by the region. We have already produced videos, a dedicated website, social media accounts, official groundbreaking, press/media relations, merchandising, and participated substantially in the CVTA's wayfinding plan development. Sports Backers has a large, award-winning, experienced, in-house marketing team.

3. Program Evaluation and Reporting:

- a. Develop metrics and evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness and impact of programs.
- Sports Backers has in-house expertise of trail usage of comparable trail projects in Virginia and beyond. We have studied other trails extensively over the last seven years, including taking many of our local and state stakeholders along.
- b. Collect and analyze data, prepare reports, and present findings to locality partners and community stakeholders.
- c. Utilize evaluation results to identify areas for improvement and make recommendations for program enhancements.
- Sports Backers' standard operation involves significant evaluation of our

workplans, strategic plans, customer and volunteer surveys, event reviews of the largest events in Richmond. We specifically commit to and fundraise for professional development to continually learn and implement best practices and new skills

4. Community Engagement:

- a. Facilitate stakeholder engagement meetings to foster effective communication among partners and ensure alignment with the vision and goals of the Fall Line.
 - Quarterly Friends of the Fall Line meetings, the development of the Fall Line Vision Plan.
- b. Foster and grow current and new relationships with trail users, community groups, local government agencies, and other stakeholders and partners.
- c. Provide support in reporting and organizing maintenance concerns to locality staff, state partners, and community stakeholders.
 - Sports Backers has in-house customer service staff and processes tens of thousands of cases each year. Locality partners already look to Sports Backers to do this for bike lanes and sidewalks.
- d. Provide assistance in monitoring and executing the addition of amenities along the Fall Line.
 - Fall Line Vision Plan
- e. Organize and participate in community events, workshops, and public meetings.
 - In its 11th year in 2024, RVA Bike Month hosted over 70 events in 5 weeks with 5,700 participants, many of which were Fall Line oriented. This is in addition to more than a dozen public meetings related to the Fall Line we have promoted and driven nearly 6,000 participants to.
- f. Collaborate with locality staff to develop and distribute program-related communications, mapping, newsletters, and social media content.

Sports Backers is already extensively and uniquely engaged in community engagement, brand awareness, and general amplification of the Fall Line. No one else is doing it. As mentioned above, we lead extensive programming, events, trainings, and public meetings.

5. Volunteer Coordination:

- a. Recruit, train, and supervise volunteers for program-related activities, including educational events and community outreach.
- b. Provide guidance and support to volunteers, ensuring a positive and rewarding experience.
- c. Maintain volunteer records and recognize volunteer contributions.

Sports Backers has a volunteer coordinator with over twenty years of service managing

8,000 annual volunteers. Sports Backers event and program committees are some of the most productive and expert volunteer opportunities in the Richmond region. We host a volunteer appreciation party every year and give awards to several categories highlighting work from across our diverse portfolio. Our volunteer training and coordination is industry-leading and is the backbone of our organizational success.

6. Events:

- a. Develop, coordinate and manage the logistics of special events, including a permit system for event organized by other parties
 - In addition to our own events, Sports Backers has an extensive history of supporting other events within the region (including VCTF's Cap2Cap). We are supportive of other external events to strategically achieve our mission of inspiring active living. We have extensive experience managing and promoting calendars of events in mutually beneficial ways that reflect event markets across the region, state, and nation.
 - Sports Backers has already included the development of a new signature Fall Line event in its Strategic Plan.
- b. Manage volunteer coordination for special events.

7. Other:

- a. Install, maintain, gather, and upload data from trail counters along the trail network.

8. Promotion and Thought Leadership:

- a. Work to establish the Fall Line as a major focus in the region's economy through incorporation in economic development, tourism, corporate talent attraction strategies.
 - Sports Backers has unparalleled participation in the development of these strategies with organizations such as Richmond Region Tourism, Greater Richmond Partnership, and through site planning of developments like the Diamond District, City Center, and the Route 1 corridor.
- b. Earn a national profile for the Fall Line in trail-oriented spheres such as the High Line Network and/or in national and international rankings by focusing on promoting innovation, quality, and novelty.
- c. Raise funds for the development of world-class placemaking, amenities, and connections to the trail as outlined in the Fall Line Vision Plan.
- d. Represent the Fall Line at conferences, in peer groups, and on study trips with regional partners.



MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
Between the
Virginia Department of Transportation
And the
Virginia Capital Trail Foundation

Purpose

This Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated as of April 5, 2017, provides for cooperation between the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation for the promotion, use, operation, and maintenance of the Virginia Capital Trail, a fifty-two mile long pedestrian and bicycle trail linking Richmond, Jamestown, and Williamsburg generally along the Route 5 Corridor. This MOA supersedes previous memoranda of agreement executed between the parties in 2005 and 2009.

Background

The Virginia Capital Trail is a non-motorized multi-use trail connecting Virginia's modern capital in Richmond to the colonial capital in Williamsburg, providing pedestrians, hikers, bicyclists and other non-motorized users a safe and scenic path along one of the most historic corridors in America. The project was constructed as a joint effort of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, the City of Richmond, the Counties of Henrico, Charles City, and James City and other organizations. Construction of the trail was completed in 2015.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is a public agency responsible for the development and management of the surface transportation network of the Commonwealth of Virginia. VDOT considers bicycling and walking to be fundamental travel modes. VDOT is the owner and operator of the majority of the Virginia Capital Trail (map attached).

The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote, enhance and advocate for the continued development of the Virginia Capital Trail.

Agreement

WHEREAS, bicycle, pedestrian, and non-motorized modes of travel are integral components of a balanced transportation network; and,

WHEREAS, construction of the Virginia Capital Trail is now complete; and,

WHEREAS, promotion, development and enhancement of the Virginia Capital Trail continues; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Capital Trail is a unique asset for Virginians, improving quality of life and supporting sustainable economic development in the communities it links; and,



WHEREAS, operations and perpetual maintenance of the Virginia Capital Trail will require the sustained support and dedicated effort of both the public and non-profit sectors; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Transportation is the lead public agency responsible for operations and maintenance of the Virginia Capital Trail; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation is the preeminent non-profit entity responsible for promotion and enhancement of the Virginia Capital Trail and the independent advocate for the trail over the entire 52-mile corridor; and,

WHEREAS, both VDOT and the VCTF seek the on-going operation, maintenance, management, promotion, enhancement and ongoing development of the Virginia Capital Trail; and,

WHEREAS, both VDOT and the VCTF agree that this is best accomplished through on-going coordination and collaboration; and,

WHEREAS, both VDOT and the VCTF agree that an advisory committee consisting of representatives from VDOT, the VCTF and each of the political subdivisions along the Trail corridor can provide important input, feedback and information sharing in a number of areas, including trail promotion, tourism, event management, safety, and maintenance standards and best practices; and,

WHEREAS, VDOT and the Foundation will coordinate and collaborate efforts in the following areas:

1) Establishment of the Virginia Capital Trail Advisory Committee

VDOT and the Foundation will jointly establish an advisory committee to provide input towards the operations, perpetual maintenance, promotion, and enhancement of the Virginia Capital Trail. The Virginia Capital Trail Advisory Committee shall meet quarterly and consist of the following members: the VCTF Executive Director, one member of the VCTF Board, one representative of VDOT's Richmond District appointed by the District Engineer / Administrator, one representative of VDOT's Hampton Roads District appointed by the District Engineer / Administrator, one representative of VDOT's Central Office appointed by the VDOT Commissioner, and one representative from each of the following jurisdictions: City of Richmond, Henrico County, Charles City County, and James City County (in each case appointed by the governing body of such locality). Members may bring subject matter experts or other guests to meetings of the Virginia Capital Trail Advisory Committee for the purpose of providing input or advice to the committee.

2) Advocacy, Education, and Communications

VDOT and the Foundation will separately and jointly engage in education, information, and advocacy efforts to promote the Virginia Capital Trail, using public and private means and media. Both parties will inform the other, in advance, of such efforts carried out independently. This includes submission of the Virginia Capital Trail for awards, recognition, or designation by other entities.

3) Right to Place Signs and Amenities

VDOT agrees to grant and permit the VCTF the right to place signs and amenities along the Virginia Capital Trail. Signs or other devices that could be interpreted as traffic control devices will require review and approval by VDOT prior to installation and will be required to comply with the standards established in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Virginia Supplement to the MUTCD and all other applicable VDOT standards. The parties agree that the MUTCD and Virginia Supplement establish minimum standards and that additional criteria may be applied to signage along the Trail to ensure a visual experience for visitors commensurate with the Trail's stature and character. VDOT will exercise reasonable discretion in permitting signs that are not traffic control devices, and will permit signs to enhance the user experience.

Amenities shall meet all applicable state and federal requirements, including conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and match the design standards developed for implementation along the trail. For purposes of this agreement, amenities shall include but not be limited to benches, kiosks, bike racks, mile markers, and trailheads. Placement of certain amenities including portable restrooms and trash receptacles may require additional location research and approvals.

VDOT agrees to grant and permit the VCTF permission to place certain amenities within VDOT right-of-way provided such amenities are not located between the Trail and a public roadway, are located within the Virginia Capital Trail corridor as designated by the Commonwealth Transportation Board, are located a minimum of thirty feet from any intersection with a public roadway, are a minimum of twenty feet away from any private or commercial entrance to a public roadway, fully outside of the roadway clear zone, are in compliance with the terms and/or intended use of any easement upon which they will be located, and VCTF provides VDOT with a minimum of two week advance notice of the installation of such amenities. In all other instances, VCTF shall request permission from VDOT prior to placing an amenity in VDOT right-of-way along the Virginia Capital Trail corridor. VDOT shall respond to any such request made by the VCTF within twenty business days and will consider the input of the Virginia Capital Trail Advisory Committee in its deliberations. VCTF shall provide any notice under this paragraph to the VDOT representative for the VDOT district in which the proposed signage or amenity is to be located.

VCTF shall ensure that, during the installation of any amenities along the Virginia Capital Trail corridor, it does not encroach upon private property without prior approval from the property owner. After notification from VCTF of their intention to install an amenity and the location for the installation, VDOT shall notify VCTF of the right-of-way boundaries within 50 feet of such location in a manner determined by VDOT within ten business days. For any amenities proposed to be placed on easements held by VDOT which easements do not include a right on the part of VDOT to locate signage and amenities, the VCTF will be responsible for obtaining the written consent of the property owner and providing a copy to VDOT prior to placement of the amenity.

The provision of this permission to the VCTF shall not be considered a waiver of other legal and regulatory requirements associated with the placement of amenities, including but not limited to environmental

permits and approvals by the Department of General Services. VCTF will coordinate with VDOT in advance to ensure that such amenities are placed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The parties agree that, in cases where previous environmental or historic reviews have been performed which reviews encompass placement of signage or amenities ancillary to the Trail, to the fullest extent permitted by law, duplicative reviews will not be required prior to the placement of signage or amenities.

