



# Advancing the BoAT Trail



*An RVA757 Connects' Priority*



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## Document Purpose



## Overview of Bike-Walk Trails – U.S., Virginia, and RVA-757



## Success of the Virginia Capital Trail To Date



## Plans for Trail Expansion – Williamsburg to the Va. Beach



## Possible Ways RVA757 Connects Can Help

# RVA757 Connects' Priority Focus Areas



One of RVA757 Connects' Board-approved priority focus areas is supporting the completion of the Birthplace of America Trail or BoAT.

The Virginia Capital Trail currently runs from Richmond to Williamsburg. Plans are being formulated to extend this trail from Williamsburg to Virginia Beach.



1. Advance our megaregion's brand
2. Implement the GO Virginia Talent Pipeline Study
3. Accelerate the understanding of digital connections between RVA and 757
4. Increase R&D collaboration
5. **Support the continuation of the Virginia Capital Trail called the BoAT Trail in the Hampton Roads Region**
6. Remove barriers to increase passenger rail service
7. Advocate for I-64 widening (29-mile gap from RIC to Williamsburg)

# RVA757 Connects' Traditional Planning Process

*To Advance RVA757 Connects' Major Focus Areas*



This document is step 3 in RVA757 Connects' traditional planning and implementation process for priority focus areas.

September 2022 RVA757 Connects' Board meeting will focus on this topic.

1. RVA757 Connects' staff maps the situation and the key players / organization in the approved focus areas.
2. Staff identifies key factors of success and ways RVA757 Connects can help advance the focus area.
- 3. Staff briefs Board directors and Megaregion Institutional Council (MIC) members.**
- 4. RVA757 Connects' Board and MIC discuss and provide input on the focus area and actions.**
5. Based on Board input, staff implements an action plan – convenes, connects, and collaborates.
6. Staff keeps Board informed of progress.
7. Subsequent RVA757 Connects' annual planning informed by focus area progress and current status

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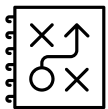
**Document Purpose**



**Overview of Bike-Walk Trails – U.S., Virginia, and RVA-757**



**Success of the Virginia Capital Trail To Date**



**Plans for Trail Expansion – Williamsburg to the Va. Beach**



**Possible Ways RVA757 Connects Can Help**

# What's Happening With Bike-Walk Trails Across America



1

**Ten Year Trend  
in Increasing Participation  
in Outdoor Activities**

# Growing National Trend: Participation in Outdoor Activities

## KEY FINDINGS

In 2020, 160.7 million Americans ages 6 and over participated in at least one outdoor activity.

Driven by COVID impacts, 7.1 million more participated than in 2019.

The outdoor participation rate—the percent of the population that reported participating—rose to 52.9 percent in 2020, up from 50.7 percent in 2019.

**This was the largest one-year jump on record.**

## OUTDOOR PARTICIPATION GROWS AMID COVID-19



## MOST POPULAR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES BY PARTICIPATION RATE

1	RUNNING, JOGGING AND TRAIL RUNNING	21.0% of Americans	63.8 million participants
2	HIKING	19.0% of Americans	57.8 million participants
3	FRESHWATER, SALTWATER AND FLY FISHING	18.0% of Americans	54.7 million participants
4	ROAD BIKING, MOUNTAIN BIKING AND BMX	17.3% of Americans	52.7 million participants
5	CAR, BACKYARD, BACKPACKING AND RV CAMPING	15.8% of Americans	47.9 million participants

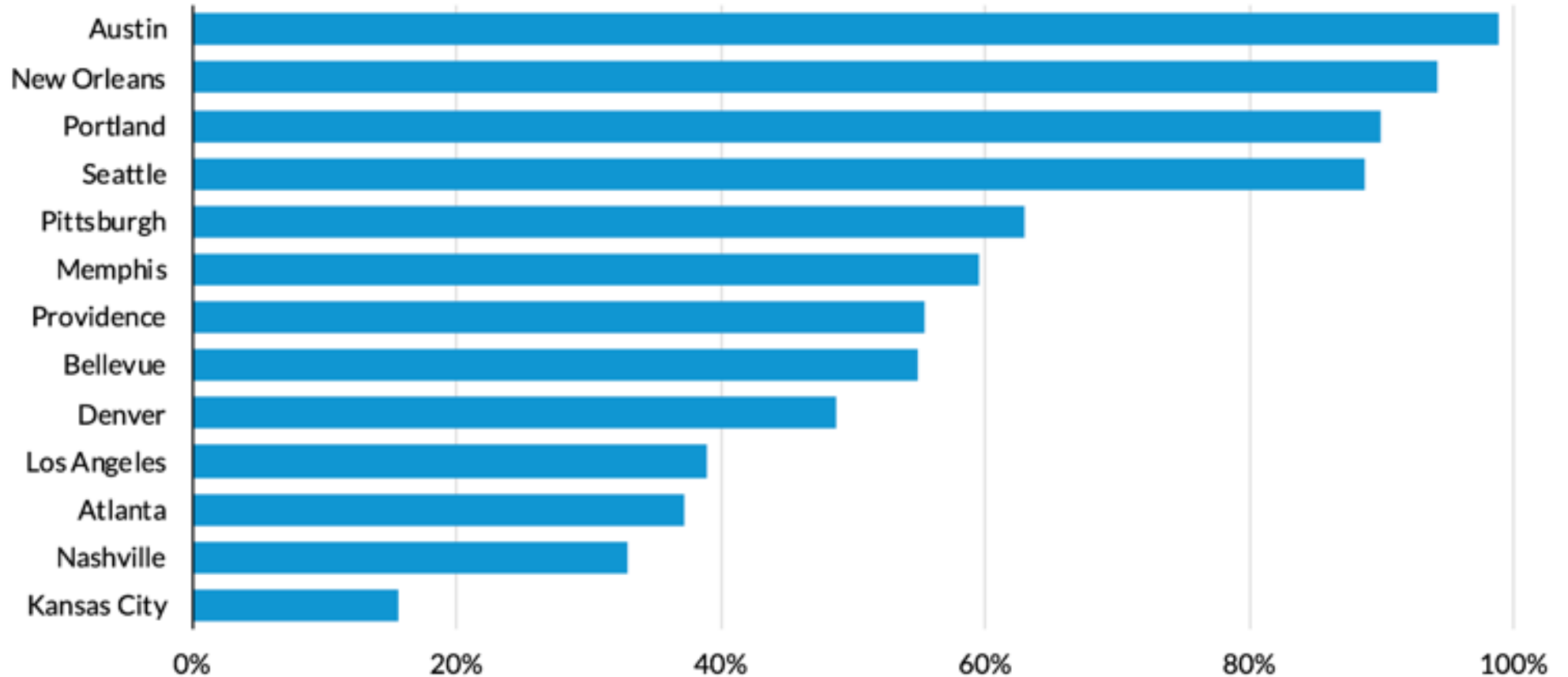
Source: Outdoor Foundation, 2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report



2

Cities Have Been  
Investing in Bike-Walk  
Infrastructure

# Percentage Increase in Secure Cycling Lanes Investments (2016 to 2021)



Source: PeopleForBikes and open source data from city governments.

Notes: Only bike infrastructure in the form of bike lanes, protected/buffered bike lanes, or shared-use trails is counted. Sharrows and neighborhood bikeways are not included. Data for comparison cities are not complete for each year between 2016 and 2021; averages are only for years for which there are data.

URBAN INSTITUTE

3

**There's Mounting Evidence  
That Investment in Bike-Walk  
Infrastructure Is Delivering  
Many Community Benefits**

Bike-Walk Trails Help  
Attract and Retain Young  
Professionals



# Young Professionals Value Bikeable-Walkable Communities

Source:  
SIR's Placemaking Research

EXPECTATION ATTRIBUTE <i>Rate on 1-5 scale the following attributes in what you look for in the community you want to live in</i>	IMPORTANCE AVERAGE 1-5 Scale
Offers a great social scene	4.09
<b>Is bikeable/walkable</b>	<b>4.06</b>
Has rich variety of neighborhoods	4.03
Has good higher education options (colleges and universities)	3.94
Has an efficient public transportation system	3.88
Offers urban living environments	3.70
Offers an active music scene	3.61
Offers an active arts scene	3.59
Has a rich history	3.59
Is supportive of the military	3.36
Has an active maritime setting	3.17
Has an active sports scene/professional sports teams	2.88

Bike-Walk Trails Advance  
Equity, Serving Underserved  
Communities

# Biking and Walking Activities Have Universal Appeal

Activity preferences and participation by race

	ASIANS	AFRICAN AMERICANS	HISPANICS	WHITES
1	Running, Jogging and Trail Running 25%	Running, Jogging and Trail Running 17%	Running, Jogging and Trail Running 21%	Hiking 22%
2	Hiking 22%	Road Biking, Mountain Biking and BMX 12%	Road Biking, Mountain Biking and BMX 17%	Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing 19%
3	Road Biking, Mountain Biking and BMX 16%	Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing 11%	Hiking 17%	Car, Backyard, Backpacking, and RV camping 18%
4	Car, Backyard, Backpacking, and RV camping 12%	Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV Camping 7%	Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV Camping 16%	Road Biking, Mountain Biking and BMX 17%
5	Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing 10%	Hiking 6%	Freshwater, Saltwater and Fly Fishing 14%	Running, Jogging and Trail Running 16%

Source: Outdoor Foundation, 2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report

# Increased minority access to parks and trails improves more than just their health and safety



“A more diverse group of park users leads to a greater number of positive interracial interactions. These positive interactions are associated with favorable social outcomes, including **lower levels of prejudice, higher interracial trust, and stronger civic engagement to support social justice.**”



Source: Powell, Roslynn Arnesia. "Who Is Responsible for Normalizing Black Bodies in White Spaces?" Journal of Park and Recreation Administration 39, no. 1 (2021).



# Trail access can directly improve local social equity



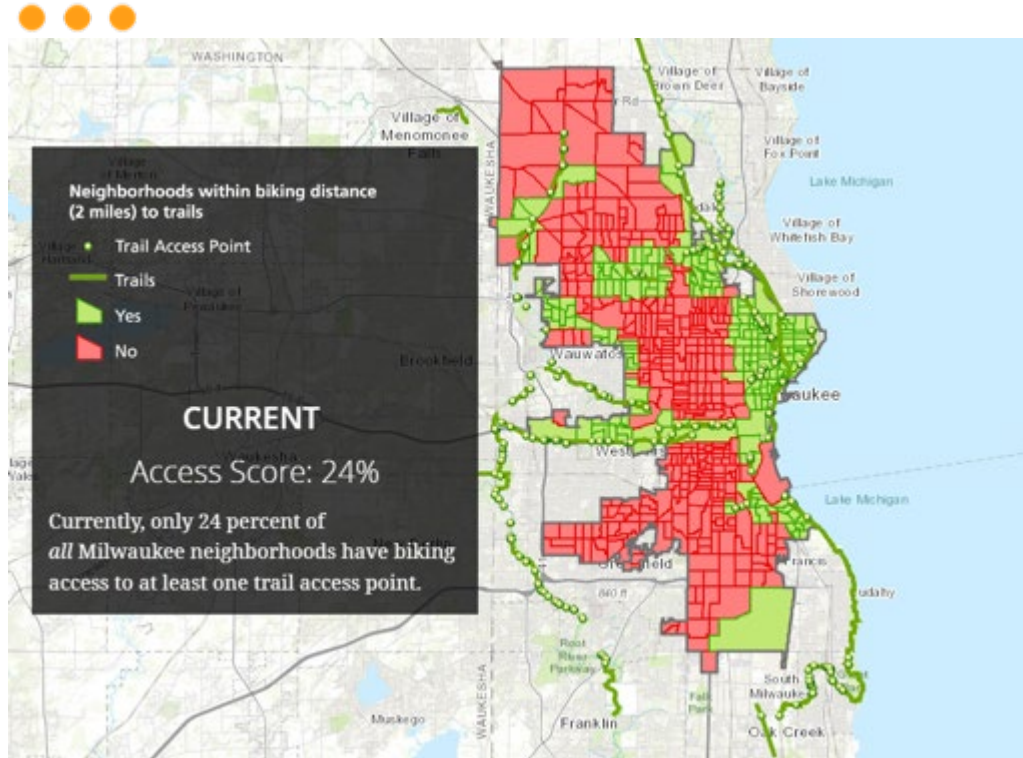
- Transportation is typically the biggest drain on household budgets, making affordable mobility options critical for lower income families
  - Nearly half of all trips in the United States are within a 20-minute bike ride
  - More than 1 in 5 trips are within a 20-minute walk
- Urban trails often connect or ease access to transit facilities, enabling residents to safely access public transportation
- Given their higher average incidences of chronic diseases associated with inactivity and less access to green outdoor spaces, lower-income neighborhoods and persons of color experience outsized benefits of trail access
- Safe places to walk or ride are a critical and often lacking option in lower-income and minority neighborhoods