4) Maintenance and Ownership of the Trail and Amenities

VDOT will maintain the trail and amenities in accordance with agency best practices based on available resources and needs. Trail maintenance needs should be identified and reported to VDOT's Customer Service Center (1-800-367-ROAD or <https://my.vdot.virginia.gov/>) so that maintenance issues and resolution can be tracked and reported. The effectiveness of the forgoing maintenance reporting mechanism shall be periodically reviewed, in consultation with the Virginia Capital Trail Advisory Committee. In the event the VCTF becomes aware of urgent or otherwise extraordinary maintenance needs, the VCTF shall also contact the VDOT representative to the Virginia Capital Trail Advisory Committee for the relevant VDOT district.

VDOT and VCTF agree that once amenities are installed, they become property of the VDOT and the responsibility for maintaining these amenities shall become VDOT's at that time.

VDOT has the right to remove any and all amenities that are installed in a manner not in accordance with the terms of this agreement, are vandalized, fall into disrepair, or are determined to be a hazard at its sole discretion; provided, VDOT agrees to consult with the VCTF and Virginia Capital Trail Advisory Committee before removing any amenity that does not present a safety risk.

5) Sponsorship

VDOT and the VCTF agree that the VCTF is authorized to recognize private sponsors that provide funding for amenities placed on the Virginia Capital Trail. The form of such recognition shall be subject to any and all applicable laws, regulations directives and policies, including but not limited to applicable federal policies and/or directives relating to sponsorships on public highways.

VDOT and the VCTF agree that as the trail is a federally funded facility, any sponsorship funds collected above the amount needed for fabrication and placement of the amenities must be used by the VCTF for improvements or maintenance to the trail facility in accordance with applicable federal laws, regulations, directives and policies including, without limitation satisfying other matching requirements for applicable state and federal grant programs. The use of sponsorship funds may be subject to audit. Federal funding cannot be utilized for the fabrication or placement of any sponsor recognition.

6) Adopt-A-Trail

VDOT and the VCTF agree to establish an "adopt a trail" program to help offset maintenance costs for the trail and associated amenities. Private parties that participate in the program would be recognized in accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth of Virginia's "Adopt A Highway" program. Signage for

such a program would conform with the sign design scheme for the Virginia Capital Trail and be sized appropriately for trail placement.

7) VCTF Sponsored Trail Events

VDOT and the VCTF agree that trail events will need to follow VDOT's land use permit process. To the extent allowable under law and regulation, permits will be issued at no fee to the VCTF. For all VCTF sponsored events, the Foundation shall be responsible for the removal of all event signage from the event route within seven days of conclusion of the event.

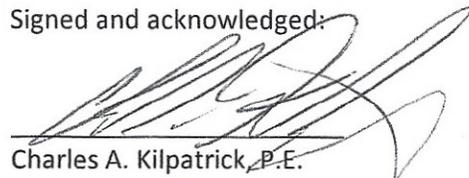
8) Miscellaneous

The parties agree that VDOT shall be bound hereunder only to the extent that funds are appropriated and allocated by the Commonwealth Transportation Board and otherwise legally available for the purposes of this MOA.

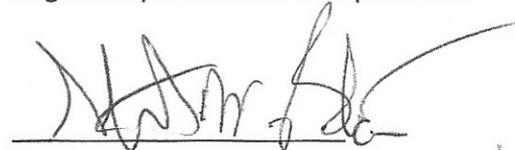
Effective and Termination Dates

This MOA is effective upon the signatures of authorized representatives of the parties listed below and shall remain in effect until terminated. This MOA may be modified by the mutual consent of the entities and may be terminated at any time by either entity, at its discretion on no less than 120 days advance written notice sent via U.S. mail to the agreed upon address of the other entity.

Signed and acknowledged:



Charles A. Kilpatrick, P.E.
Commissioner
Virginia Department of Transportation



Stuart W. Blain
Chairman of the Board
Virginia Capital Trail Foundation

6-22-17

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
BETWEEN
HENRICO COUNTY
AND
THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
RELATING TO
MAINTENANCE OF THE REGIONAL MULTI-USE FALL LINE TRAIL

THIS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA), is made and entered into as of the last date of execution below, between Henrico County, Virginia, hereinafter referred to as Henrico, and the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Transportation, hereinafter referred to as the Department. The Department and Henrico are collectively referred to as the “Parties”.

WHEREAS, the Department initiated the Ashland to Petersburg (ATP) Trail Study (Study) to identify a preferred corridor for this regional multi-use trail (Trail) that would extend between the Town of Ashland and the City of Petersburg, a distance of approximately 40 miles; and

WHEREAS, the ATP Trail Study evaluated existing conditions and identified a corridor least impactful to environmental resources with feedback from state and federal agencies, affected localities, special interest groups, and the general public; and

WHEREAS, the preferred corridor for this Trail, now officially named the Fall Line Trail, would be located within the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover and Henrico, cities of Colonial Heights, Petersburg and Richmond, and the Town of Ashland; and

WHEREAS, throughout the Study, stakeholders and the public noted the importance of Trail maintenance and aesthetic considerations, including Trail continuity, feel and signage and it was further noted that future Trail maintenance will be determined based on the funding source and location of the Trail segment of the preferred corridor; and

WHEREAS, the varying location and ownership of the property or right of way on which the Trail will ultimately be situated raises issues as to maintenance responsibilities for the Trail, once it has been constructed and becomes operational, and in Henrico, specifically, the Trail may be located or situated on right of way or property owned by the Department in certain instances, Henrico in other instances, and private entities in yet other instances; and

WHEREAS, the Department and Henrico recognize the need for and are agreeable to establishing the general maintenance responsibilities for each of the Parties prior to construction of the Trail and seek to memorialize their understanding in a written document in order to

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facilitate planning and preparation well in advance of the need for maintenance activities on the Trail.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and mutual covenants and agreements contained herein, the Parties hereto agree as follows:

A. Division of Maintenance Responsibilities

The Parties agree that, as the Trail or portions thereof become operational, each will bear responsibility for maintenance of the Trail as follows:

1. For portions of the Trail that are situated on right of way or property owned by the Department prior to commencement of the Trail project, the Department shall bear responsibility for performing or causing to be performed all maintenance of said portions of the Trail.
 2. For portions of the Trail that will be located on easements granted by Henrico to the Department for placement or construction of the Trail, whether the Trail is at-grade or situated on a structure, the Department will bear responsibility for performing or causing to be performed all maintenance on said portions of the Trail, and any structures upon which it is situated.
 3. For portions of the Trail that will be located on right of way or property owned by Henrico that will not be the subject of easements to the Department for placement or construction of the Trail, Henrico will bear responsibility for performing or causing to be performed all maintenance on said portions of the Trail.
 4. For portions of the Trail located on structures owned or maintained by Henrico and for which Henrico receives maintenance funding pursuant to 33.2-366, Henrico will bear responsibility for performing or causing to be performed all maintenance of said portions of the Trail.
 5. For portions of the Trail that will be located on easements granted by a private entity to the Department for placement or construction of the Trail, whether the Trail is at-grade or situated on a structure, the Department will bear responsibility for performing or causing to be performed all maintenance on said portions of the Trail, and any trail-related structures upon which it is situated, pursuant to a separate agreement with the private entity.
- B. It is the intent of the Parties that financial responsibility for the costs of maintaining the portions of the Trail as noted in Section A will be borne by the Parties as follows:
1. For portions of the Trail for which the Department bears responsibility for performing or causing to be performed maintenance as set out in subsections A.1., and A.2., the Department will bear all costs of maintenance and in subsection A.5., the Department will bear all costs of maintenance unless otherwise agreed in a separate agreement with the private entity.

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2. For portions of the Trail for which Henrico bears responsibility for performing or causing to be performed maintenance as set out in subsections A.3. and A.4., Henrico will bear all costs of maintenance. However, to the extent permitted by law and subject to Section E, it is the intent of the Parties that, to the extent that the Trail has been located on right of way for which Henrico receives maintenance payments pursuant to §33.2-366 of the *Code of Virginia*, Henrico will continue to receive maintenance payments for said right of way.
- C. The Parties agree that this MOA establishes general expectations regarding maintenance of the Fall Line Trail, acknowledge that subsequent agreements setting forth more detailed terms and conditions relating to maintenance of the Trail may be necessary prior to or after completion of the Trail's construction, and herein are stating their intent to cooperate in the development of future agreements as may be necessary.
- D. To the extent that Henrico has granted easements to the Department for purposes of the Trail as set forth in subsection A.2, the Parties agree that Henrico shall retain the right to perform maintenance and repairs on locality-owned facilities within or adjacent to the easements for the Trail. Subject to a minimum of ten days notice to the Department and provided a Department-approved detour is provided, Henrico shall have the right to close the impacted portion of the Trail, as necessary, for maintenance and repair activities associated with Henrico-owned facilities. In the event that Henrico exercises closure of a portion of the Trail pursuant to this Section (D), Henrico shall be responsible for posting public notices and signage in the vicinity of the affected portion of the Trail advising of the closure, at least five days in advance of closure.
- E. The Parties agree that this MOA and its provisions are subject to state and federal law and regulations as well as policies of the Commonwealth Transportation Board (Policies) and that to the extent laws, regulations or said Policies may require modification of the terms of this MOA or to the extent laws, regulations or said Policies may require modification to effectuate the intentions of the Parties, the Parties will cooperate to modify this MOA or to use their best efforts to effectuate changes in the law, regulations and/or Policies.
- F. Nothing in this MOA shall obligate the Parties hereto to expend or provide any funds except those as shall have been included in an annual or other lawful appropriation for the purposes herein.
- G. The Parties mutually agree and acknowledge, in entering this MOA, that the individuals acting on behalf of the Parties are acting within the scope of their official authority and the Parties agree that neither Party will bring a suit or assert a claim against any official, officer, or employee of either party, in their individual or personal capacity for a breach or violation of the terms of this MOA or to otherwise enforce the terms and conditions of this MOA.

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- H. Nothing in this MOA shall be construed as a waiver of the sovereign immunity of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- I. This MOA may only be modified in writing as agreed to by both Parties.
- J. This MOA may be terminated at any time by either Party, at its discretion upon no less than 120 days advance written notice.
- K. Notices: all notices under this MOA to either Party shall be in writing and forwarded to the other party by U.S. Mail and email, care of the following authorized representatives:

Henrico

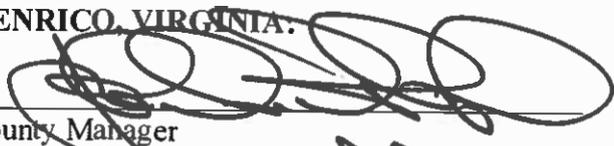
Department

John A. Vithoukas
 County Manager
 P.O. Box 90775
 Henrico, VA 23273
 vit@henrico.us

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
 Commissioner of Highways
 1401 East Broad Street
 Richmond, VA 23219
 stephen.brich@vdot.virginia.gov

IN WITNESSETH WHEREOF, the Parties sign and cause this MOA to be executed by their duly authorized officers on the dates set forth below.