**Active transportation options (like those offered by a multi-use trail) present a practical choice for these commutes**



Source: 5 ways multi-use trail systems transform communities, <https://www.greenbiz.com/article/5-ways-multi-use-trail-systems-transform-communities>

# Case Study – Reconnecting Milwaukee

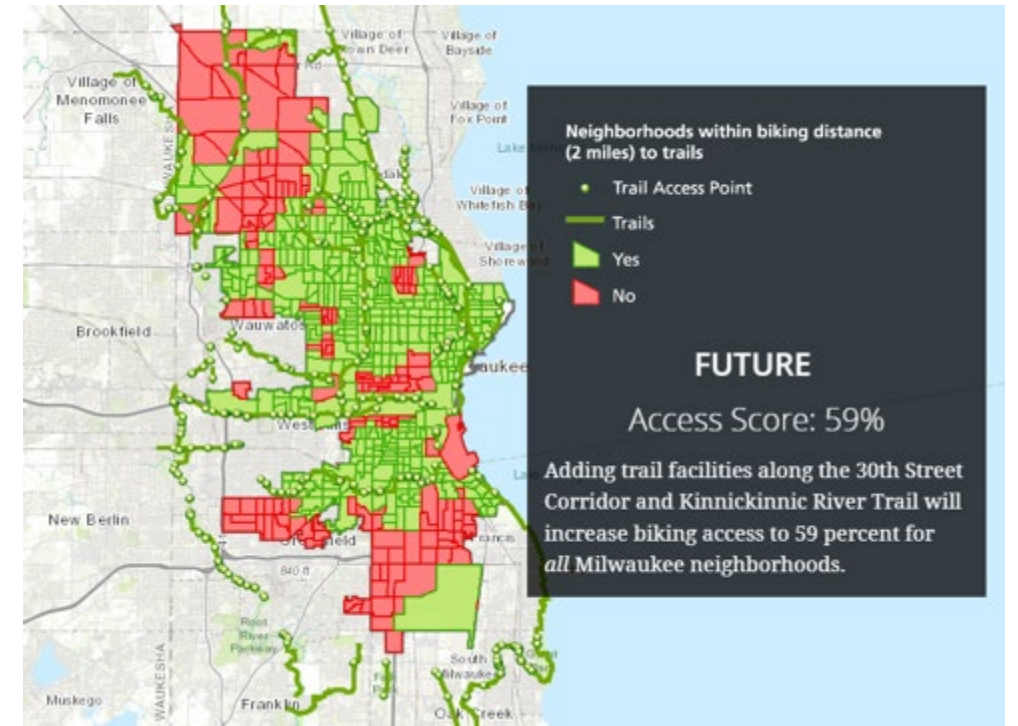
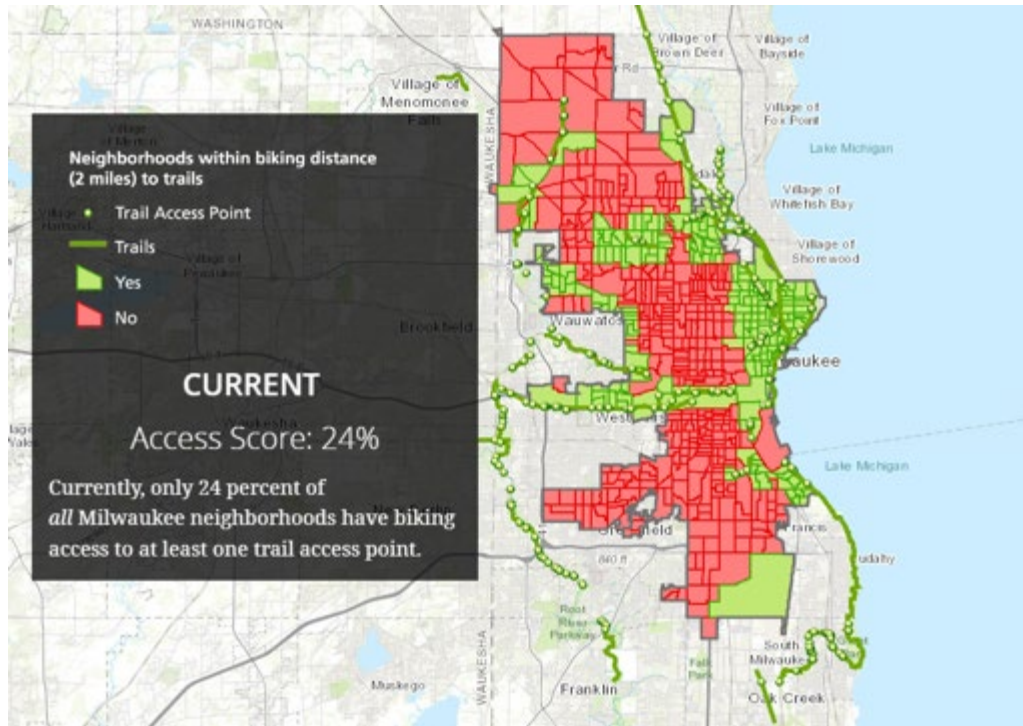


- Milwaukee boasts an impressive array of trails, connecting communities and offering recreation benefits to thousands of residents
- However, many communities that could benefit most from trails lacked access to them
- The areas in red on the left are neighborhoods where there is limited or no access to trails
- These neighborhoods also happen to be those experiencing the most inequality, with high populations of those in poverty, unemployed, with low levels of educational attainment and a greater percentage of zero-car households

The city took a data-driven approach to selecting potential trail routes that would have the greatest impact on these neighborhoods and reconnect the city for all residents

Source: Reconnecting Milwaukee, A BikeAble™ Study of Opportunity, Equity and Connectivity, <https://railstotrails.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=617ccd30696a44e19937437c222557a2>

# Case Study – Reconnecting Milwaukee (Cont.)



**The result:** a Master Trail plan the focuses on connecting and positively impacting the neighborhoods and communities that need it most. **Trails that fight inequality.**

Source: Reconnecting Milwaukee, A BikeAble™ Study of Opportunity, Equity and Connectivity, <https://railstotrails.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=617ccd30696a44e19937437c222557a2>

**Investment in  
Bike-Walk Trails Deliver a  
Positive ROI**

# The Economic Benefits of Multi-use Trails

## (Capital Trails Network, VA, D.C., MD)

### The Economic Impact on the DC Metro Area of Capital Trail Network Completion

generated from a \$1.09B investment over 25 years



The Economic, Health, and Environmental Benefits of Completing  
**The Capital Trails Network**

### Potential State Tax Revenue

resulting from the completed Capital Trails Network over 25 years



**MD**  
**\$37.4M**

**DC**  
**\$18.3M**

**VA**  
**\$9.4M**

### An Interconnected Active Transportation System For the Washington, DC Metropolitan Area

Capital Trails Coalition seeks to create a trail network that is . . .

**ACCESSIBLE**  
to people of all ages and abilities

**HEALTHY & SAFE**  
to promote wellbeing

**EQUITABLY DISTRIBUTED**  
to provide access across all communities

**RELIABLE**  
for affordable, sustainable transportation

**WORLD-CLASS**  
built to the highest design standards

### Economic Impacts

**\$2.05B** from construction over 25 years supporting **16,100 Jobs**

**\$941M** from local annual spending supporting **8,200 Jobs**

**\$9.9B** in property value premium benefits over 25 years

**\$517M** annual public health savings

### Environmental Benefits

**\$433M** in lifetime carbon storage value

**49M Miles** in reduced vehicle miles traveled each year

**930,000+ Regular Trail Users** throughout the DC Metro Area

**\$1.02 Billion total economic impacts per year**

**\$2.4 Billion total savings per year**

Source: Capital Trails Coalition, The Economic, Health and Environmental Benefits of Completing the Capital Trails Network, 2021

# The Economic Benefits of Multi-use Trails

## (Silver Comet Trail, NW of Atlanta)

### Qualitative Benefits:

- Enhances employer and employee attraction
- Increases access and mobility for local communities
- Direct and indirect health care savings
- Direct and indirect worker compensation savings



*“For every \$1 spent on the Silver Comet Trail expansion, Georgians gain an estimated \$4.64 in direct and indirect economic benefits.”*

### ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

This Economic Impact Analysis is the first of its kind to comprehensively report the economic benefits of the existing 61-mile Silver Comet Trail and its proposed 66-mile expansion. Recreational amenities such as rail-trails are increasingly seen as regional economic development tools that generate value through:

- **Recreational spending** (bicycle rentals, food & drink, sporting equipment)
- **Tourism** (spending by out-of-state users on lodging, transportation, dining)
- **Spillover impacts** (additional jobs and worker spending)
- **Fiscal impacts** (sales tax revenue generated)
- **Increased property values** (increased household wealth near SCT)
- **Property tax revenue** (benefitting municipalities and school districts)

Summary of Economic Impacts for Existing and Expanded Silver Comet Trail

	Current Trail Network	Expanded Trail Network
Recreational Spending	\$47 Million	\$71 Million
Tourism Spending	\$10 Million	\$15 Million
Regional Spillover	\$98 Million	\$147 Million
State Spillover Impact	\$118 Million	\$177 Million
Statewide Fiscal Impact	\$4 Million	\$5 Million
Property Value Increases	\$182 Million	\$316 Million
Property Tax Gains	\$2 Million	\$4 Million
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$461 Million</b>	<b>\$735 Million</b>

4

**National Bike-Walk  
Trail-building Efforts  
Have Reached Virginia**

# Major U.S. Bike-Walk Trail Routes Are Being Planned



**Transamerica Bicycle Trail**  
(5,000-mile cross continent cycling route  
that ends in Yorktown)



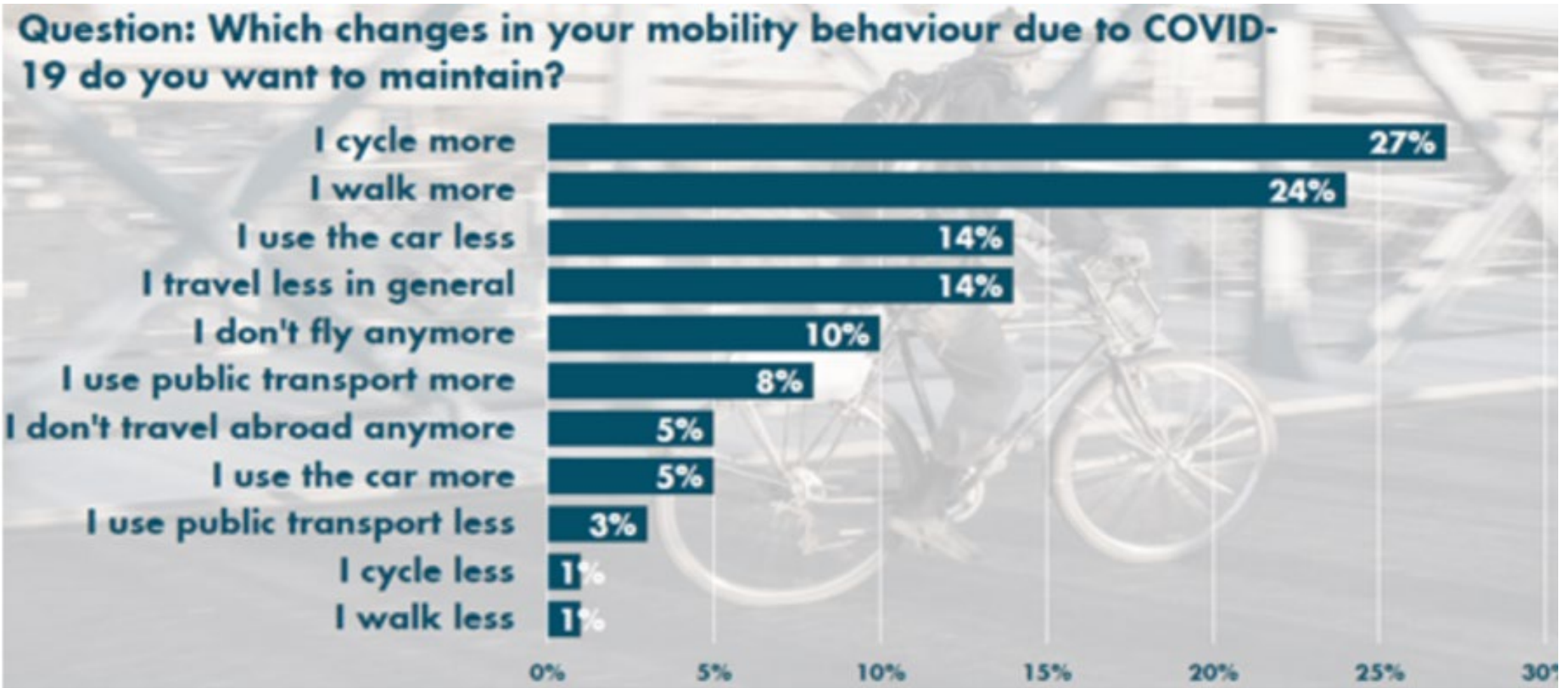
**East Coast Greenway**  
(3,000-mile cycling and walking route  
from Maine to Florida)



5

**Biking and Walking and  
Related Infrastructure  
Will Continue to Grow  
in the Post-COVID Era**

# A Cultural Shift Has Taken Place



# Biking/Walking Trails Align with Trends Fueled By COVID-19 and the Social Justice Movement

Trend	Description	Implications for Regions
<p><b>BE RESILIENT</b> Growing appreciation and desire for more resilient personality traits and nimble business models</p>	<p>Life is full of surprises, and now they come everyday. While the scientific community had an eye on the emergence of COVID-19, many of us were blindsided. Our entire world turned upside down. We all now more fully appreciate change and the possibility of dramatic shifts. People, organizations, and even entire communities will increasingly value the ability to be nimble, flexible, adaptive, and innovative.</p>	<p>Community planning will shift from creating plans to a perpetual planning mindset, which will include more scenario planning, trends and risks identification, and measurement.</p>
<p><b>TAKE CARE</b> Growing appreciation of health and wellness and quality of life</p>	<p>COVID-19 is a health crisis. We are seeing, hearing, and watching this healthcare story unfold all around us 24-7. Social isolation, lack of exercise, and financial uncertainty are creating higher levels of mental and physical stress in all of us. In addition, the crisis has helped to increase awareness of the health disparities in minority populations. These factors are all conspiring to raise the demand for universal health and wellness access and a better quality of life for all.</p>	<p>Communities will continue to shift toward health and wellness as a key development anchor.</p>
<p><b>VALUE ALL</b> Increasing appreciation of and support for equity and social justice policies and initiatives</p>	<p>The COVID-19 virus affects everyone – young, old, rich, poor, black, white. In addition, society has a newfound appreciation for frontline, essential workers, as well as what they are being paid. The events and protests related to the social justice BLM movement have advanced our understanding beyond economic inequities and health disparities. As a result, community-wide investments will be made in new supportive pathways to help ensure everyone thrives.</p>	<p>Communities will lean into region-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives (DE&amp;I). DE&amp;I will become a locational advantage in attracting visitors, residents, and businesses.</p>
<p><b>GO TEAM</b> Increasing appreciation and strategic value of partnering and collaboration</p>	<p>The war against the COVID-19 crisis has rekindled the spirit and power of teamwork. Corporate advertising is mirroring this through “stronger together” messaging. This social sentiment will last long past the recovery period. Paying for COVID-19 relief and rebuilding local economies will come at a financial cost. Everyone will look for and embrace ways to do more with less.</p>	<p>Communities will orchestrate more public-private partnerships, drive intra-regional cooperation, share more services, and leverage regional connections beyond traditional borders.</p>
<p><b>HYPER-CONNECT</b> Growing need for personal connections and sense of belonging</p>	<p>People are driven by a deep-seated personal need to feel they belong. This includes belonging to a family, group, team, organization, and community. Social isolation, economic and health-related uncertainty and vulnerability, and civil unrest are fueling this primary need for personal connection and, most importantly, affirmation.</p>	<p>Communities will invest in organizations, spaces, and events to foster and advance more local and regional personal connections.</p>
<p><b>GET REAL</b> Growing appreciation and support of local artisans, experts, admired leaders, companies and experiences</p>	<p>Joni Mitchell’s refrain, “you don’t know what you’ve got ‘til it’s gone” has never been more poignant. This includes favorite restaurants, local artists, and unique places. Authenticity – the real deal - will become more recognized and cherished. After COVID-19, we will value our most authentic and local people, experts, companies, events, and places even more.</p>	<p>Communities will value and support more redevelopment of authentic community assets that provide unique and memorable local experiences.</p>
<p><b>WORK VIRTUALLY</b> Increasing movement toward a distributed workforce</p>	<p>Pre-COVID-19, 1 in 3 workers were part of America’s distributed or remote workforce. Experts speculated that this segment would grow to 1 in 2 by 2030. COVID’s impact will push us there in a few short years. The largest tech companies are leading the way. Google, Amazon, and Apple are hiring with no expectation new workers will ever be physically present. More and more people will expect and ask for flexible home-based working arrangements. This will be especially challenging to support for some industries (mfg., construction, retail, etc.), as well as for fast-growing or high-turn-over companies’ who rely on successful on-boarding.</p>	<p>Economic development will be more about talent attraction that more closely resembles tourism place marketing and less about traditional business recruitment.</p>

# What's Happening With Bike-Walk Trails Across

## Virginia and RVA-757

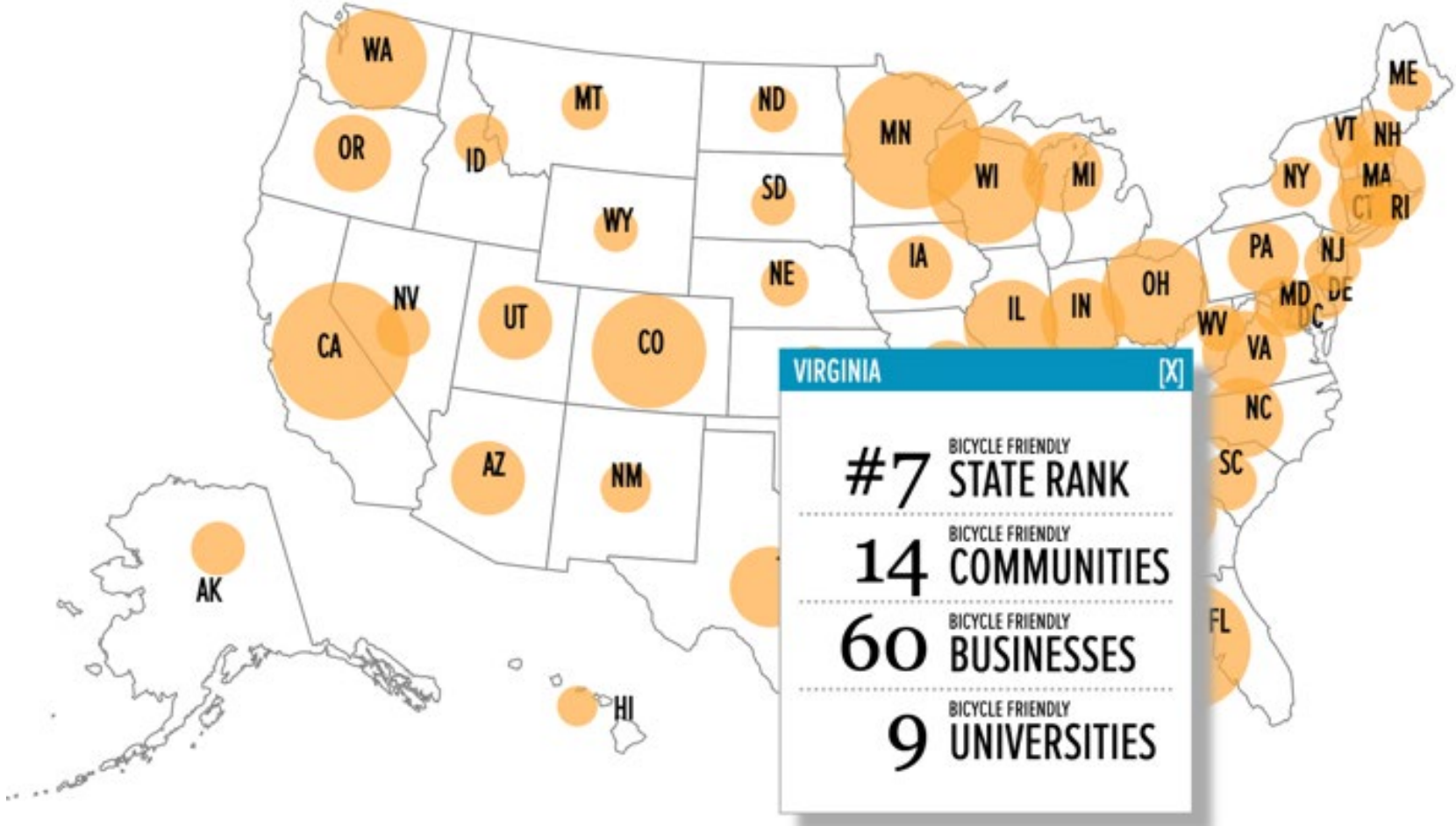


**RVA757**  
connects

1

There Are Many Pro-bicycling  
Location Ratings & Rankings.  
Overall, Virginia Does Well.

# Virginia Ranks High in Being Bicycle-friendly



Source: League of American Bicyclists; [https://bikeleague.org/bfa/awards?gclid=Cj0KCQjwuuKXBhCRARisAC-gM0hkwFYAv4ILFK-bh3hzAkz29blzcjxS6iF0asEpDY7S5U\\_v-gTCvuoaAilbEALw\\_wcB#community](https://bikeleague.org/bfa/awards?gclid=Cj0KCQjwuuKXBhCRARisAC-gM0hkwFYAv4ILFK-bh3hzAkz29blzcjxS6iF0asEpDY7S5U_v-gTCvuoaAilbEALw_wcB#community)

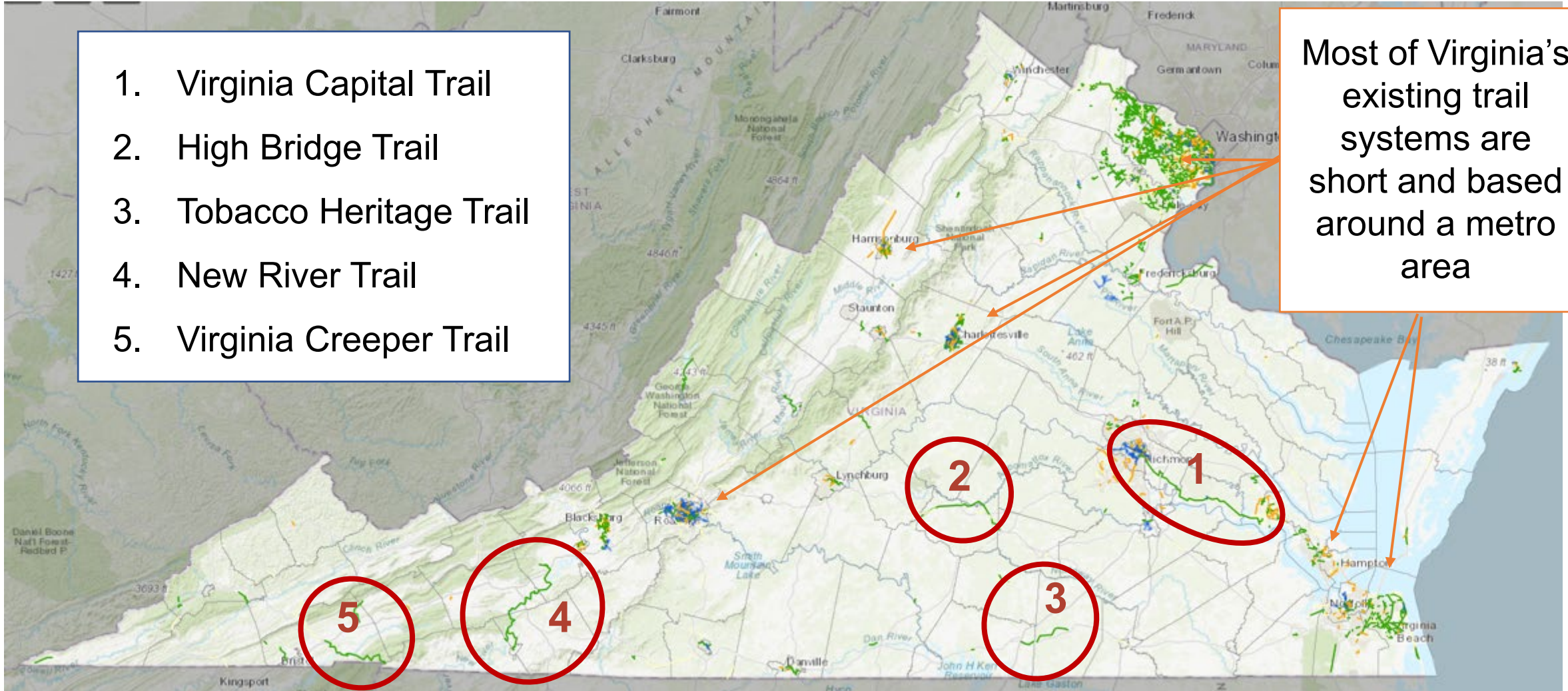
2

Virginia Has Many Trails,  
But Few Are Long  
Distance Trails

# Today, There Are Few Long-Distance Trails

1. Virginia Capital Trail
2. High Bridge Trail
3. Tobacco Heritage Trail
4. New River Trail
5. Virginia Creeper Trail

Most of Virginia's existing trail systems are short and based around a metro area