HENRICO, VIRGINIA:



 County Manager

1/25/2022

 Date



 John A. Vithoukas

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION:



 Commissioner of Highways

2/28/2022

 Date

Stephen C. Brich

 Typed or Printed Name of Signatory

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE
SECRETARIAT OF TRANSPORTATION

Virginia Capital Trail Sponsorship and Maintenance Report

TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE CHAIR OF THE SENATE FINANCE AND
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE AND THE CHAIR OF THE HOUSE
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

Richmond

The Honorable Ralph S. Northam
Governor of Virginia

The Honorable Janet D. Howell
Chair, Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Luke E. Torian
Chair, House Appropriations Committee

Dear Governor Northam, Senator Howell and Delegate Torian:

We are pleased to provide this report, ***Virginia Capital Trail Sponsorship and Maintenance Report***, on behalf of the Secretariat of Natural Resources and Secretariat of Transportation.

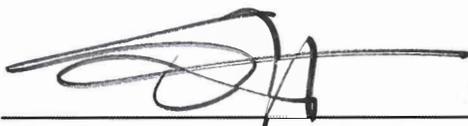
This report is presented in accordance with requirements enacted under Item 361 of Chapter 854 of the 2019 Virginia Acts of Assembly, in which the Secretariats of Transportation and Natural Resources were asked to assess the feasibility and costs of transferring maintenance and sponsorship of the Virginia Capital Trail from the Virginia Department of Transportation to the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

This report reviews the historic development of the Virginia Capital Trail and Route 5 corridor. Specifics are provided within the report on current maintenance and operational costs of the Virginia Capital Trail, and compares those costs to existing Department of Conservation and Recreation management of the New River Trail.

This cost comparison illustrated that shifting maintenance responsibilities and sponsorship of the Virginia Capital Trail from the Department of Transportation to the Department of Conservation and Recreation will not yield significant cost-savings to the Commonwealth, and affirmed our position that maintenance and sponsorship responsibilities should remain with the Virginia Department of Transportation and Virginia Capital Trail Foundation.

If you have any questions regarding this report or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully submitted,



Shannon Valentine
Secretary of Transportation



Matthew Strickler
Secretary of Natural Resources

Executive Summary

The Department of Conservation and Recreation and Department of Transportation, in accordance with Item 361 of Chapter 854 of the 2019 Virginia Acts of Assembly and under the direction of the Secretary of Natural Resources and Secretary of Transportation, convened a stakeholder group to assess the feasibility and costs associated with transferring sponsorship and maintenance support responsibilities for the Virginia Capital Trail from the Department of Transportation to the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The stakeholder group consisted of representatives from the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, members of trail user groups with particular representation from the cycling community, and representatives of local governments from jurisdictions through which the trail traverses.

This report, consistent with the instructions of the General Assembly, focused on all aspects of trail maintenance and support to gain a holistic picture of feasibility and all costs associated with a transfer of sponsorship and maintenance support. This process involved a review of trail funding sources to identify any restrictions due to grants, as well as analysis of the existing management structure for the Virginia Capital Trail. In addition, members of the stakeholder group inventoried existing and proposed trail infrastructure, identified past and current operational and maintenance costs and practices across an array of stakeholders, and considered existing and current revenue sources associated with the Virginia Capital Trail.

This report provides a cost comparison, based on the Department of Conservation and Recreation's management of the 57-mile linear New River Trail. This cost comparison, a review of maintenance responsibilities, and feedback from stakeholders indicate that the current management structure operates in a cost-effective manner that divides maintenance and operational responsibilities across Richmond City, Henrico County, Charles City County, James City County, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation. This report also identifies modest recommendations to improve the experience of Virginia Capital Trail users, including a targeted partnership between the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation to provide technical assistance in developing a master plan, specific funding for active transportation corridor maintenance needs, and a unified public safety approach for the Virginia Capital Trail.

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1 Legal Framework and Authority

The Code of Virginia in § 33.2-112 specifies that the Commonwealth Transportation Board and Commissioner of Highways may “construct such sidewalks or walkways on the bridges and along the highways under its jurisdiction as it deems necessary for the protection of pedestrian traffic.” The code section goes on to note that “All provisions of law with respect to the acquisition of lands and interests therein and the construction, reconstruction, alteration, improvement, and maintenance of highways in the primary and secondary state highway systems, including the exercise of the power of eminent domain by the Board and the Commissioner of Highways, shall be applicable to such sidewalks and walkways.”

During the 2005 session of the Virginia General Assembly, the legislature passed Senate Bill 1033 sponsored by Senator Benjamin Lambert declaring “That the bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities within the Virginia Route 5 corridor between the City of Richmond and Jamestown are hereby designated the “Virginia Capital Trail.” This designation shall not affect any other designation heretofore or hereafter applied to these facilities.”

Subject to Title 10.1 of the Code of Virginia, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is authorized by the General Assembly to operate 38 state parks and 63 natural area preserves on behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth. Specifically, § 10.1-201(A) authorizes the Department of Conservation and Recreation to acquire “areas, properties, lands, or any estate or interest therein, of scenic beauty, recreational utility, historical interest, biological significance or any other unusual features which... should be acquired, preserved, and maintained for the use, observation, education, health and pleasure of the people of Virginia.”

2 Historic Development of the Virginia Capital Trail

The origin of the Virginia Capital Trail dates to 1975, when the Commonwealth Transportation Board designated the Route 5 Corridor as a Virginia Scenic Byway, only the second such designation in the Commonwealth to be approved at that point in time. Designation as a scenic byway formalized the opinion of the Commonwealth Transportation Board and Department of Transportation that the historic, cultural, and in particular the scenic resources of the Route 5 corridor were worthy of protection by state government.

Fifteen years later, the 1990 General Assembly asked the Virginia Department of Transportation to conduct a Route 5 corridor study with a particular focus on preservation of Route 5’s historic and scenic characteristics. The report issued after that study in 1991 recommended that the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Department of Conservation and Recreation should work with localities along the corridor to ensure that local zoning and comprehensive planning programs undertaken by the localities would sufficiently preserve the historic and scenic resources and noted that “the commitment to preserve a scenic byway is presently shared by the state and local governments.”

The 1991 report also revealed growing support from stakeholders for the inclusion of multi-use paths alongside Route 5, to safely accommodate growing interest by bicyclists intent on enjoying the scenic and recreational assets of the corridor. To that end, among the recommendations included in the 1991 report, was the following language: “Any improvements to Route 5 should include a minimum four-foot smooth paved shoulder to accommodate a bicycle lane on each side of the roadway between the east corporate limits of the City of Richmond and Route 199 west of the City of Williamsburg.” The Virginia Department of Transportation followed up on the recommendations from the 1991 report, selecting the firm of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) to conduct a two-year feasibility study from 1997-1999 that determined the preferred alignment of a multi-use trail along the Route 5 corridor.

The next crucial step, after completion of the feasibility study, involved identifying the funding sources necessary to achieve the ambitious trail corridor goal linking Williamsburg to Richmond. Governor Mark Warner’s Secretary of Transportation Whitt Clement identified initial federal and state funding for the project in the 2003 budget, allowing the Virginia Department of Transportation to survey the proposed Virginia Capital Trail corridor. 2004 marked another significant push forward for the Virginia Capital Trail, as citizen advocates and supporters of the trail established the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation as a nonpartisan advocacy partner to provide trail expertise, to raise public awareness, and to seek funding and contributions to enhance and promote the development of the Virginia Capital Trail. In addition, the project received a mix of federal and state dollars, highway enhancement funds, and federal open container funds in the 2004 fiscal year, allowing design work to begin in earnest and negotiations with landowners along the route to proceed. Just a year later in July 2005, Governor Mark Warner offered keynote remarks at the official groundbreaking for the Greensprings Road segment of the Virginia Capital Trail.

With the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation in place to solicit support from state and local stakeholders and ground broken, progress on the Virginia Capital Trail accelerated greatly from 2005 to the present. The Greensprings Road portion of the Virginia Capital Trail opened to the public in 2006, and over the next two years trail development began in Charles City County and Richmond City. While progress slowed during the early days of the Great Recession, by March 2010 the Virginia Capital Trail featured two trailheads at Jamestown and the Richmond Riverfront, completion of the Charles City Courthouse, Chickahominy, Greensprings, and Richmond Riverfront sections, and a trail wide signage system to assist members of the public in navigating the trail. In October 2013, the western terminus of the trail opened at Great Shiplock Park in the City of Richmond. A year later, the largest segment of the trail, known as Sherwood Forest, was completed and opened to the public. Finally, after significant public and private investment and just twelve years after the General Assembly first approved funding to survey the Virginia Capital Trail corridor, the 52-mile trail was completed and the full length of the corridor opened to the public in October 2015.

Since the trail’s completion in 2015, public interest and usage of the corridor has continued to grow, both for recreational purposes as well as for serving as a transportation alternative for many in Williamsburg and Richmond who wish to commute to work via alternative means of transportation. The Virginia Department of Transportation maintains a system of trail counters along the length of the Virginia Capital Trail that have gauged this growing interest from the public. During Virginia Capital Trail’s first year in

operation, the trail recorded 550,000 counts and in 2018, the number of unique counts exceeded 1.4 million, with a daily average of 300 counts. It should be noted that a count measures a person or persons passing by a particular portion of the trail. This total may not directly reflect the actual number of unique users, but does give some indication of usage trends. As the trail’s user base has evolved, so too has the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation adjusted its role with the times. As first envisioned nearly forty-five years ago, the citizens of the Commonwealth now use the Virginia Capital Trail as a source of outdoor recreation and to satisfy an ever-growing demand to commute to and from their workplace via alternative means of transportation. At the same time, the scenic, cultural, and historic resources along Route 5 are preserved for the enjoyment of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

3 Funding Sources for Development of the Virginia Capital Trail

From 2003, when capital funding was first allocated to study, develop, and construct the route of the Virginia Capital Trail to its completion in 2015, the Virginia Department of Transportation used a unique combination of federal enhancement, open-container, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and Smithsonian funds to pay for the design and construction of the Virginia Capital Trail. These funds could not be used to construct new roadways, but could be used to enhance existing corridors and for the creation of multi-use pedestrian and bike trails. The funding sources utilized require that the Virginia Capital Trail be open to the public and not-for-profit, in order to comply with grant funding requirements. Thus, no mandatory user fees can be collected from daily users of the trail, limiting a source of potential revenue. These unique funding streams allowed the Virginia Department of Transportation to avoid drawing from their regular construction budget in developing the multi-use transportation and community trail. The following charts reflect the capital expenses that went into construction and development of the Virginia Capital Trail.

Summary of Federal Funding Sources

Funding Sources	Projects Funded ¹	Funds
Recovery & Reinvestment Act	New Market Trail Segment	\$10.05 million
Federal Highway Enhancement	Chickahominy, Sherwood, Richmond City	\$10.42 million
Federal Open Container Funds	Varina, Sherwood Forest, Charles City Segments	\$44.37 million
National Highway Performance	Sherwood Forest Segment	\$842,695
Scenic Byways Funding	Greensprings Acquisition and Development	\$2.35 million
Primary (Fed)	Chickahominy to Greensprings, Charles City	\$620,136
Primary Mixed (Fed/State)	Capital Trail Feasibility Study, Richmond Section	\$2.38 million
TOTAL (FEDERAL):		\$71.04 million

¹ The projects funded column list is not all encompassing. The projects named reflect where the bulk of dollars were allocated from that particular fund source, but may not reflect smaller projects along the Virginia Capital Trail funded from the same source. The funds allocated column represents the total amount of funds from that source expended to construct the Virginia Capital Trail.