Source: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT); Trail Map



3

**There Are Many Advocacy  
Groups, Including VDOT, That  
Are Advancing Virginia's  
Bike-Walk Trails**



<https://www.viriniadot.org/programs/bikeped/maps.asp>

**Traffic Information**

511 offers real-time traffic info. Anytime you need it, anywhere you are.



**SMART SCALE** Funding the Right Transportation Projects in Virginia

**Virginia Roads**

Your one-stop source for VDOT maps, data and project info.



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Visit Our Social Media Pages »

RT @VaDOTFRED: Colleges/Universities are almost back in session! As you pack for the fall semester, remember to take the time to properly &... 15 hours ago

RT @VaDOTFRED: Hope you're out enjoying the beachy weather this weekend! ☀️🏖️ Don't be nauti, ditch distractions like your shellphone when dri... 15 hours ago

**Other Links**

- VirginiaRoads.org Portal
- Open to the Public

## ► Bicycling and Walking in Virginia

[Home](#) | [Maps](#) | [U.S. Bicycle Routes](#) | [Places to Bike](#) | [Traveling with your bike](#) | [Laws and safety tips](#) | [2004 CTB policy](#) | [Projects and Studies](#) | [Bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee](#) | [Contacts](#) | [Resources](#) | [Roadway reconfiguration](#) | [Bicycle and Pedestrian Treatments](#)

### State Bicycle Map



A perfect companion for those looking to explore by bicycle, *Bicycling in Virginia* provides major bicycle routes, bicycle clubs, information centers, and other resources. The map includes setting, terrain, elevation and surface conditions on selected routes, and enlargements of selected locations. Helpful information, including state and national parks, camp site, and family-friendly trails is also shown.

- [Order a Bicycling in Virginia map](#)
- [Give feedback](#)

### Online Maps

#### [Bicycling in Virginia - Featured Places to Bike](#)

An online interactive companion to the print version of the VDOT Bicycling in Virginia map. The purpose of this map is to showcase places to bicycle in Virginia. It is not a comprehensive inventory.

#### [Virginia Interactive Bicycle Map](#)

An online interactive map with information useful to bicyclists including the bicycle facility inventory, unpaved roads, train stations with bicycle service, United States Bicycle Routes, and a layer showing roadways prohibited to bicyclists.

[Virginia Roads](#) A portal for web maps, mapping applications, open data, and paper maps, this online tool includes roadway, maintenance, and construction data. Traffic volume, speed limits, park and ride lots, crashes, truck routes, pavement condition, and the Six Year Improvement Program are also available.

#### [Virginia Bicycle Inventory Map](#)

Information about shared use paths, bicycle lanes, shared lanes, and paved shoulders are provided on the inventory map. Because data originates from a variety of local and regional sources, the definitions and dimensions of these facilities vary. Since there may be discrepancies between what appears on the map and actual conditions, riders are reminded to remain vigilant for road hazards.

# Many Trail Advocacy Group Exist Across The State



[www.virginiatrails.org](http://www.virginiatrails.org)



Devoted to making the valley a better place to live.



Northern Virginia Regional Commission

4

There Are Three Other\*  
Big Virginia Trail Initiatives  
Currently Underway

*\*In addition to the BoAT Trail*

# Fall Line Trail (Ashland to Petersburg)



**Where:** The Fall Line trail courses through seven localities: Ashland, Hanover, Henrico, Richmond, Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg.

The Fall Line Trail will tie into the East Coast Greenway – the 3,000-mile cycling and walking route from Maine to Florida.

**Advocates:** Jurisdictions along the Fall Line route - Ashland, Hanover, Henrico, Richmond, Chesterfield, Colonial Heights, and Petersburg

**Champion:** Sports Backers and Clark Mercer



# Shenandoah Rail Trail



- **Where:** The biking and walking trail would stretch across a nearly 50-mile inactive Norfolk Southern rail corridor from Broadway to Front Royal.
- **Advocates:** Shenandoah Rail Trail Partnership, a group of localities and organizations across Rockingham, Shenandoah, and Warren Counties.
- **Champions:** Todd Gilbert, Mark Obenshain, Emmett Hanger, and Tony Wilt



Source: Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley, Shenandoah Rail Trail Exploratory Partnership, <https://shenandoahalliance.org/project/shenandoah-rail-trail-partnership/>

# Virginia Eastern Shore Trail



- **Where:** 50 miles along the spine of the Eastern Shore of Virginia between Cape Charles and Hallwood.
- **Advocates:** Friends of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail – about 875 members
- **New Organization:** Eastern Shore Rail Trail Foundation, a nonprofit corporation charged with heading up planning an
- **Champion:** Former Governor Ralph Northam
- **Plans:** The plan is to submit four SMART SCALE applications — three for segments of the rail trail and one for the entire trail.



5

**A New State-level Trail  
Funding Resource Has Just  
Been Created**



# Virginia Has Created A Fund to Extend/Create Multi-use Trails Across Virginia

- In June 2022, Governor Glenn Youngkin signed the first budget of his term, **dedicating a record-setting \$93 million to funding for multi-use trails across the Commonwealth.**
  - An eight-fold increase of the previous year's general fund commitment
- This budget **includes funding to establish a State Office of Trails**, designed to manage a recurring fund of money that can be divvied to trails building and management groups.



Youngkin Administration recognizes May as **Bike Month**

Source: <https://www.greenway.org/stories/record-93-million-for-multi-use-trails-in-new-virginia-budget>

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**Document Purpose and Overall Goal**



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**Plans for Trail Expansion – Williamsburg to the Va. Beach**

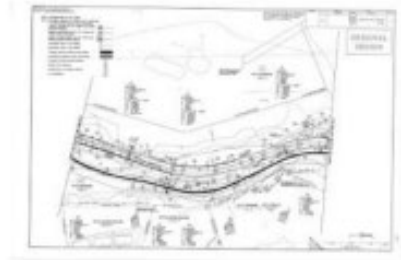
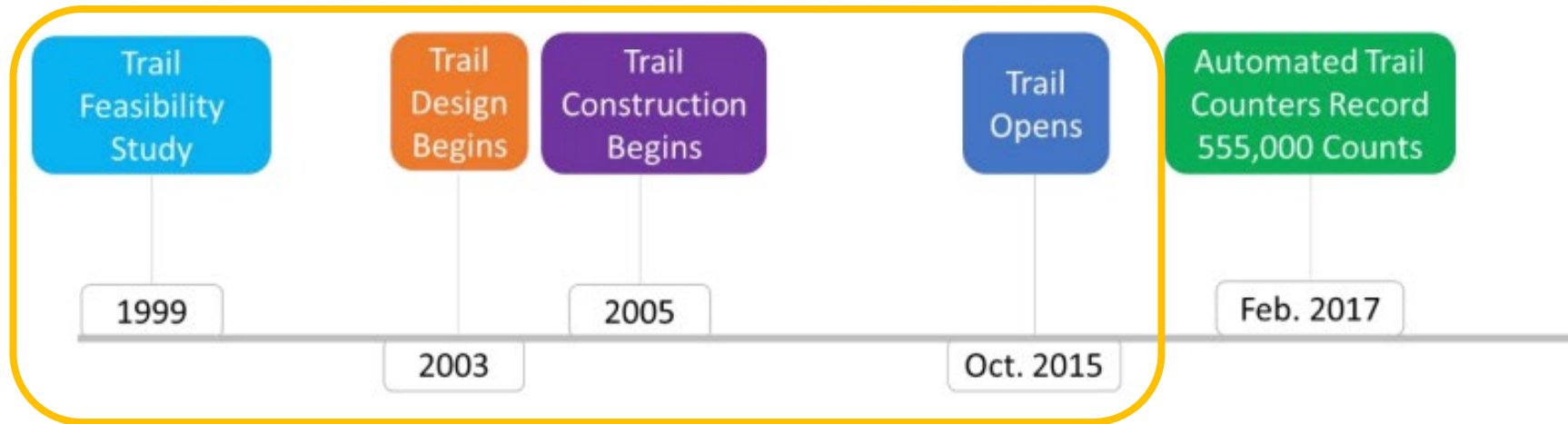


**Possible Ways RVA757 Connects Can Help**

# The Virginia Capital Trail Took 15 years to go from planning to opening.



FIGURE 5: FROM VISION TO REALITY, VIRGINIA CAPITAL TRAIL TIMELINE



Source: Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), Birthplace of America Trail Study, 2017