Summary of State Funding Sources

Funding Sources	Projects Funded ¹	Funds
Bonds (State)	Varina, Henrico County	\$2.77 million
Primary (State)	Varina, Sherwood Forest Segment	\$1.91 million
State Maintenance	Williamsburg Cap Trail Improvement Project	\$473,559
Revenue Sharing (State)	Chickahominy River and Greenspring	\$125,890
TOTAL (STATE):		\$5.28 million

4 Current Management Structure, Partnerships, and Future Developments

During the trail-building phase, much of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation’s work emphasized raising awareness of the trail, building support among local and state policymakers, and soliciting private support from major donors. The completion of the trail marked a new era for the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation staff, board, and volunteers, with the non-profit focused more on maintaining the trail in line with the foundation’s management agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation’s role has expanded to now focus on such tasks as maintaining and developing the trail in line with user demands, organizing volunteers to be part of their Trail Ambassador Program, placing signage, soliciting private support for construction of trail amenities, managing relationships with local governments, and holding special events like the Cap2Cap Bike Ride. Not surprisingly and perhaps most importantly, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation spends the bulk of their day-to-day staff time working with volunteers, local governments, and Virginia Department of Transportation staff to maintain the trail and keep its condition suitable for usage by the public. This unique public-private partnership has allowed the trail to evolve and serve a diverse customer base of commuters, recreational enthusiasts, and casual users alike.

Management Structure

The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation is currently helmed by Executive Director Catherine Anthony with the support of two other full-time staff members. The staff report to a seventeen-member citizen board, comprised of regional cycling and hiking enthusiasts, as well as trail promoters. Ms. Anthony and her staff operate the trail on a day-to-day basis as part of the non-profit’s management agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation. The non-profit facilitates a trail ambassador program of volunteers who ride the trail to monitor safety and maintenance concerns. Trail ambassadors utilize volunteer labor to ride the trail daily and report concerns and issues to Virginia Capital Trail Foundation staff, who then route the issues to the appropriate entities to be resolved. The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation sponsors the annual Cap2Cap Bicycle Ride, which raises the majority of the non-profit’s approximately \$400,000 annual operating budget. The revenues from that event in combination with private donations underwrite the three staff members, annual marketing expenses, program expenses, and allow the non-profit to add customer-friendly amenities to the trails such as benches, fix-it stations for bicyclists, and rain shelters.

Partnerships

While the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation manages day-to-day operation of the trail, volunteer recruitment and development, marketing, donor solicitation, contact with stakeholders, and general administration of the Virginia Capital Trail as their core functions, maintenance support is largely provided by the localities along the trail as well as through the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Virginia Department of Transportation has three maintenance area headquarters that serve different portions of the trail, in addition to the primary and secondary highway systems in their respective jurisdictions. Each maintenance area headquarters provides litter removal, mowing, tree removal, debris removal, patching of asphalt, signage replacement, bridge and crossing inspection, and drainage inspection over the course of the year.

While the Department of Transportation is the primary maintenance provider for the trail proper, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation and Virginia Department of Transportation have a memorandum of understanding with James City County and less formal agreements with the City of Richmond and Henrico County to maintain portions of the trail and trailheads. In the case of Richmond and Henrico particularly, these trailheads are integrated with the local park system in each locality, and thus are already being maintained through locality park and recreation budgets. As part of their memorandum of understanding with the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation and Virginia Department of Transportation, James City County mows portions of the trail, picks up litter, has local law enforcement patrol portions of the trail as available, and assume maintenance responsibility (though not replacement costs) for any amenities installed by the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation. Henrico County maintains fourteen miles of the Virginia Capital Trail through mowing and debris removal, most of which passes through their county park system. Henrico County also maintains portable toilets, rain shelters, and benches at the Four Mile Creek trailhead. The City of Richmond maintains just over a mile of the Virginia Capital Trail, providing routine mowing on a monthly basis as well as litter clean-up based on citizen demand.

Future Developments

The Virginia Capital Trail currently connects to the Colonial Parkway, the Dorey Park Connector Trail, Greensprings Interpretive Trail, Powhatan Creek Trail, and to the James River Park System through the Canal Walk. It is a segment of both the East Coast Greenway and Bike Route 76.

Proposed Trail Connections

The Virginia Capital Trail is well-positioned to connect to ten other regional and local trail networks under development, which will increase traffic and therefore maintenance costs on the Virginia Capital Trail. These potential trail connections are currently being incorporated into the trail planning process as goals for trail planners, developers and advocates. Just as a connected highway system was a catalyst for economic development, a connected active transportation network will continue to stimulate business development, encourage healthy activities, and provide transportation options for people without cars along the full corridor.

- ***Appomattox Riverfront Trail (ART Trail):*** The ART Trail connects six localities that border the lower Appomattox River (Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Prince George, Colonial Heights, Hopewell, and Petersburg). The 2017 Trail Master Plan mentions a potential connection from City Park in Hopewell to the Virginia Capital Trail via Route 10 to the Jordan Point Bridge (Route 156) across the James River. A ferry making this connection is another option. This vision is supported by the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR), PlanRVA and the Crater Planning District Commission.
- ***Birthplace of America Trail (BoAT Trail):*** The Transportation Technical Advisory Committee of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization seeks two paths connecting the South Hampton Roads Trail and Ft. Monroe to Jamestown and the Virginia Capital Trail. The total trail system is about 95 miles, and the plan has been approved and adopted in regional plans as of July 2017. The Peninsula Route would connect Jamestown, the College of William & Mary, Newport News Park, Yorktown Battlefield, Hampton University, the VA Medical Center, and Fort Monroe. The Southside Route would use the Scotland Ferry to connect to Smith’s Fort Plantation, the Town of Surry, Bacon’s Castle, the Isle of Wight Courthouse, Smithfield, St. Luke’s Church, and the South Hampton Roads Trail (a segment of the statewide Beaches to Bluegrass Trail) in the City of Suffolk.
- ***East Coast Greenway (ECG):*** The East Coast Greenway connects 15 states and 450 cities and towns for 3,000 miles from Maine to Florida. Fostering a safe walking and biking route through the country’s most populated corridor, the East Coast Greenway Alliance’s goal is to offer a shared use path fully separated from traffic, although much of the route through Virginia is still on-road. In Richmond, the historic coastal route of the ECG splits from the spine route and follows the Virginia Capital Trail and the Scotland Ferry towards the Dismal Swamp Trail. The spine route roughly follows Route 1 and connects to North Carolina south of Clarksville. There is potential for the spine route to follow the High Speed Rail Corridor south of Petersburg.
- ***James River Heritage Trail:*** This braided trail network includes water and land trails along the James River and its tributaries. The concept plan for this statewide trail is under development, but the vision is a network of communities that share their traditions, history, and lifestyle to foster sustainable recreation and stewardship of treasured landscapes and local waters, trails, and byways.
- ***Ashland to Petersburg Trail:*** Working with stakeholders, VDOT is studying a preferred corridor for a multi-use trail within Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, Colonial Heights, Petersburg, Richmond, and Ashland. The study’s purpose is to identify a trail corridor that will improve safety for the non-motoring public, enhance connectivity, and maintain consistency with state, regional, and local transportation plans. The Trolley Line Trail will be a major component of this trail system from Ashland through Henrico County.
- ***Three-Notch’d Trail:*** The original Three Notch’d Road (sometimes called Three Chopt Road) connected Richmond to the Shenandoah Valley as a main east-west route from the 1730s to the 1930s, until U.S. Route 250 was built on much of the original route. The Rivanna Trails Foundation (RTF) is spearheading

an effort to connect Charlottesville to Crozet and the Blue Ridge Tunnel along the Three-Notch'd Trail, but there is also interest in connecting eastward to the VCT. In May 1781, Thomas Jefferson and state officials fled Richmond to escape the British. The General Assembly adjourned its session to meet again in Charlottesville on May 28. They held a quick session on the morning of June 4 at the Swan Tavern in Charlottesville and again at Trinity Church in Staunton June 7-23. There is interest in connecting these temporary state capitols to the VCT.

- **BridgePark:** BridgePark is a proposed linear public park that would span the James River and connect the riverfront experience to the City Center, on both sides of the James. The park would transform 9th Street (including a portion of the Manchester Bridge over the beautiful James River) into a world-class destination for biking, walking, art, education, events, and community engagement. Stretching from Manchester to Jackson Ward, the path includes VCU's downtown campus, the John Marshall House, the State Capitol, Kanawha Plaza, Brown's Island, the Manchester Climbing Wall, and Southside's historic streets.
- **Gillies Creek Greenway:** The Gillies Creek Greenway, proposed in 2015 in the Gillies Creek Greenway Plan, will be a ten-foot-wide paved path for pedestrians and bicyclists. The greenway will connect neighborhoods in Greater Fulton and beyond to the James River and increase visibility of Gillies Creek. The greenway is planned to eventually extend from the James River along Gillies Creek to Oakwood Cemetery. It will intersect the VCT near the Intermediate Terminal.
- **Cannon Creek Greenway:** The Shockoe Valley Streets Improvement Project, currently under development by the City of Richmond, will connect the Cannon Creek Greenway to the James River and the VCT. This connection will link residential neighborhoods in northeast Richmond with the James River.
- **Shared Use Path on Courthouse Road (Route 155) in Charles City:** VDOT is helping plan a 0.53-mile multiuse path on southbound Courthouse Road (Route 155) between the VCT and Charles City County High School.

5

Virginia Capital Trail Current Operational and Maintenance Costs

The unique management structure of the Virginia Capital Trail means that operational and maintenance costs are split across the non-profit Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the localities served. Based on the operational responsibilities of each partner in the Virginia Capital Trail, the costs are allocated respectively between each entity. The information in this section illustrates the best estimations available from partners for their overall costs to operate and maintain the trail under the current management structure. These figures help establish a baseline cost for maintaining the Virginia Capital Trail, which can then be compared to the Department of Conservation and Recreation's cost to maintain a linear trail system.

Stakeholders were able to provide some background on their annual contributions to the Virginia Capital Trail. The annual budget of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation is approximately \$400,000 annually, with revenues largely coming from trail sponsors as well as funds associated with the Cap2Cap Trail Ride. The budget is anticipated to grow further with future events like the Cap Trail 10 Miler and 5K race scheduled for late October 2019². James City County provided invoices from their most recent fiscal year, indicating they spent approximately \$23,000 in staff time and resources to maintain their segment of the trail pursuant to the memorandum of understanding they have with the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation. The Virginia Department of Transportation's Ashland residency, which provides maintenance to the largest portion of the Virginia Capital Trail, expended \$24,479 in Fiscal Year 2015, \$221,049 in Fiscal Year 2016, \$184,934 in Fiscal Year 2017, \$196,148 in Fiscal Year 2018, and \$85,026 in Fiscal Year 2019. The Ashland residency of the Department of Transportation also spent \$170,000 over the past four years, including \$68,000 in FY 2019, on traffic engineering and pedestrian safety improvement studies. The Virginia Department of Transportation's Williamsburg residency, which serves the smaller eastern portion of the

Virginia Capital Trail alongside James City County, expended approximately \$52,500 in FY 2019 replacing bridge planks, removing trees and debris, repairing and replacing signage, and conducting studies and sign upgrades. The Williamsburg residency also anticipates a one-time expense of \$80,000 in Fiscal Year 2020 for an emergency bridge replacement.

For the most recent FY 2019, spanning from July 2018 to June 2019, the approximate total expenditures from three of five partners involved in the Virginia Capital Trail is estimated to be approximately \$628,554. Note that this figure reflects the salaried staff of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, and wage staff employed by the Virginia Department of Transportation and James City County whose work specifically involves the Virginia Capital Trail. This estimation includes James City County's maintenance costs specific to the Virginia Capital Trail, which are the subject of a memorandum of understanding, however it does not reflect some additional local government expenditures on maintenance by Richmond City and Henrico County. The reason for this is that Richmond City and Henrico County maintenance expenditures related to the Virginia Capital Trail overlap in part with other local municipal park maintenance and upkeep costs. In addition, these figures also do not reflect any staff time or resource expenditures related to public safety and law enforcement functions in the vicinity of the Virginia Capital Trail.

² It is noted that funding provided by the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation presumably would be available whether the trail is maintained by VDOT or by DCR and hence, for purposes of this report, has no bearing on the feasibility and costs associated with transferring sponsorship and maintenance support responsibilities for the Capital Trail from VDOT to DCR.

Capital Trail Total Expenditures by Stakeholder – FY 2019

Stakeholder	Trail Responsibilities ³	Expenditure
Virginia Capital Trail Foundation	Administration, Marketing, Programs, Fundraising	~\$400,000
Department of Transportation	Maintenance, Pedestrian Safety Improvement Studies	\$205,525
Local Governments (James City)	Greensprings Segment Maintenance	\$23,029
TOTAL:		~\$628,554

This report, consistent with the instructions of the General Assembly, focused on all aspects of trail maintenance and support. While the topline expenditures above are a helpful data point, the figures above include some non-maintenance funding associated with special events like the Cap2Cap Bike Ride and marketing expenses. Those expenses are not as clearly tied to the annual operation and maintenance costs of the trail, and therefore should be excluded in light of the narrow guidance from the General Assembly.

The chart above also includes administration expenditures by the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation that do have a direct impact on operations and maintenance. For instance, traffic engineering and safety improvement studies can identify operational efficiencies and enhance public safety. The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation facilitates the trail ambassador program, which trains and develops volunteers and provides the public with a daily presence on the trail. The Foundation also fields and routes safety and maintenance complaints to the appropriate stakeholders, and act as the public face of the trail. The full-time staff associated with the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation manage day-to-day operational concerns. This administrative role, much like the role of a state park’s management team, correlates directly with overall operational and maintenance costs. Expenses related to the administration of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, as well as traffic safety and engineering studies, can and should be part of the narrower calculation of operational and maintenance expenditures.

The instructions of the General Assembly request a study of the transfer of maintenance responsibilities for the Virginia Capital Trail, therefore it is important to identify the current maintenance practices associated with the Virginia Capital Trail to make sure those activities align with the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s maintenance practices. Maintenance activities currently undertaken by the Virginia Department of Transportation or localities include: litter removal, mowing, tree trimming, debris removal, facility upkeep, patching of holes, drainage, signage placement, bridge maintenance and inspection, and as needed patching and resurfacing of pavement along the trail. Activities not reflected in the annual maintenance figures due to their non-routine nature are large-scale repaving of trail segments as well as replacement of bridges and other crossings. Infrastructure replacement of that nature is typically

³ The trail responsibilities column list is not all encompassing. The responsibilities named reflect a general description reflecting where the bulk of dollars were spent. The list of responsibilities may not reflect smaller duties performed by the funding source along the Virginia Capital Trail funded from the same source. The absence of Henrico County and Richmond City figures are due to the fact that expenditures related to the Virginia Capital Trail are tied in with other conflating and unrelated costs as part of the local parks and recreation budget for those localities. The expenditure column represents the total amount of funds from that source known to be expended on the Virginia Capital Trail in fiscal year 2019.

not included in the annual maintenance or operating budget of a state park, and is considered more specialized. In addition, the Virginia Capital Trail spends a portion of its budget on special events and programming, which are not directly tied to maintenance and operations, allowing that figure to be reduced.

With those considerations in mind, the overall expenditures presented above can be narrowed to include those more traditional maintenance functions performed by the Virginia Department of Transportation and James City County listed above, as well as isolating the administrative overhead associated with the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation’s management role. The following table provides a more accurate maintenance and operation cost for comparison with the Department of Conservation and Recreation:

Capital Trail – Direct and Indirect Operating and Maintenance Expenditures – FY 2019

Stakeholder	Trail Responsibilities ⁴	Expenditure
Virginia Capital Trail	Administration, Stakeholder Management, Amenities	~\$150,000
Department of Transportation	Maintenance, Pedestrian Safety Improvement Studies	\$205,525
Local Governments (James City)	Greensprings Segment Maintenance	\$23,029
	TOTAL:	~\$378,554

Current Maintenance Frequency and Standards

The current maintenance practices undertaken by the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, Virginia Department of Transportation, and localities along the trail are undertaken on an as-needed basis, and are reactive to customer complaints and concerns. Those maintenance activities entail the following:

Current Maintenance Profile of the Virginia Capital Trail	
Activity	Current Maintenance Practice Frequency
Litter removal	Ranges from Monthly to Weekly
Mowing	Ranges from Monthly to Weekly
Tree Trimming	Ranges from none to Bi-Monthly
Debris Removal	Ranges from as needed to weekly
Bridge Inspection and Maintenance	2 year frequency for official inspections; weekly inspections by maintenance personnel
Resurfacing	As needed and conditions warrant
Drainage	As needed
Patching	As needed
Signs	As needed
Traffic Engineering	As needed

⁴ The responsibilities named are a general description reflecting where the bulk of maintenance-related and operational management dollars were spent. The list of responsibilities may not reflect smaller tasks which are funded by the funding source along the Virginia Capital Trail. Henrico County and Richmond City figures are not set out because expenditures related to the Virginia Capital Trail are tied in with other conflating and unrelated costs as part of the local parks and recreation budget for those localities. The expenditure column represents the total amount of funds from that source known to be spent specifically on maintenance or administration of the Virginia Capital Trail in FY2019.

One of the most notable aspects of the current maintenance regime is that most, if not all, actions are reactive to customer concerns and conducted only on an as-needed basis. The Virginia Department of Transportation notes receiving approximately 75 maintenance requests per year related to the Virginia Capital Trail, between both the Ashland and Williamsburg residencies. When compared to the approximately 1.4 million recorded “counts” from public users in 2018, this would indicate that maintenance requests from the public very likely account for less than 1% of overall users.

The chart above also does not reflect preventative maintenance, which will be a growing need in the coming years. Though the trail as a whole has been open for only four years, some parts of the Virginia Capital Trail are approaching a decade of use. The Virginia Department of Transportation Williamsburg residency has been sealing cracks prior to major resurfacing projects, but with wooden bridges and asphalt exposed to the elements as well as increasing year-over-year commuter and recreational use by the public, the need to prolong the life cycle of existing trail infrastructure will likely continue to grow. There is currently no dedicated line-item budget within the Virginia Department of Transportation for maintenance of active transportation corridors, non-motorized paths, or multi-use paths like the Virginia Capital Trail.

VDOT costs set forth in this report represent direct “reactive” cost generated from service requests only. At this point in time, VDOT has not established a maintenance plan for the Capital Trail, but is working with all relevant stakeholders to develop such a plan for short-term and long-term costs or needs required to maintain the trail. In addition, for the “reactive” costs, VDOT has only considered costs for hourly staff, materials and equipment and has not tracked or reported administrative costs associated with maintenance of the Capital Trail. Hence, the lane mile costs reported for VDOT and its partners (excluding Richmond and Henrico) in this report do not reflect the more realistic and higher VDOT per lane maintenance costs/needs of the trail that can only accurately be reported once a maintenance plans is established.

6 Anticipated Maintenance Costs for Department of Conservation & Recreation

In the previous section, using budget information from all Virginia Capital Trail partners revealed that the cost of administration, operation, and maintenance for the Virginia Capital Trail in Fiscal Year 2019 was approximately \$378,554 or approximately \$7,280 dollars per mile of trail maintained which, as noted previously are costs associated with only reactive maintenance or service, account only for hourly staff, materials and equipment costs and are lower than costs that will likely be incurred in future years, once VDOT has established and implemented a maintenance plan for the trail that takes into consideration short-term and long-term needs. With that figure in mind, the next step in the feasibility study requested by the General Assembly was to identify the approximate cost of those same core functions in the event that the Department of Conservation and Recreation assumed responsibility for maintenance and operation of the Virginia Capital Trail. To accomplish this task, staff from the Department of Conservation and Recreation performed a cost analysis for New River Trail State Park, a 57-mile linear park that follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way, consisting of three major bridges, thirty minor crossings, and a largely

gravel surface. The New River Trail is not a perfect reflection of the Virginia Capital Trail, but due to the length and maintenance challenges offers a strong parallel.

Key differences to be aware of include the frequent commuter use of the Virginia Capital Trail in Richmond and James City County, as well as the fact that much of the Virginia Capital Trail's length is paved with asphalt relative to the largely gravel surface of the New River Trail. The Department of Conservation and Recreation has a more frequent maintenance regime for debris and trash removal, and employs staff that have law enforcement responsibilities within park boundaries.

Despite these differences, Department of Conservation and Recreation staff were able to estimate the current costs per mile of trail to maintain the New River Trail to state park maintenance standards, and thus establish a baseline cost for comparison. It should be noted that the cost analysis in this section assumes that the General Assembly would appropriate sufficient funding for wage and full time employees, as well as start-up equipment and ongoing operational needs.

Comparative Cost Analysis for a Linear Trail – Maintenance and Operations

The New River Trail is a 57-mile linear park consisting of a gravel trail that follows an abandoned railroad right-of-way. The park parallels the scenic and historic New River for much of its length. The New River Trail passes through four counties and the city of Galax. The trail's gentle slope makes it great for visitors of all ages to hike, bike and ride horseback. The trail features two tunnels, three bridges, and nearly thirty smaller bridges and trestles. Potable water is available only at Galax, Cliffview Campground (Dannelly Park), and Foster Falls, as well as at the horse trailer lots at Ivanhoe, Draper, and Dora Junction, and there are five non-flush toilets available along the trail. The New River Trail and the day-use area are open daily from dawn to dusk.

Annual Maintenance Costs per Mile of New River Trail

New River Trail maintenance costs include operating support, supplies, and wages for 12 seasonal maintenance staff and five full-time maintenance-performing employees. These employees handle mowing, cleaning bathrooms, general maintenance of grounds and buildings, operation of park contact stations, refuse services, water/sewer (day use/vault/portable toilets), and electrical services.