# It has been a huge success



ANNUAL USAGE COUNTS OF OVER

**1.2 MILLION**



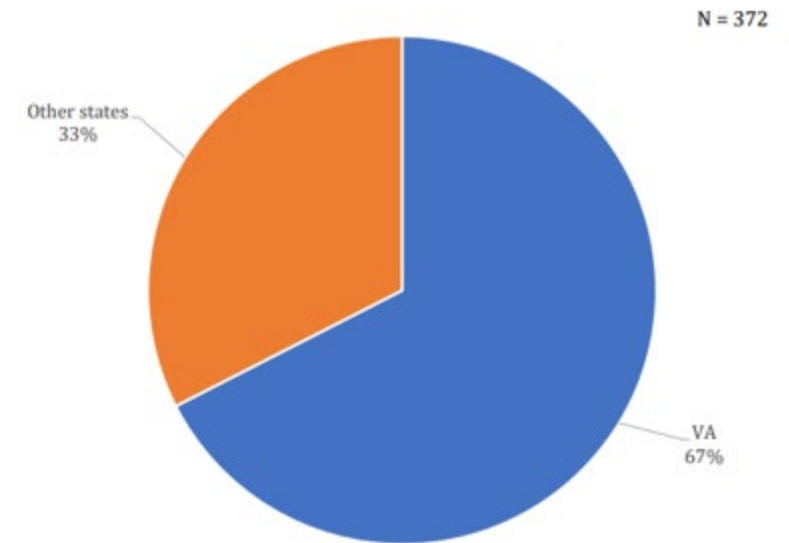
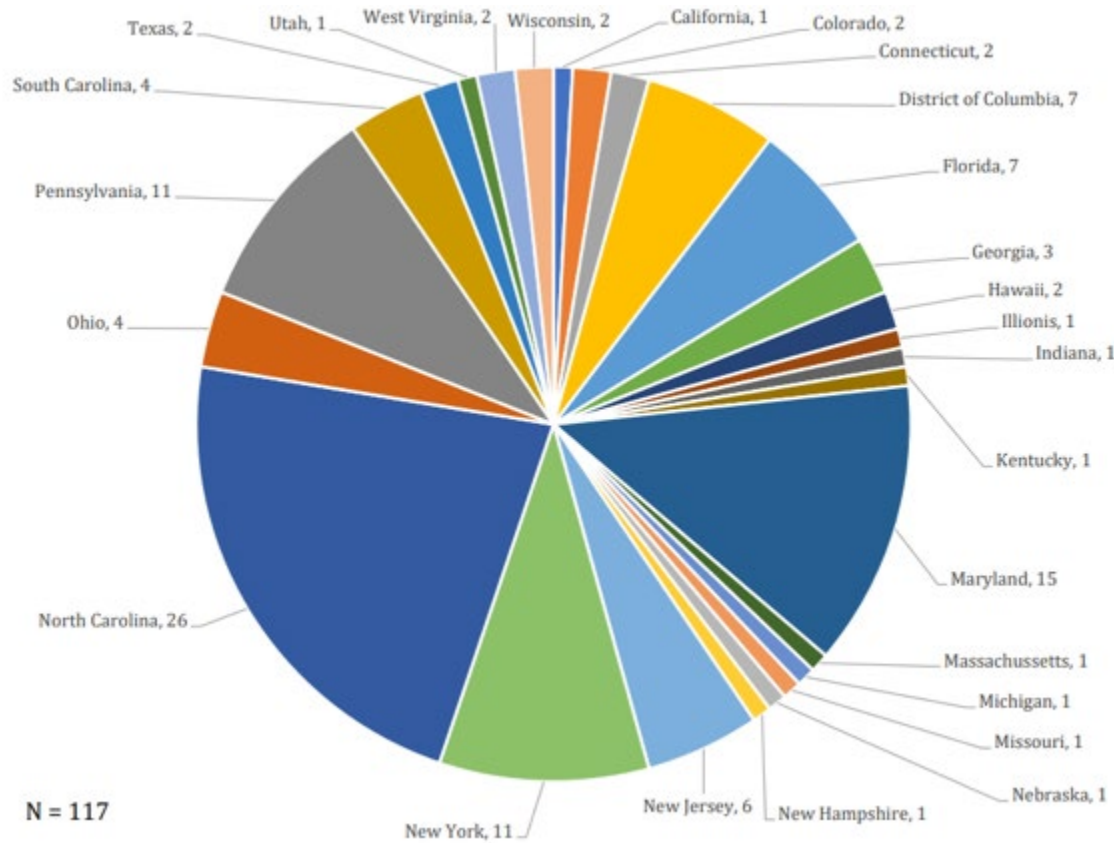
- Stimulated \$8.5 million-plus in economic activity within 50-miles of the trail\*
- Supports 100+ FTE jobs in the state\*
- Is responsible for more than \$3.6 million in wage and salary income\*
- Generated \$613,000 in state and local tax revenues in Virginia\*

\* For the 2018-19 fiscal year

Source: Pilkington, L., Magnini, V., and Wyatt, C. (2019). The Economic and Fiscal Impacts of the Virginia Capital Trail: Fiscal Year 2018-19. University of Richmond in collaboration with the Institute for Service Research.

Source: Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, 2020 Impact Report

# Draws users from far and wide



**1 in 3 Virginia Capital Trail users  
polled at the Jamestown terminus  
were from out of state**

Source: Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), Economic Impact of Bicycle Facilities in Hampton Roads, July 2020

# Va. Capital Trail's Factors of the Success

Based on RVA757 Connects' Discussions with Virginia Capital Trail Executive Director and Foundation Board Leaders



1. The concept of the trail had initial champions – elected official and business leaders.
2. The energy of the initial champions was sustained by creating a foundation (501c3).
3. Dedicated staff person hired – someone who worked on advancing the concept every day. (4 FTE current staff)
4. Seamless integration with local governments and their planning/timing needs.
5. Most of the trail property was already owned by VDOT (rights-of-way already in place)
6. Built in sections with gaps, starting at the ends so the middle would have to be built.
7. The 2015 World Cycling Race in RVA was a big deadline boost.
8. VDOT was and continues to be actively engaged (VDOT handles most of the trail maintenance).
9. Active ongoing marketing and engagement – events, promotions, PR, trail cleanup days, trail ambassadors, advocacy, etc.



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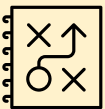
**Document Purpose and Overall Goal**



**Overview of Bike-Walk Trails – U.S., Virginia, and RVA-757**



**Success of the Virginia Capital Trail To Date**



**Plans for Trail Expansion – Williamsburg to the Va. Beach**

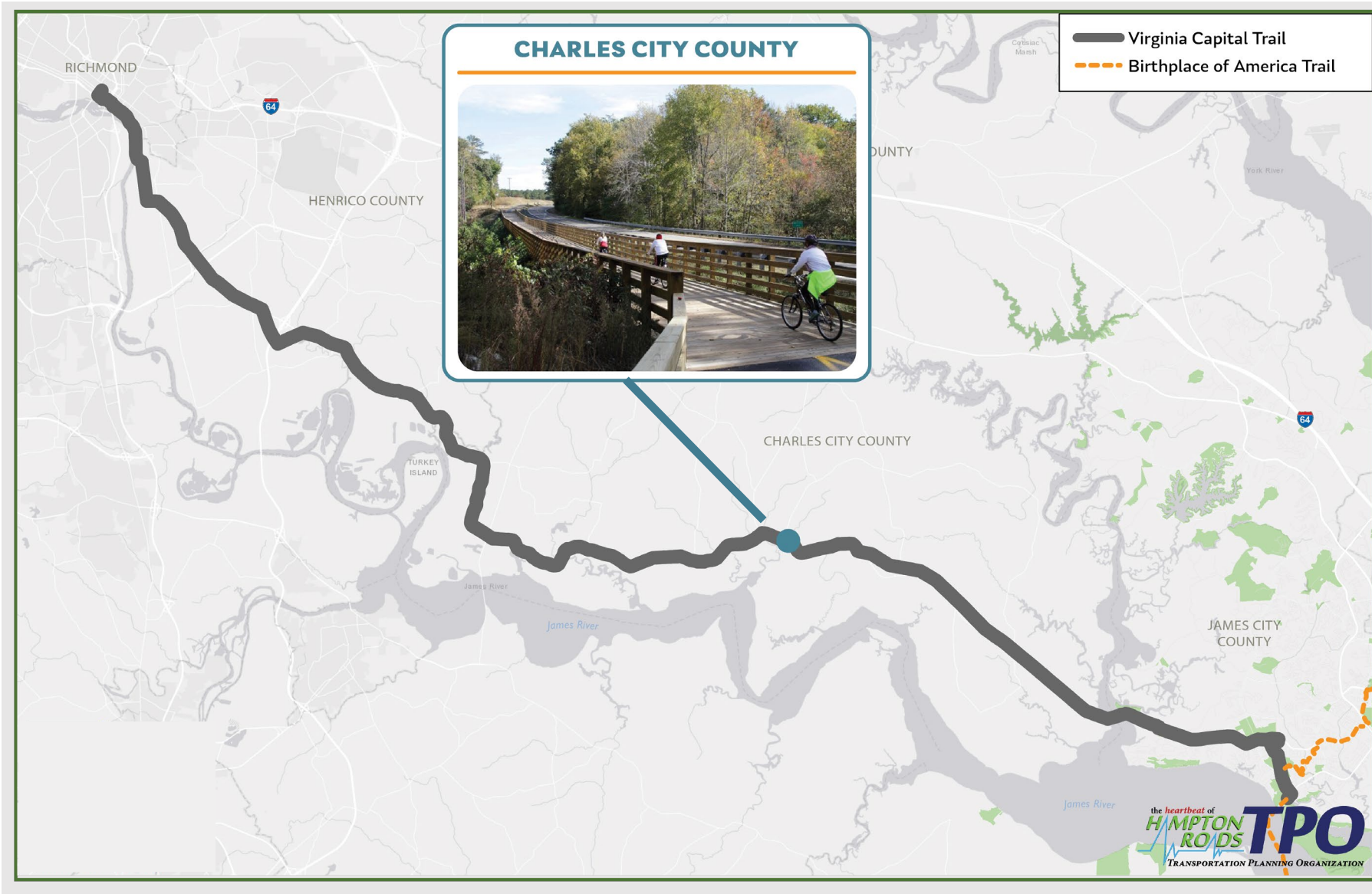


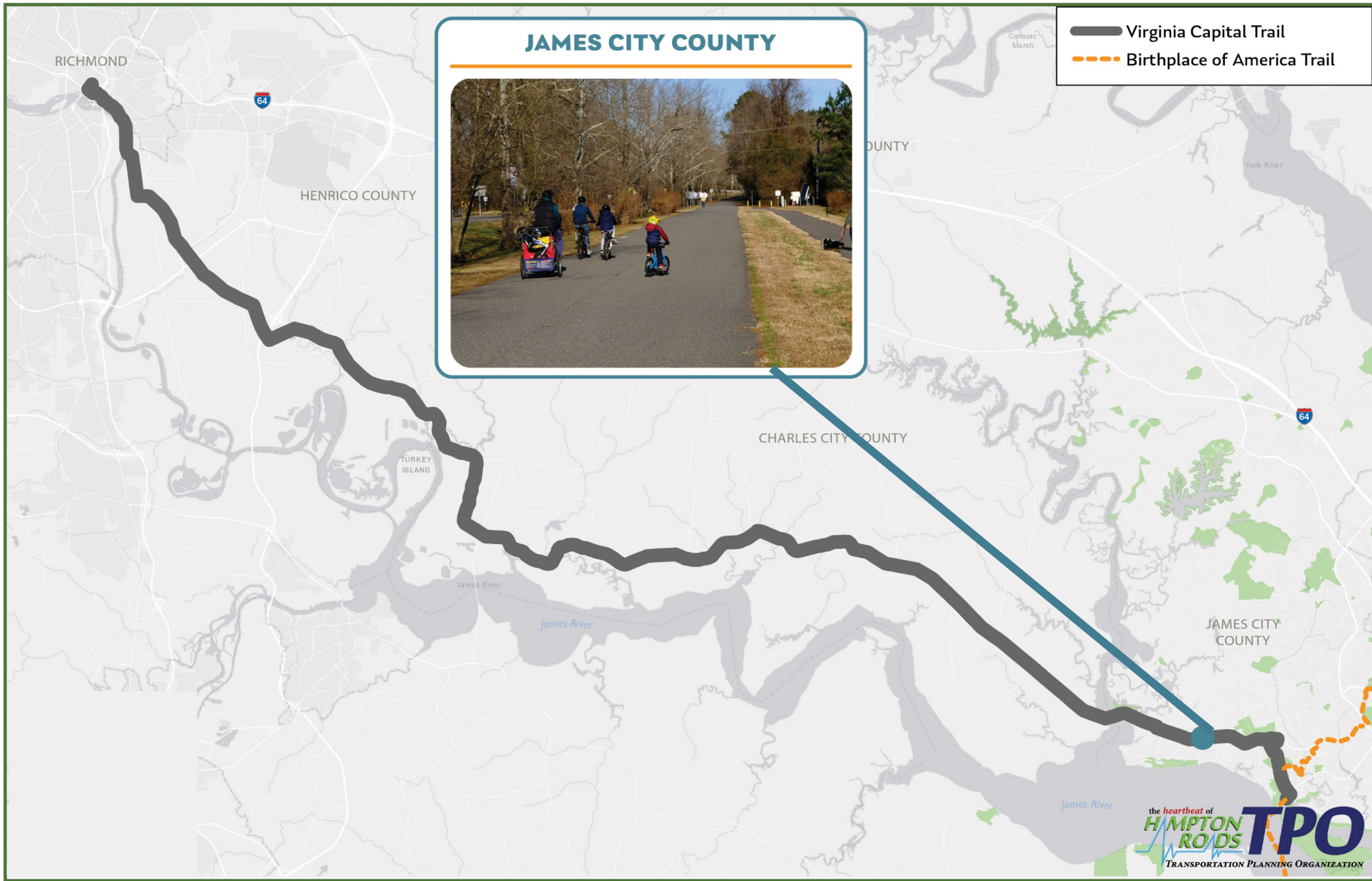
**Possible Ways RVA757 Connects Can Help**

The following slides are the latest update on the BoAT Trail from Bob Crum

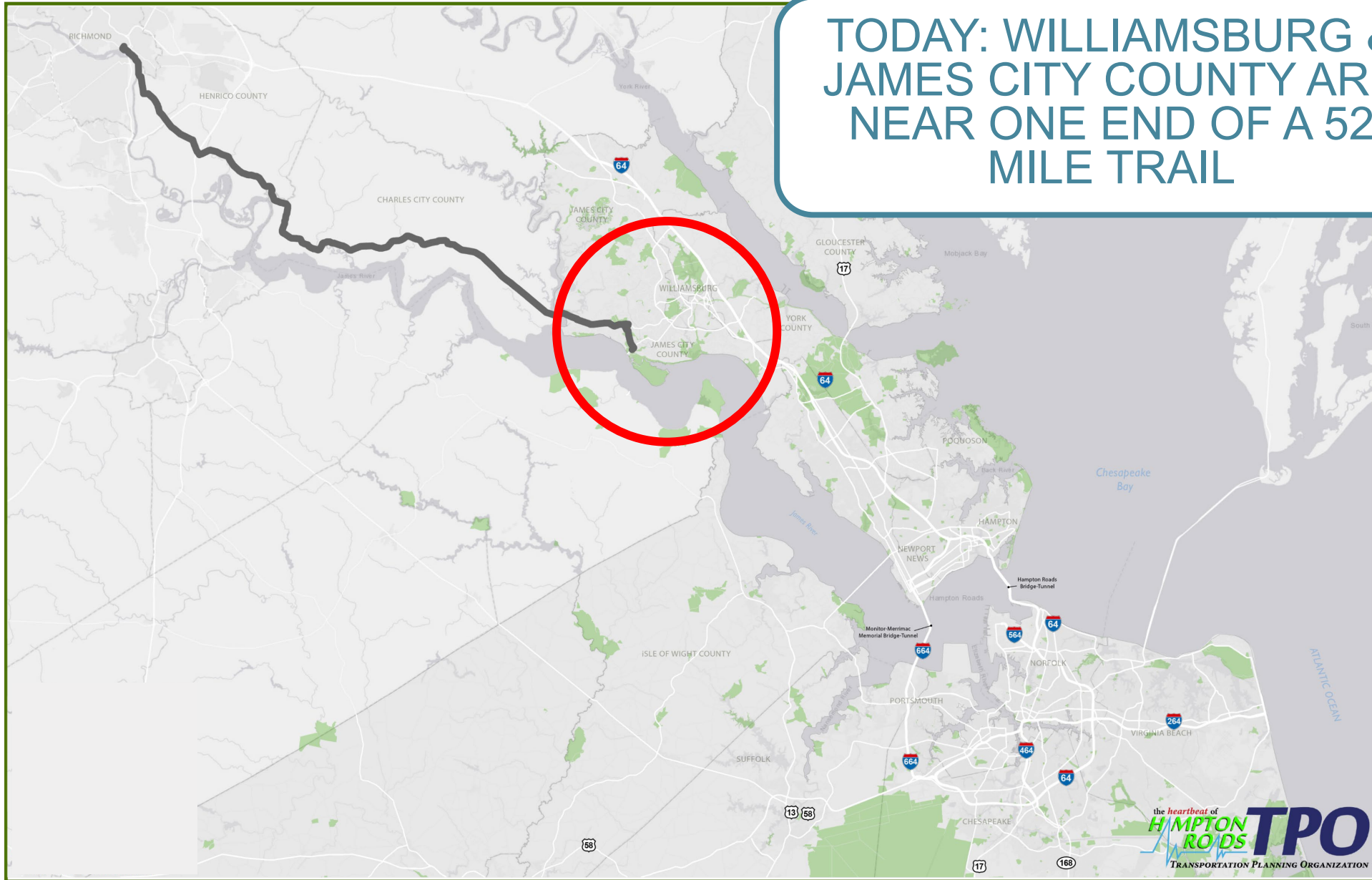




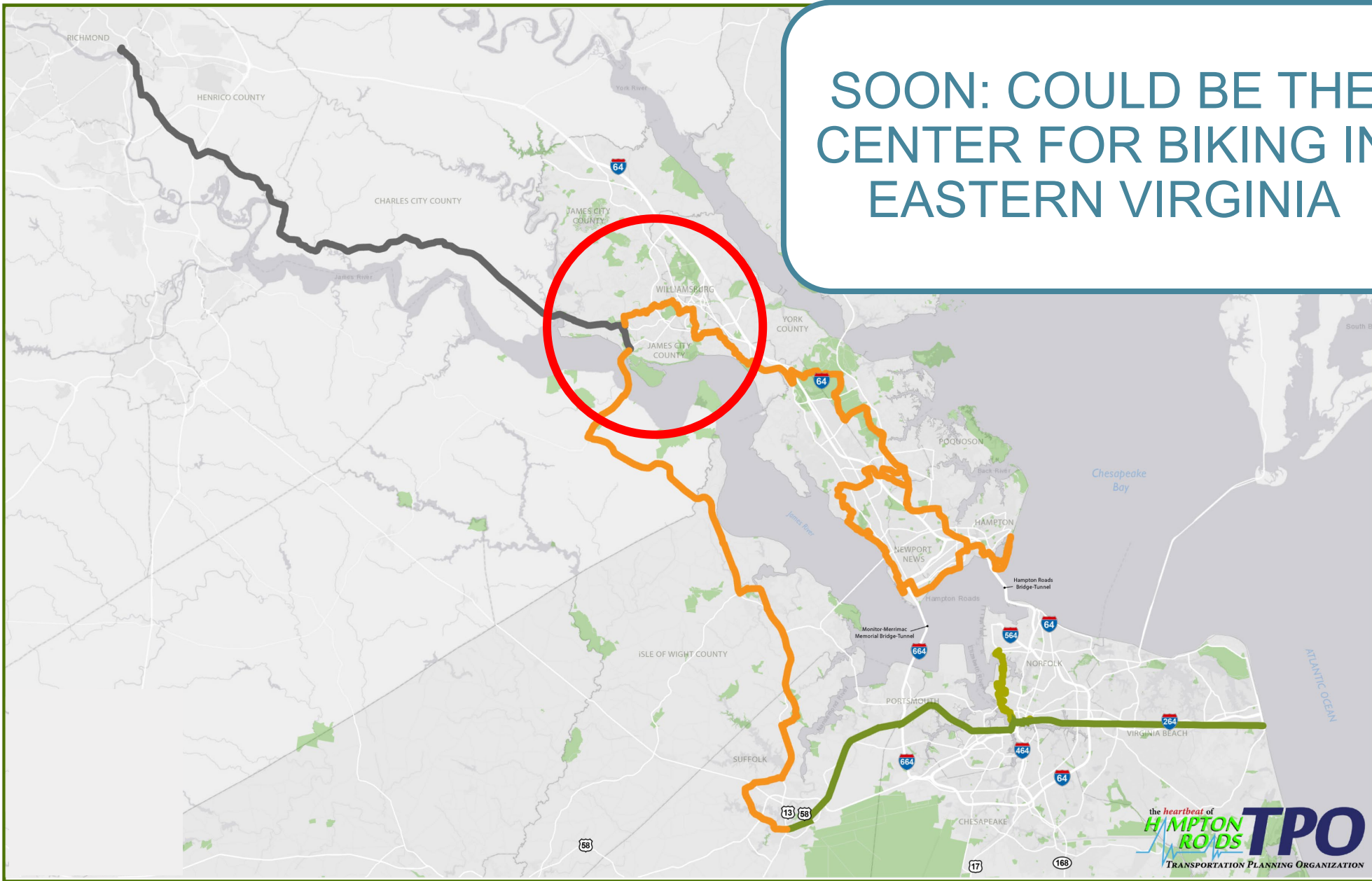




TODAY: WILLIAMSBURG & JAMES CITY COUNTY ARE NEAR ONE END OF A 52 MILE TRAIL



SOON: COULD BE THE  
CENTER FOR BIKING IN  
EASTERN VIRGINIA

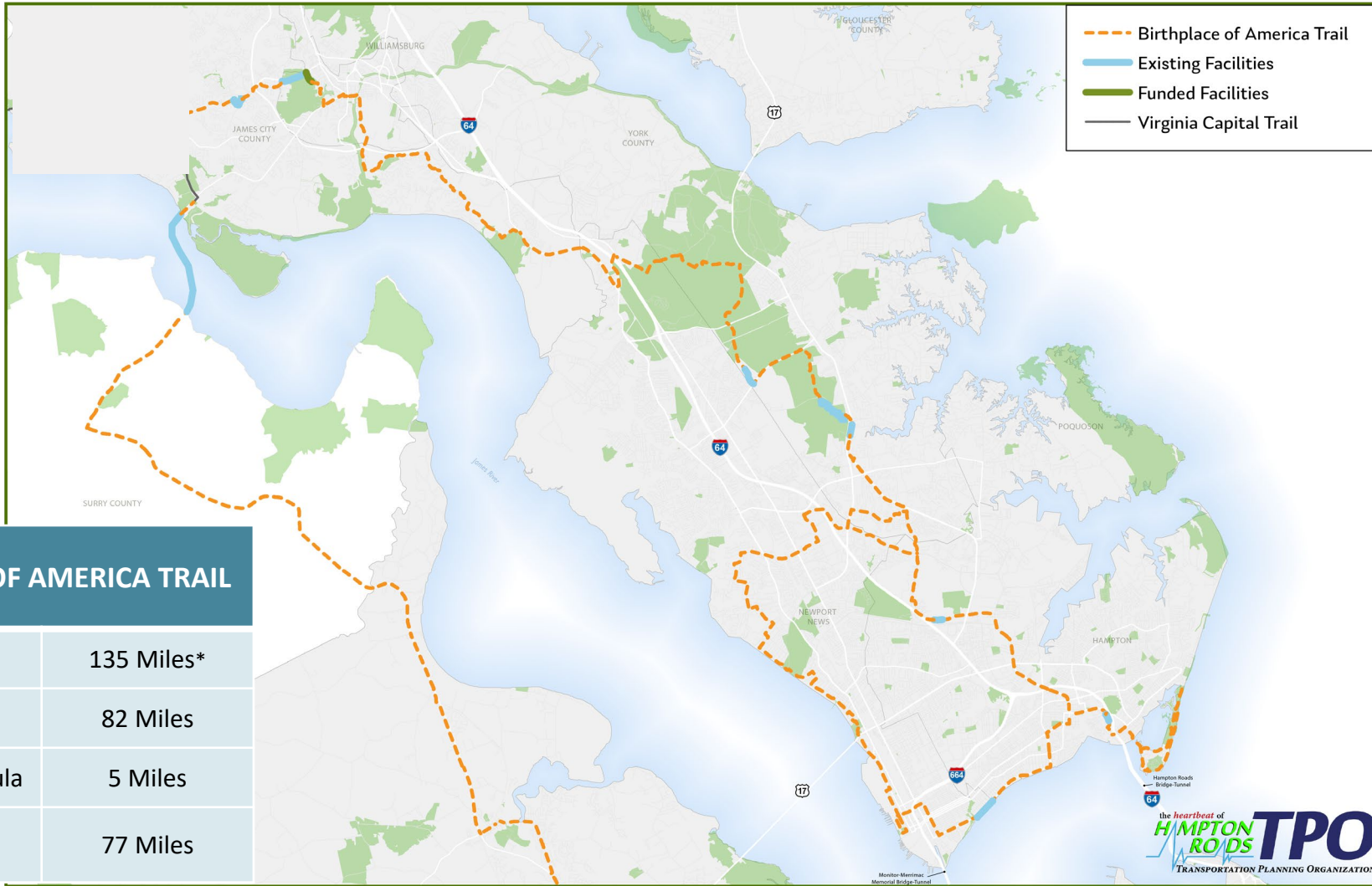


# The HRTPO conducted a high-level planning study and identified two potential routes for extending the Virginia Capital Trail into the Hampton Roads region



- One route was identified on the Peninsula to Fort Monroe
- The other crossed the James River at the Surry Ferry, and proceeded south to the railroad right of way and connected to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront
- The region's local governments have unanimously endorsed this vision/plan