New River Trail State Park currently dedicates \$120,300 in salary and benefits for full-time employees performing maintenance functions along the trail, which, when coupled with seasonal staff wages, results in an annual cost of \$226,948.81. The services, supplies, equipment, and other materials to support this maintenance team cost an additional \$206,082. This means that the total annual cost for maintenance functions of New River Trail State Park is approximately \$553,331 or \$9,707 per mile of trail served.

Annual Operating Costs per Mile of New River Trail

New River Trail currently has nine full-time employees, including five law enforcement officers. Trail infrastructure includes two park offices, two maintenance shops, 22 parking accesses, 31 trestles-bridges, two tunnels, and 22 seasonal staff providing coverage and services for the public and care to buildings and

grounds. These administrative costs are in addition to the maintenance and operating costs outlined above. New River Trail State Park currently dedicates around \$107,679 to administration and day-use operating costs for the state park. This means that the estimated total operating cost for day-use functions of New River Trail is approximately \$107,679 or an additional \$1,889 per mile of trail served.⁵

Administrative Operations (\$107,679)

This funding includes two seasonal staffers in addition to a full-time office manager operating two offices. Rates of pay for seasonal staff are \$12 per hour to cover an office manager for two days per week and \$10 per hour to cover a receptionist five days per week over nine months of the park season. Expenses include costs annually for wages, FICA, postage for mail and shipping, organization fees (chamber of commerce), employee training costs, office supplies, stationery forms, gasoline for operations, custodial supplies for cleaning offices, copier rentals, electrical service, and office furniture/incidentals. Wage/FICA costs for each office are \$13,789, and these figures are based on having two park offices staggered along the length of the trail.

Cost Considerations Specific to the Virginia Capital Trail

The comparative cost analysis above captures many of the basic operating and maintenance functions of day-use linear trail systems; however, the costs above do not reflect some unique maintenance expenses that make the Virginia Capital Trail distinct from the New River Trail. Department of Conservation and Recreation staff examined these additional expenses at length, to assess the anticipated cost to the Department of Conservation and Recreation if the agency were to take over maintenance responsibility of the Virginia Capital Trail. In the event that the costs specific to the Virginia Capital Trail were included as part of an annual maintenance budget, it would add an additional \$515,000 in ongoing maintenance and operational costs or \$9,035 per mile per year.

- **Resurfacing Costs:** Currently resurfacing costs are not part of the routine operating budget of New River Trail. The gravel along the trail occasionally needs to be resurfaced, and when it does that comes at a cost of \$12,172 per mile of gravel resurfaced. This includes roller rental costs, road grader operation, delivery of rock dust for to the surface, and wage staff time to complete the project with proper equipment. **NOTE:** For a paved trail, such as the Virginia Capital Trail, the cost estimate runs closer to \$100,000 per paved mile of trail. This estimate is based on Washington & Old Dominion Trail's annual budget for trail resurfacing for paved trail. The Washington & Old Dominion Trail completes 3-4 miles of resurfacing annually using contracted services.
- **Tree Removal:** Tree removal falls outside the normal operating budget for New River Trail. Generally, using contracted services for removal of safety issue-danger trees along trail structures and neighboring properties costs between \$5,000 and \$10,000 per year.

⁵ DCR's costs reported for the New River Trail take into consideration annual maintenance costs, long-term replacement costs and administrative costs such as law enforcement and staffing which are costs not considered or factored in VDOT costs currently incurred for purposes of maintain the Capital Trail. Thus the disparity in costs between maintenance of the New River Trail and the Virginia Capital Trail are attributable in part to additional costs for elements not considered or included in VDOT cost estimates.

- Trestle Redecking: New River Trail counts replacement of posts, decking, handrails and associated wages, materials and hardware outside the scope of normal operations. Replacement of boards is generally expected every 5-8 years, and considered a special project. New River Trail would estimate a budget of \$80,000 per year to replace four bridges annually.
- Trestle and Bridge Structural Repairs: New River Trail, much like the Virginia Capital Trail, is currently in the process of completing assessments on bridges and trestles for repairs. This expense item would include repairs such as scaling of abutment, piers, ties, and bents and major structural repairs. This would be performed through services contracted under the Department of Conservation and Recreation, with an estimated annual expense of \$325,000 to cover one major structural repair along the trail per year.

Cost Comparison: Virginia Capital Trail vs. New River Trail

The cost of administration, operation, and maintenance for the Virginia Capital Trail in Fiscal Year 2019 was approximately \$378,554 or approximately \$7,280 dollars per mile of trail maintained. The combined cost of administration, operation, and maintenance for DCR to administer the gravel New River Trail is \$661,010 or approximately \$11,597 per mile of trail maintained. When factoring in unique aspects of the Virginia Capital Trail, such as the paved surface, trestle redecking, and structural repairs to bridges and major crossings (all items which are not routinely part of an annual operational or maintenance budget for a state park), this raised the estimated cost for DCR to \$20,807 per mile.

There are several notable reasons for this cost differential: 1.) The Department of Conservation and Recreation employs law-enforcement rangers to provide public safety services to park guests an amenity not reflected in the figures, for the Virginia Capital Trail. 2.) New River Trail features more physical assets such as contact stations and park offices, which have utility, maintenance, and upkeep costs. Many of the physical assets along the Virginia Capital Trail have lower carrying costs. 3.) The New River Trail has nine full-time employees and 22 seasonal staff providing an array of services to maintain the trail to state park standards, whereas the Virginia Capital Foundation has only three full-time employees, the Virginia Department of Transportation relies on four to five seasonal wage employees for maintenance, and the localities served by the trail split costs using existing parks and recreation staff who maintain the Virginia Capital Trail on a less frequent basis.

7 Current and Future Revenue Generation Opportunities

Given that the maintenance and operational costs of the Virginia Capital Trail have been thoroughly examined in this report, it is appropriate to look at current and future revenue generation potential of the Virginia Capital Trail to see what, if any, funds may be used to offset those costs. As noted previously, due to the many sources of federal grant funding utilized in the development of the Virginia Capital Trail, no user fee or toll can be charged to members of the public without violating terms of the grant agreements. Despite this restriction, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation has flexibility in its role as a 501(c)3

organization to solicit private donations from individual and corporate sponsors, and to then utilize those funds to enhance trail amenities, support their staff overhead, conduct marketing campaigns, and administer the Trail Ambassador program just to name a few functions.

Presently, the Virginia Cap2Cap Bike Ride held in May is the major source of private dollar revenue. The event pays for itself, and underwrites the costs of administering the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation for the remainder of the year. It is responsible for nearly all of the organization's approximately \$400,000 annual budget, though Virginia Capital Trail Foundation staff also directly solicit some contributions, sell annual sponsorships, and allow users to sponsor mile markers along the length of the trail. It should be noted that, while the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation routinely hosts festivals and major events similar to the Cap2Cap Bike Ride, much of the private revenue generated by those events winds up reverting to the festival and event sponsors. In addition, maintenance and operational staff allocated to the Virginia Capital Trail are unlikely to have time to dedicate to the planning and execution

of special events without relying on volunteer support from the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation.

In addition to current revenue streams from the Cap2Cap Bike Ride, private solicitations, and trail marker sponsorships, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation recently announced plans for a Capital Trail 10-Miler and 5k event in partnership with Richmond Road Runners in October, with proceeds reverting to the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation. Though the event is in its first year in 2019, it is anticipated to be cash-positive for the Virginia Capital Trail and will likely further grow the organization's capacity to operate and administer the trail for the benefit of the public. While no other special events have been identified as of yet, it stands to reason that the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation could grow their existing annual special events or add to the list to diversify their income streams and expand their capacity as trail managers in the years ahead.

8 Recommendations and Conclusion

In conclusion, the Secretariat of Transportation and Secretariat of Natural Resources offer the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

The costs associated with moving maintenance responsibilities from the Department of Transportation to the Department of Conservation and Recreation will not yield significant cost-savings to the Commonwealth and localities, and therefore, maintenance and sponsorship responsibilities should stay with the Virginia Department of Transportation and Virginia Capital Trail Foundation.

Rationale: The primary basis of this recommendation is that, after review of the maintenance responsibilities associated with the Virginia Capital Trail, the current maintenance regime by the Virginia Department of Transportation and James City County, Henrico County, Charles City County, and Richmond City is being delivered in a cost-effective manner. The Virginia Department of Transportation remains the owner of the Virginia Capital Trail corridor, even with a transfer of maintenance responsibilities. The

Virginia Department of Transportation has greater in-house expertise in traffic engineering, paving and resurfacing needs of paved roads used by commuters. While duties such as mowing, trimming, and debris removal can be taken on by the Department of Conservation and Recreation within the course of normal maintenance ranger responsibilities, a full transition of all maintenance duties is unlikely due to the Department of Transportation's specialized expertise, and contracted services would still be required for more complex tasks. Finally, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation is currently handling many of the operational and administrative tasks associated with linear trail management using private funds. If the Department of Conservation and Recreation were to take over maintenance responsibilities, the full-time and wage maintenance rangers hired would require administrative and operational support, shifting that cost to the taxpayers and requiring the General Assembly to appropriate new full-time employees and wage positions for DCR to handle administration and upkeep of the new asset.

Recommendation 2

The Department of Conservation and Recreation, without incurring additional operational costs, should lend its linear park planning expertise to the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation and Virginia Department of Transportation to provide technical assistance in developing a Virginia Capital Trail master plan.

Rationale: The Virginia Capital Trail developed incrementally over the course of a decade with a guiding vision to connect Virginia's colonial capital of Williamsburg to its current capital of Richmond. The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation's role has evolved in that time, largely as a reaction to increased usage and maintenance pressures. Through technical assistance from the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Planning and Recreation Resources, the non-profit can work with their citizen board and members of the public to establish a long-term plan mapping out capital needs, desired amenities, and safety improvements, and establish a time horizon for those projects. This would give the Virginia Department of Transportation a sense of the foundation's long-term needs and plans, allow non-profit staff to work towards specific goals and benchmarks for the Virginia Capital Trail's future, and provide clarity to the public about future development of the Virginia Capital Trail along the Route 5 corridor.

Recommendation 3

Given the increasing use of active transportation paths such as the Virginia Capital Trail, it would be advisable for the General Assembly to develop a dedicated fund for future capital needs as well as ongoing maintenance and operational costs of active pedestrian and commuter multi-use paths operated by the Virginia Department of Transportation that serve as alternatives to highways and secondary roads.

Rationale: The Virginia Capital Trail came together as a product of a diverse array of largely federal funding sources, as part of a growing trend of alternative transportation models. While the Virginia Capital Trail serves a role in outdoor recreation as well as preservation of scenic and historic assets, there is a growing trend among local users, particularly in Richmond, Williamsburg, and James City County, to commute to work along the path. There is currently no dedicated state fund to support future capital requests for multi-use paths, and no specific line-item within the Virginia Department of Transportation budget to cover long-

term maintenance costs of active transportation corridors such as pedestrian and bicycle paths. As these active transportation corridors continue to grow and age, additional funding would help ensure they are adequately maintained to the standard expected by the public.