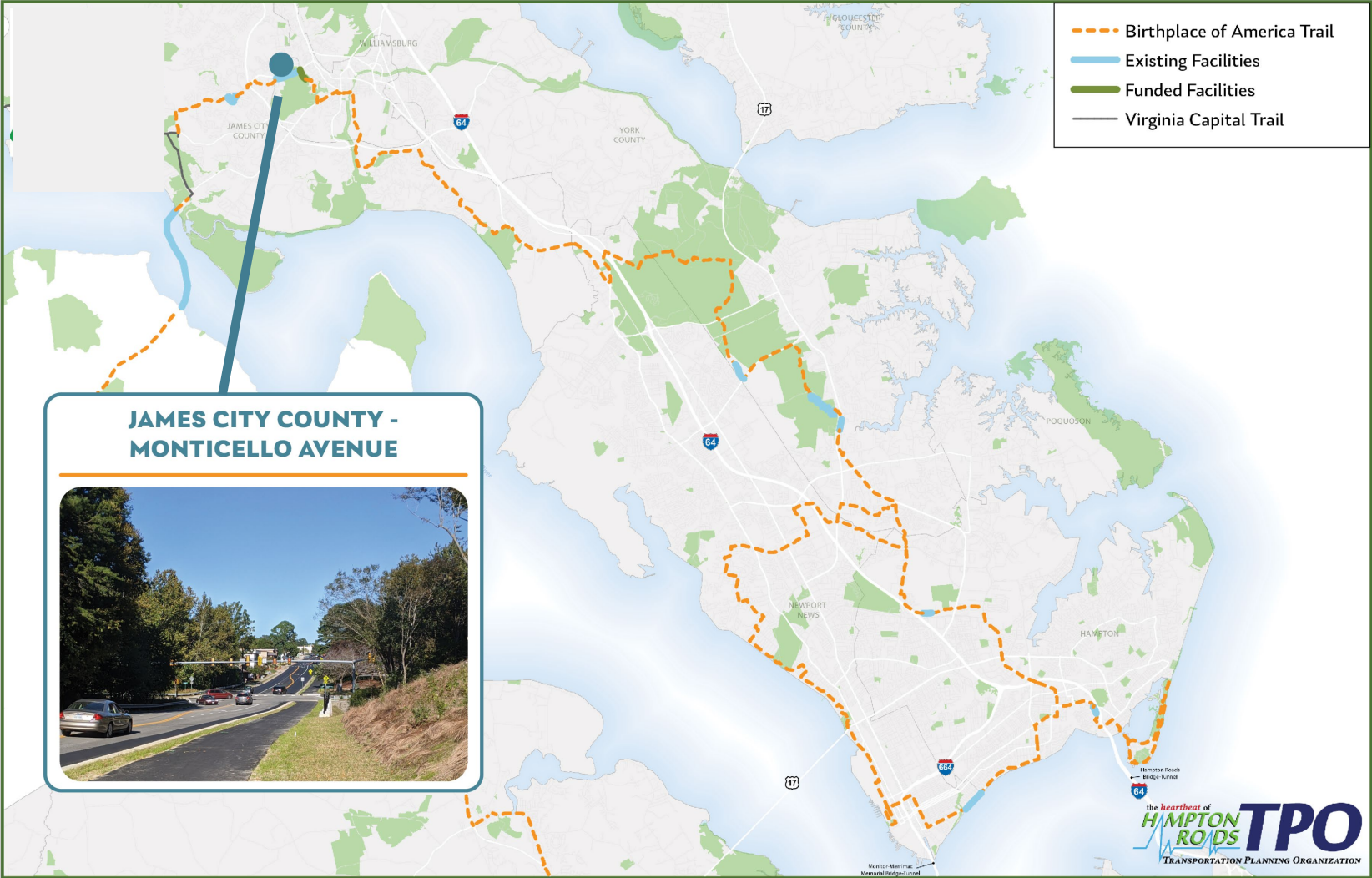
# The current focus is on the Peninsula – extending the trail from the Williamsburg area to Fort Monroe in the City of Hampton



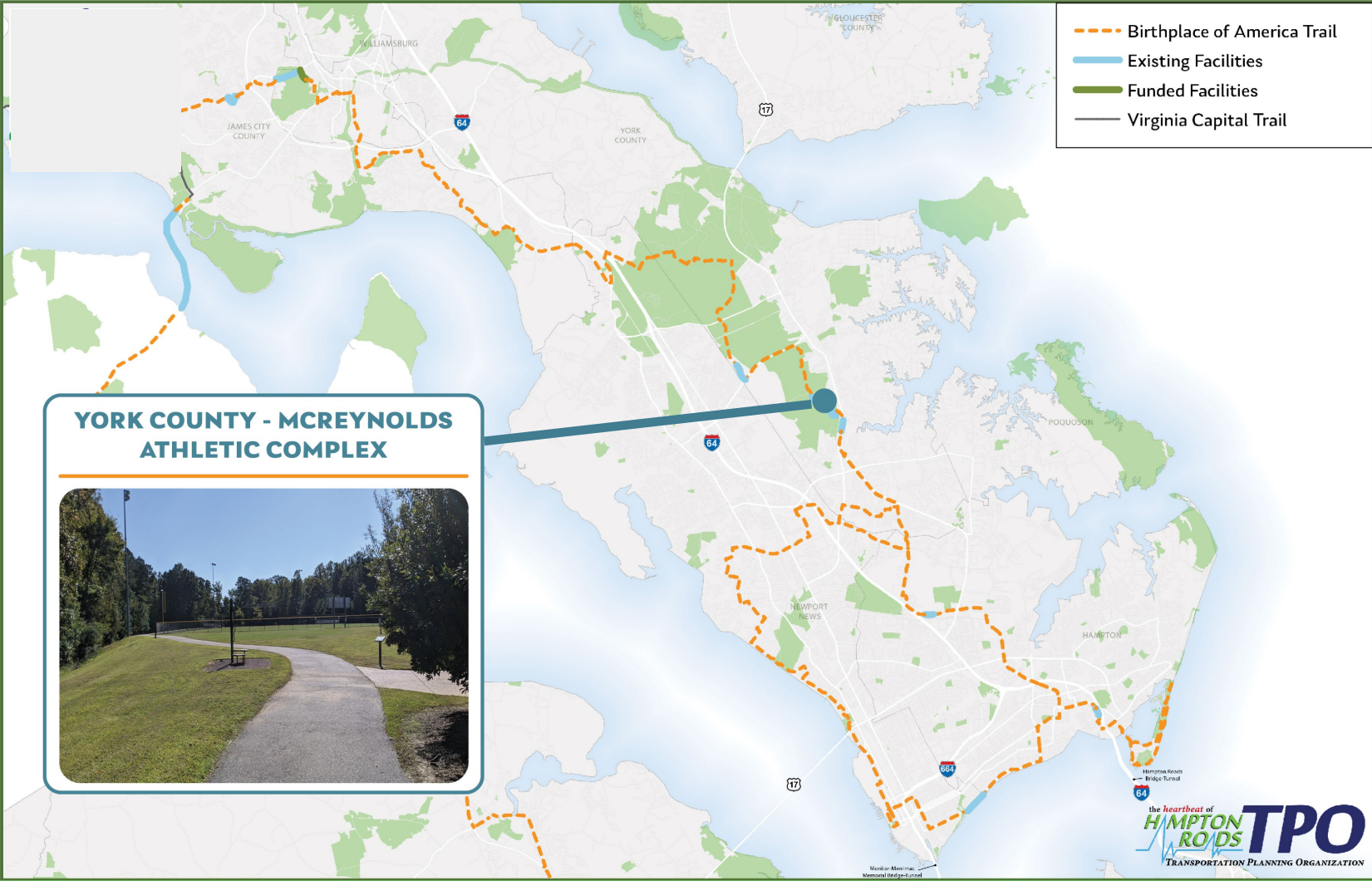
BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA TRAIL	
Total	135 Miles*
Peninsula	82 Miles
Existing - Peninsula	5 Miles
Remaining - Peninsula	77 Miles



# EXISTING FACILITIES: Some segments of the trail are in place and are being used



# EXISTING FACILITIES: CONTINUED





# EXISTING FACILITIES: CONTINUED



# BoAT Trail Cost

But most of the trail on the Peninsula must be designed, funded and built. The estimate to complete the entire trail network on the Peninsula is approximately:

**\$125 Million**

# Complexity



- While most of the Virginia Capital Trail traverses rural areas along Route 5, the trail extension in Hampton Roads will proceed through suburban and urban areas.
- This complex environment can create challenges regarding alignments, property ownership, on-street/off-street, available right of way, etc.

# The Good News



- The good news is that the proximity of the proposed trail to residential and employment areas creates incredible potential to serve residents, businesses, education, etc.
- Residents could use this trail as a transportation choice in their daily trips to work, school and play.
- The trail would provide access to underserved populations.
- While also connecting significant tourism destinations which will be attractive to visitors.

# Unanimous Regional Support

- Through the HRTPO/HRPDC, the region's 17 local governments have unanimously supported the BoAT Trail in Hampton Roads
- CAOs from James City County, Williamsburg, York County, Newport News, Hampton and Poquoson have all committed to advancing the trail in their localities
- Some of these localities have committed local match for portions of the trail that are outside of their localities

# We Are Starting to Build Momentum



Summer 2018 – The City of Hampton was awarded funding for the Mellen Street Bicycle and Pedestrian Project – Segment I (South Mallory Street to South Willard Avenue) via the VDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Program

Summer 2018 – The City of Hampton was awarded funding for the Mercury Boulevard Road Diet Project – Segment II (North Willard Avenue to Fort Monroe) via the VDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Program

Summer 2019 – York County was awarded funding for the Victory Boulevard (Route 171) Capacity (multi-modal) Enhancements Project (Yorktown Road to Poquoson City Line) through the VDOT SMART SCALE program

Fall 2019 – The City of Williamsburg was awarded funding for the Compton Drive Shared-use Path (Monticello Avenue to Brooks Street) via the VDOT Transportation Alternatives Set-aside Program

Summer 2020 – The City of Poquoson was awarded funding for the Victory Boulevard (Route 171) Enhancement Project (York County Line to Poquoson Avenue) through the VDOT SMART SCALE program

# Future Segments Are Planned for Construction

- ● ●  
Spring 2023 – Planned completion of the Compton Drive Shared-use Path (Monticello Avenue to Brooks Street), located in the City of Williamsburg
- Spring 2023 – Planned completion of the Mellen Street Bicycle and Pedestrian Project – Segment 1 (South Mallory Street to South Willard Avenue, located in the City of Hampton
- Spring 2023 – Planned completion of the Mercury Boulevard Road Diet Project – Segment II (North Willard Avenue to Fort Monroe), located in the City of Hampton
- 2026 – Planned completion of the Victory Boulevard (Route 171) Enhancement Project (York County Line to Poquoson Avenue), located in the City of Poquoson
- 2027 – Planned completion of the Pocahontas Trail Multimodal Corridor project (Ron Springs Road to Plantation Road), located in James City County
- 2028 – Planned completion of the Victory Boulevard (Route 171) Capacity (multi-modal) Enhancements Project (Yorktown Road to Poquoson City Line), located in York County

# Next Steps for Key Segments of the Trail



Right of Way Issues

Property Ownership

Routing and Design and funding  
for strategic segments of the trail

Identify Funding



# BoAT Trail

- VDOT has agreed to provide On-Call Consultant – Michael Baker Engineers
- \$200,000 of resources to support On-Call Consultant Work
- Not enough funding for design work, but resources to further address planning level issues, including refinement of route locations
- Goal is to advance project segments to be candidates for grant applications

# Funding



- HRTPO continues to explore State and Federal funding opportunities.
- As an example, a Smart Scale Application for 5-miles of the trail in Newport News was submitted in early August.