Recommendation 4

To address existing operational gaps, establish reciprocal law enforcement agreements between the Virginia Capital Trail jurisdictions and the Department of Transportation or amend the Code of Virginia to allow state and local police to issue tickets along the full length of the Virginia Capital Trail.

Rationale: The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation and stakeholders identified a gap in current management capabilities related to law enforcement and public safety along the trail. The Virginia Capital Trail currently lacks a dedicated law enforcement presence along the full length of the trail. Each locality currently provides coverage based on their individual resources and is limited when offenders cross local boundaries, which leads to a fragmentation of law enforcement efforts. This gap in public service can be filled relatively easily with either a simple amendment to the *Code of Virginia* or through law enforcement reciprocity agreements related to the Virginia Capital Trail.

Long-Term Management of Fall Line

Prepared by PlanRVA staff for the
Central Virginia Transportation Authority

Fall Line Working Group

Spring 2024

DRAFT

Introduction

The Richmond region is on a transformative journey towards becoming a beacon of bicycle and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. The area showcases an ever-growing array of bike lanes, shared-use paths, and streets designed with cyclists and pedestrians in mind, spanning and connecting diverse neighborhoods. Initiatives such as the Virginia Capital Trail – a 52-mile trail connecting Richmond to Jamestown – and adherence to Complete Streets policies underscore the region's commitment to enhancing walkability and bikeability across its urban, suburban, and rural landscapes. The strategic position of Richmond as a pivotal hub for regional transit and active transportation is crucial, particularly considering its connectivity to adjacent counties and regions.

The Fall Line is a regional spine trail planned to traverse seven localities – including five localities in the PlanRVA MPO – for an estimated 43 miles from the Town of Ashland to the City of Petersburg. It will be the north-south spine for the region that will meet with the east-west spine, Virginia Capital Trail, in downtown Richmond. Named for its unique geography along the trail corridor, the Fall Line denotes the area where the Piedmont Plateau and Atlantic Coastal Plain meet, resulting in several rapids and waterfalls. The Fall Line courses through Ashland, Hanover, Henrico, Richmond, Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg.

The purpose of this study is to help inform the process of identifying a long-term management plan for the Fall Line. The options listed in the study are outlined below with examples provided of each as they have been implemented in their respective localities, regions, and states.

1) **Foundation/Non-Profit**

- a) Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (Richmond)
- b) Sports Backers (Richmond)
- c) Maymont Foundation (Richmond)
- d) PATH Foundation (Atlanta)

2) **Authority**

- a) Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks, Northern Virginia)

3) **Coalition**

- a) Circuit Trails Coalition (Philadelphia)
- b) Great Trails State Coalition (North Carolina)

4) **Conservancy**

- a) Great Allegheny Passage (GAP)

5) **Department of Transportation**

- a) Florida Shared-Use Non-motorized (SUN) Trail Program

Background

The [National Recreation Trails Program](#) defines a trails as: "A trail is a travel way established either through construction or use and is passable by at least one or more of the following, including but not limited to: foot traffic, stock, watercraft, bicycles, in-line skates, wheelchairs, cross-country skis, off-road recreation vehicles such as motorcycles, snowmobiles, ATVs and 4-wheel drive vehicles."

Fall Line trail will be an active transportation route and recreational trail for the Richmond region including many of the previously mentioned non-motorized modes of travel (e-bikes should be permitted). The following sections will help define the five options selected for this study and provide selected examples of each.

Foundation/Non-Profit

"Organizations that meet the [requirements of Internal Revenue Code section 501\(c\)\(3\)](#) are exempt from federal income tax as **charitable organizations**. In addition, contributions made to charitable organizations by individuals and corporations are deductible under Code section 170," according to the [Internal Revenue Service](#).

"Every exempt charitable organization is classified as either a public charity or a private foundation. Generally, organizations that are classified as public charities are those that (i) are churches, hospitals, qualified medical research organizations affiliated with hospitals, schools, colleges and universities, (ii) have an active program of fundraising and receive contributions from many sources, including the general public, governmental agencies, corporations, private foundations or other public charities, (iii) receive income from the conduct of activities in furtherance of the organization's exempt purposes, or (iv) actively function in a supporting relationship to one or more existing public charities. Private foundations, in contrast, typically have a single major source of funding (usually gifts from one family or corporation rather than funding from many sources) and most have as their primary activity the making of grants to other charitable organizations and to individuals, rather than the direct operation of charitable programs."

Virginia Capital Trail Foundation <https://www.virginiacapitaltrail.org/>

Non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

All information below is quoted from the Virginia Capital Trail website.

"The Virginia Capital Trail is a 51.7 multi-use, fully-paved trail that runs through four jurisdictions (City of Richmond, Henrico County, Charles City County, and James City County) with dozens of attractions along the way.

“In September 2004, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF) was formed as a nonpartisan advocacy partner to provide trail expertise, to raise public awareness of the trail, and to seek funding and contributions to enhance and promote the trail.

“Serves as the unified voice of the trail. When the Capital Trail was being built, its supporters realized there was a need for an organization to communicate with all the jurisdictions, government offices, supporters, partners, and Trail users. From this idea the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation was born. Continue the mission 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.”

Sports Backers <https://www.sportsbackers.org/>

Non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

NOTE: While the Richmond Sports Backers do not currently manage a trail, the organization has been a leader in active and healthy living in the Richmond region for more than three decades.

All information below is quoted from the Sports Backers website.

“Sports Backers has developed programs and events that are designed to inspire people from all corners of our community to live actively. We achieve this work by focusing on a network of collaborative partnerships with other organizations, businesses, local governments and faith-based institutions. In order to have transformational change, we realize we can’t do it all alone, but rather we work to build a movement of change in our community to make active living the easy choice.

“Sports Backers, through our Bike Walk RVA Program, is the lead organization advocating for the completion of Fall Line, this backbone of biking and walking in the Richmond Region and beyond.

“Sports Backers owns and produces many events throughout the year, to include some of the largest and most successful of their kind in the country. In 2023, the Sports Backers supported 25 other sports tourism events owned and operated by nonprofit organizations in the Richmond region.”

Maymont Foundation <https://maymont.org/>

Non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

All information below is quoted from the Maymont website.

NOTE: Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico contribute to Maymont Foundation annual budget – 13% public support budget

“Maymont is a 100-acre historic estate and park, located in Richmond, Virginia, with many unique experiences for all to enjoy. Stroll through the gardens and arboretum, see native wildlife habitats, feed friendly goats, and explore The Robins Nature Center.

“The foundation of the Foundation—then and now—is the desire to keep Maymont beautiful and accessible for every generation to come.”

“The Maymont Foundation is committed to creating experiences that delight, educate and inspire. As the organization entrusted with caring for this important public space, we believe in:

- Remaining true to the Dooleys’ vision of Maymont as a park and museum for everyone, in this and future generations.
- Serving as an exceptional asset to the City of Richmond and its citizens to help establish Richmond among the great cities of this nation.
- Fostering community engagement, citizen leadership and private philanthropy – the three keys to ensuring Maymont’s purpose endures.

PATH Foundation (Atlanta) <https://www.pathfoundation.org/> (Trails ATL)

Non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

All information below is quoted from the PATH Foundation website.

“Since its founding in 1991, the PATH Foundation has been reshaping urban areas of the greater metropolitan Atlanta. Through a combination of philanthropic contributions, public funding, and diverse financial support, PATH has creatively repurposed abandoned railroad corridors into picturesque linear green spaces that seamlessly merge neighborhoods to vibrant commercial centers, offering varied transportation alternatives for commuters, joggers, walkers, cyclists, and individuals of all age groups. To date, more than 325 miles of multi-use PATH trails have been built, making an immeasurable difference in Atlanta’s quality of life.

“PATH forms partnerships with local governments to build greenway trails. PATH provides knowledgeable staff and consultants to plan, design, and build trail projects. In some cases, PATH provides matching funds to finance the development of trails. Local governments provide access to state and federal funding, rights-of-way for trails, and in-kind services during trail development.

“As a non-profit organization dependent upon donations, gifts, and support from multiple resources, the PATH Foundation is committed to maintaining a clear record of financial statements and documents. <https://www.pathfoundation.org/financials>

Authority

Virginia Law: <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacodepopularnames/park-authorities-act/>

§ 15.2-5702. Creation of authorities

A. A locality may by ordinance or resolution, or two or more localities may by concurrent ordinances or resolutions, signify their intention to create a park authority, under an appropriate name and title, containing the word "authority" which shall be a body politic and corporate.

Whenever an authority has been incorporated by two or more localities, any one or more of the localities may withdraw therefrom, but no locality shall be permitted to withdraw from any authority that has outstanding obligations unless United States securities have been deposited for their payment or without unanimous consent of all holders of the outstanding obligations.

B. Each ordinance or resolution shall include articles of incorporation setting forth:

1. The name of the authority and the address of its principal office.
2. The name of each incorporating locality, together with the names, addresses and terms of office of the first members of the board of the authority.
3. The purpose or purposes for which the authority is created.

C. Each participating locality shall cause to be published at least one time in a newspaper of general circulation in its locality, a copy of the ordinance or resolution together with a notice stating that on a day certain, not less than seven days after publication of the notice, a public hearing will be held on such ordinance or resolution. If at the hearing substantial opposition to the proposed park authority is heard, the members of the participating localities' governing bodies may in their discretion call for a referendum on the question of establishing such an authority. The request for a referendum shall be initiated by resolution of the governing body and filed with the clerk of the circuit court for the locality. The court shall order the referendum as provided for in § [24.2-681](#) et seq. Where two or more localities are participating in the formation of an authority the referendum, if any be ordered, shall be held on the same date in all such localities so participating. In any event if ten percent of the registered voters in such locality file a petition with the governing body at the hearing calling for a referendum such governing body shall request a referendum as herein provided.

D. Having specified the initial plan of organization of the authority, and having initiated the program, the localities organizing such authority may, from time to time, by subsequent ordinance or resolution, after public hearing, and with or without referendum, specify further parks to be acquired and maintained by the authority, and no other parks shall be acquired or maintained by the authority than those so specified. However, if the governing bodies of the

localities fail to specify any project or projects to be undertaken, and if the governing bodies do not disapprove any project or projects proposed by the authority, then the authority shall be deemed to have all the powers granted by this chapter.

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks, W&OD Trail)

<https://www.novaparks.com/>

Established by Virginia law: <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacodepopularnames/park-authorities-act/>

§ 15.2-5704.1. Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority is authorized to acquire, either by gift or purchase, any real property or interests therein that the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority considers necessary or desirable to provide public use areas as identified in the Goose Creek Scenic River Report published in 1975.

All information below is quoted from the NOVA Parks website.

- Organized by the Virginia Park Authorities Act in 1959 as the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA). Changed to NOVA Parks in 2014. Represents counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and the cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax.
- NOVA Parks staff, volunteer board members appointed from each jurisdiction and many friends of the regional parks working together have preserved over 12,000 acres of the rolling and wooded Virginia countryside for you and created a priceless legacy for future generations.
- Serves approximately two million citizens. By pooling their funds, these local governments find that each dollar they contribute to NOVA Parks is multiplied by contributions from other member jurisdictions and sometimes augmented even more by state and federal grants and private donations.
- W&OD (dev. 1974-1988): Often called the “skinniest park in Virginia,” Washington & Old Dominion (W&OD) Railroad Regional Park is a paved trail between Shirlington and Purcellville, Virginia. 45-mile route along the former roadbed of the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad, which runs through the urban heartland and into the Virginia countryside. Equestrians can ride the adjacent 32-mile gravel horse trail. The W&OD trail has multiple parking areas, enabling you to jump on and off the trail at various points.
- “Regional parks may cross the jurisdictional boundaries of two or more localities, may be too costly to be undertaken by any one jurisdiction alone or may have special characteristics which appeal to the broad-based population of the entire region.”

Coalition

According to a guidance document written by [American Trails](#), “A trails coalition is a private collaboration of diverse trail organizations/interests that work together to find common ground and primarily address an array of local, regional, statewide, and/or federal trail programs, issues, needs, and solutions. Typically, a coalition may work with local governments, their state legislature, and federal legislators either in a lobbying capacity or sharing of information with local, state, or federal decision makers. A coalition is a network of organizations, and sometimes just regular people that work together to achieve a common greater goal.”

Circuit Trails Coalition (Philadelphia) <https://circuittrails.org/>

All information below is quoted from the Circuit Trails website.

“The Circuit Trails Coalition is a collaboration of non-profit organizations, foundations, and agencies working to advance completion of a connected network of trails – the Circuit Trails – in the Greater Philadelphia region. Their goal is to raise the profile of bicycle and pedestrian trails and their public benefits so that building the Circuit Trails becomes a significant regional priority.

“The Circuit Coalition (renamed the Circuit Trails Coalition in 2016) was created in 2012 to coordinate and advocate for the completion of the Circuit (renamed the Circuit Trails in 2016), Greater Philadelphia’s Regional Trail Network in nine counties, including five in Pennsylvania (Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia) and four in New Jersey (Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer).

“The Coalition was created to follow up on successful collaborative efforts amongst multiple organizations, which working closely were able to secure a \$23 million USDOT TIGER grant in 2009 and create the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) Regional Trail Fund in late 2010. Because of the success of these efforts, a need for an ongoing collaboration was identified (instead of the previous haphazard or opportunistic collaborative efforts).

“The Circuit Coalition partners worked together for over a year to coordinate the official creation of the Circuit, which was defined as 750 miles of multi-county, multi-state, connected trails; and of the Circuit Trails Coalition, which was composed of over 35 member organizations in 2012.”

Great Trails State Coalition (North Carolina) <https://greattrailsstatecoalition.org/>

All information below is quoted from the Great Trails State website.

“A broad-based group of diverse organizations, including nonprofits, local government, industry partners, and other supporters advocating for increased state investment in all types of muscle-powered trails statewide including hiking, paddle, mountain bike, equestrian, and paved.

“The Coalition’s goal is to secure sustained state investment in trail projects across the state, through appropriations for trail programs and projects. There are more than 70 members as of 2023. They were first successful in convincing the state’s General Assembly to designate 2023 as North Carolina Year of the Trail. They also convinced their General Assembly to appropriate \$29.5 million for 12 authorized State Trails.

“[NCDOT’s Great Trails State Plan](#), published in 2021, is a plan to connect all 100 NC counties by trails. State funding will provide matching dollars for significant federal funds and accelerate investment-ready projects to completion, benefiting citizens and the outdoor recreation economy.

Conservancy

“Nonprofit conservation organization” - non-governmental nonprofit organization whose primary purpose is conservation of open space or natural resources.

Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) <http://www.gaptrail.org/>

All information below is quoted from the Great Allegheny Passage website.

“The Great Allegheny Passage is a 150-mile rail-trail between Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Cumberland, Maryland. Together with the C&O Canal towpath, the GAP is part of a 335-mile route between Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. GAP is owned by a mix of public and nonprofit entities, including Allegany County, Somerset County, Ohio State Park, the Regional Trail Corporation, Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, and Point State Park, each of which appoints a member to the [GAP Conservancy](#)’s board of directors. Also see more about the conservancy’s [partner organizations](#).

Department of Transportation

Another long-term management option for trails in Virginia could be handled by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). An example of a state DOT managing a trail network is the Florida Shared-Use Non-motorized (SUN) Trail Program in the state of Florida.

Florida Shared-Use Non-motorized (SUN) Trail Program

<http://floridasuntrail.com>

All information below is quoted from the Sun Trail Program website or FDOT documents.

“The Florida Shared-Use Non-motorized (SUN) Trail Program was established in 2015 pursuant to [Section 339.81](#), Florida Statutes (F.S.) in 2015. Section 335.065, F.S., bicycle and pedestrian ways along state roads and transportation facilities, authorizes FDOT to use the State

Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) to support the establishment of a statewide system of interconnected multi-use trails for bicyclists and pedestrians in coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). FDOT receives an annual allocation from the redistribution of new vehicle tag revenues pursuant to Section 320.072, F.S., Motor Vehicle Licenses.

“[FDOT’s primary statutory responsibility](#) is to coordinate the planning and development of a safe, viable, and balanced state transportation system serving all regions of the state, and to assure the compatibility of all components, including multimodal facilities.

“The SUN Trail network includes a combination of existing and conceptual trails. As envisioned, portions of the SUN Trail network are within the FDOT right-of-way (on-system), other portions are on other lands (off-system). FDOT Design Manual Topic 625-000-002 (FDM) [Chapter 224] defines on-system SUP. FDOT Office of Design Topic 625-000-015 – Manual of Uniform Minimum Standards for Design, Construction and Maintenance for Streets and Highways (Florida Greenbook) [Chapter 9] defines off-system SUP. Not all trails are within the SUN Trail network. Implementing projects in the SUN Trail network increases the reliability of Florida’s transportation system.

“The department is committed to building a transportation system that not only fits the current needs of Florida’s residents and visitors but also enhances mobility throughout the state to accommodate its consistent and rapid growth.”

Components funded through the SUN Trail program [will not include](#):

- Sidewalks, nature trails, or loop trails wholly within a single park or natural area; or
- On-road facilities (such as bicycle lanes of routes other than on-road facilities that are no longer than one-half mile connecting two or more nonmotorized trails) if the provision of non-road facilities is infeasible and if such on-road facilities are signed and marked for nonmotorized use.

SUN Trail funds are for the transportation element of the standard trail. Ineligible costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Benches, trail furniture, seating areas, or tables;
- Bicycle racks or lockers, bicycle air or repair stations;
- Buildings or enclosed structures, restrooms, bathhouses, comfort stations, wayside structures, shade structures, concession stands, overlooks, fishing platforms, boat ramps or launches, transit or ride share facilities, shelters, gazebos, or picnic pavilions;
- Kiosks, interpretive panels, or placemaking signs (safety controls are an allowable cost);
- Landscaping (trail stabilization is an allowable cost);
- Litter or recycle receptacles, or doggie bag dispensers;
- Parking areas, trailheads, or camping areas;
- Playgrounds or playing fields, fitness equipment, or fitness structures;
- Promotional, marketing, or educational materials;
- Sculptures, monuments, or art; and

- Water fountains, splash zones, spigots, showers, water features, or irrigation equipment.

Proposed solution

Fall Line needs a long-term maintenance plan. The trail corridor connects seven different localities, but an organization should be at the heart of the plan to bring them all together and keep them all together. Five different management options were presented in this study.

- Foundation/Non-Profit
- Authority
- Coalition
- Conservancy
- Department of Transportation

The option most familiar to the Richmond region is the Foundation/Non-Profit option, embodied locally by the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF). The VCTF was founded in 2004, 11 years before the official completion of the trail. Because of the success of the Virginia Capital Trail, using the VCTF as a good example of leadership and advocacy is warranted. From the inception of the foundation, the board helped advocate for the trail; seek funding; work with the Commonwealth of Virginia; VDOT; the counties of James City, Charles City, and Henrico, and the City of Richmond to help establish the right of way for the trail and the promotion of the process publicly. The foundation was essential in helping curate the successful trail we have today. Since the trail was dedicated in October 2015 the VCTF has continued to advocate for the trail, continue the promotion, steer the maintenance and further the development of necessities along the trail corridor. Those necessities include trail signage, restrooms & water, trailheads, repair stations, and more. The foundation also brings events to the Capital Trail, large volunteer efforts to clean along the trail, and encourages residents to participate in making the trail a great place to visit for everyone.

It cannot be ignored that while VCTF has experience managing the Capital Trail, the Richmond Sports Backers have been the advocacy leaders for the Fall Line from its inception. Sports Backers took the lead regionally to think beyond the former Ashland Trolley Line corridor – Ashland to Richmond – and pushed regional localities to consider a much longer trail that roughly followed the Route 1 corridor. This envisioned route would connect Ashland and Petersburg. Sports Backer and their board helped lobby the office of then-Governor Ralph Northam for the funding of the Ashland to Petersburg Trail Study. Sports Backers also developed a plan for naming Fall Line; built a website (falllineva.org); created a branding and marketing plan for the trail; organized multiple visits to other trails to inspire the vision for Fall Line; founded a Friends of Fall Line working group; and eventually developed a [Vision Plan for Fall Line](#). Managing a trail would be a new endeavor for Sports Backers, but the organization's success leadership to this point also merits great consideration.

The NOVA Parks example of a regional authority would be something new for the Richmond region. It should merit some consideration as a long-term maintenance option. The need to establish such an authority under Virginia law may, however, present an obstacle and perhaps complicate and even delay the process to provide a long-term maintenance solution. The W&OD Trail is a major active transportation route for Northern Virginia and the authority, while it is founded as a recreational entity, manages the trail for the region.

Consideration of a coalition for the long-term management of Fall Line does not seem to be a realistic option. Same can be said for a conservancy. Both options appear to be more appropriate approach for managing a collection of trail organizations as a unifying umbrella group. While there are advantages for unified advocacy and partnerships with both options, guidance for maintenance does not appear to be as strong.

Lastly, having a Department of Transportation take the long-term maintenance role for an active transportation network does seem worthy of consideration. Just like with the authority option, it would likely take legislation to establish VDOT as the proper authority to manage the trails and to dedicate a larger budget. While VDOT currently does maintain the Virginia Capital Trail and many other shared use trails in Virginia, the overall enhancement of those trails lies largely with the localities in which the trails have been established and the variety of ways those localities have chosen to provide upkeep beyond the basics provided by VDOT.

Conclusion

Five different management options were presented in this study as a long-term solution for the overall maintenance and management of Fall Line. Of the five options, the most viable and potentially most expedient option would be to select a foundation or non-profit to take on that role. The two current viable non-profit candidates with known interest in managing Fall Line are the Richmond Sports Backers and the Virginia Capital Trail Foundations. Both of those entities would likely need to bring in more funding and also hire more staff and expand the services of their organizations to take on more leadership responsibility for the trail. The leaders of the seven localities that are a part of the Fall Line corridor should be the ones tasked with selecting and deciding on a solution for the long-term maintenance of the trail.