# Potential Funding Sources

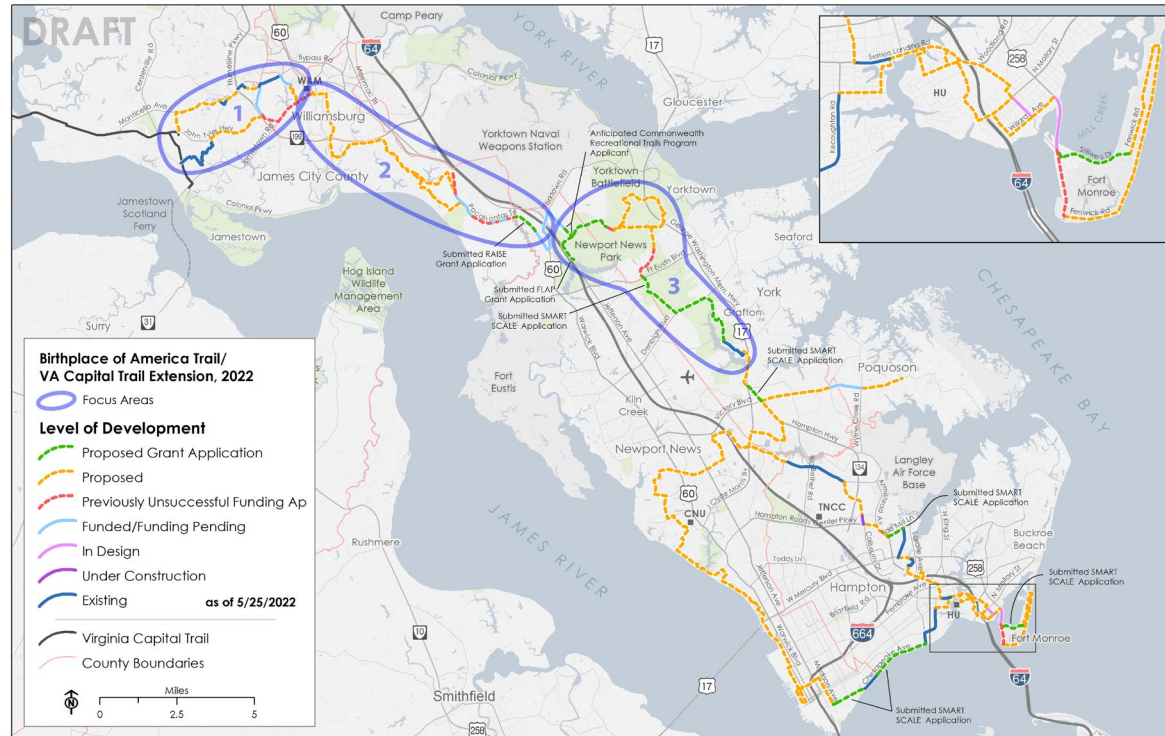


- **Smart Scale**
- **Working with Commonwealth Transportation Board Members**
- **State Trail Funding**
- **Federal Infrastructure Package Funding**
- **Locality Capital Improvement Programs**
- **Coordination with Developers**

# Pathway Forward



Proceed in a Strategic Inter-connected Approach



Funding Will Be Key to Our Success  
\$125 Million for full Peninsula Segment

# Realize Our Vision



**To build over 100 miles of continuous trail from Richmond to Fort Monroe in Hampton that will serve as a walking and biking trail that will:**

Interconnect the RVA and Hampton Roads region with a nationally recognized trail network

Interconnect historic sites of national and international significance

Provide alternate option for transportation access for residential, employment, shopping, education and recreation areas

Provide access and positive contributions to the region's underserved communities

Serve as a center point for historical celebrations that will occur in the Historic Triangle over the next Ten Years.

# Table of Contents



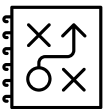
**Document Purpose**



**Overview of Bike-Walk Trails – U.S., Virginia, and RVA-757**



**Success of the Virginia Capital Trail To Date**



**Plans for Trail Expansion – Williamsburg to the Va. Beach**



**Possible Ways RVA757 Connects Can Help**

1

Help Current Advocates  
Position This Initiative  
For Success

# Thought Starter for RVA757 Connects *(convene)*



- The BoAT is a critical infrastructure investment to remain competitive on local, regional and state level:
  - Residents: Attract and retain residents - improve quality life and provide greater support to underserved communities/neighborhoods (social equity)
  - Economy: Grow regional and local travel industry - improve travel and tourism experiences
  - Economic Development: attract and retain talent
- The BoAT segment around Williamsburg-Jamestown is a critical part of Virginia's infrastructure supporting and participating in America's 250th anniversary in 2026.
- For immediate state funding purposes (\$93M), the BoAT is one of the "Big Four" to help make Virginia competitive:
  - Eastern Shore Trail
  - Fall Line Trail
  - Shenandoah Trail
  - BoAT
- Convene all BoAT Trail advocates to discuss and adopt this position.



2

Help Identify  
And Engage Trail  
Champions

# Having Champions Top the List of Virginia Capital Trail's Factors of the Success



- 1. The concept of the trail had initial champions – elected official and business leaders.**
2. The energy of the initial champions was sustained by creating a foundation (501c3).
3. Dedicated staff person hired – someone who worked on advancing the concept every day. (4 FTE current staff)
4. Seamless integration with local governments and their planning/timing needs.
5. Most of the trail property was already owned by VDOT (rights-of-way already in place) .
6. Built in sections with gaps, starting at the ends so the middle would have to be built.
7. The 2015 World Cycling Race in RVA was a big deadline boost.
8. VDOT was and continues to be actively engaged (VDOT handles most of the trail maintenance).
9. Active ongoing marketing and engagement – events, promotions, PR, trail cleanup days, trail ambassadors, advocacy, etc.

# Thought Starter for RVA757 Connects (*connect*)



- Brainstorm BoAT Trail champion candidates:
  - Elected local, state, and federal officials
  - Community leaders
  - Business leaders
- Use a form of this deck to make presentations.
- Convene leading perspective champions.

3

Help Make The  
Case For Trail Funding

# Thought Starter for RVA757 Connects (*connect*)



- Help position the BoAT for funding state purposes as one of the Big Four:
  - Eastern Shore Trail – part of Hampton Roads community
  - Fall Line Trail – priority for RVA jurisdictional leaders
  - Shenandoah Trail
  - BoAT - priority for 757 leaders
- Conduct ROI study that makes a powerful economic case for the BoAT.
- Tap into regional foundations and corporations for support. Perceived benefits of the trails differ between organizations (healthcare might focus on community health outcomes) so be sure to tailor communications and case for the trails).
- Offer “adopt-a-trail” opportunities for corporations that give them recognition on signage, websites, e-newsletters, etc.

## **BIG IDEA**

Inspire a 1-to-1 five-year match campaign:

\$125M is the total cost for the project.

Over 3 Years:  
\$41.6M from local governments  
\$41.6M from state  
\$41.6M from business.

4

**Help Raise Awareness  
of the Trail and the  
Benefits It Will Deliver**

# Thought Starter for RVA757 Connects. *(collaborate)*



- Create a simple project website (using images and copy in this deck) and project brochure to help advance momentum.
- Provide materials to all trail advocates.
- Start promoting the project through RVA757 communications efforts.
- Generate earned media.

5

Help Everyone Decide  
On Naming the Trail



# The Trail's Name

Trail advocates currently call this trail the BoAT Trail – the “Birthplace of America Trail”? We often hear people ask why isn't this new Williamsburg to Virginia Beach trail simply called the Virginia Capital Trail? After all, on a map, the Williamsburg to Virginia Beach run appears to be a logistical extension of the Richmond to Williamsburg Virginia Capital Trail. Well, it's not that simple.

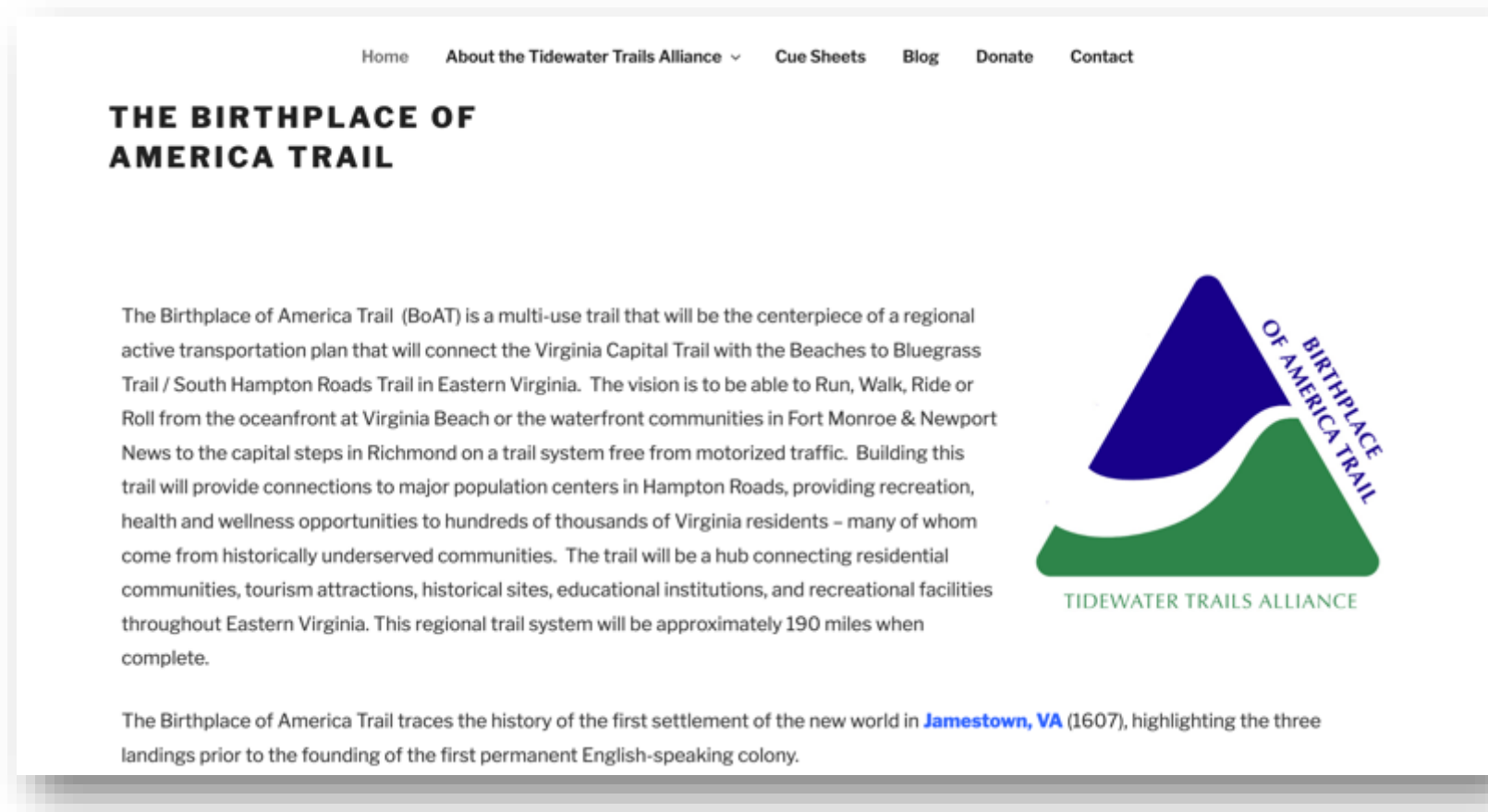
The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation owns the name the “Virginia Capital Trail.” They have thoughtfully pointed out a number of related issues. For example, from a branding perspective would use of the name the Virginia Capital Trail for the entire Richmond to Virginia Beach run be confusing? From an experience perspective, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation has spent considerable time and resources over the years ensuring a great and consistent experience on the Richmond to Williamsburg trail. Will the same experience be delivered consistently for the Williamsburg to Virginia Beach trail? Would the mile markers, signage, cleanliness, and safety be seamless and consistent? Today, the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation does not have the resources to take on this responsibility.

The Virginia Capital Trail Foundation Board is open to discussing this topic with trail advocates, but this should be part of a thoughtful planning process. What follows are a few examples of naming-related considerations that we suspect would surface as part of this discussion – pros and cons of using the Virginia Capital Trail or the BoAT Trail name.

# The “BoAT Trail” Name Origin and Logic

The Tidewater Trails Alliance came up with the name “Birthplace of America Trail” - BoAT Trail for short.

[www.birthplaceofamericatrail.com](http://www.birthplaceofamericatrail.com)




The screenshot shows a website page with a navigation menu at the top: Home, About the Tidewater Trails Alliance (with a dropdown arrow), Cue Sheets, Blog, Donate, and Contact. The main heading is "THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA TRAIL". Below this is a paragraph of text describing the trail. To the right of the text is a logo consisting of a blue triangle on top and a green triangle on the bottom, separated by a white wavy line. The text "BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA TRAIL" is written vertically along the right side of the triangles, and "TIDEWATER TRAILS ALLIANCE" is written below the green triangle.

Home About the Tidewater Trails Alliance ▾ Cue Sheets Blog Donate Contact

## THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA TRAIL

The Birthplace of America Trail (BoAT) is a multi-use trail that will be the centerpiece of a regional active transportation plan that will connect the Virginia Capital Trail with the Beaches to Bluegrass Trail / South Hampton Roads Trail in Eastern Virginia. The vision is to be able to Run, Walk, Ride or Roll from the oceanfront at Virginia Beach or the waterfront communities in Fort Monroe & Newport News to the capital steps in Richmond on a trail system free from motorized traffic. Building this trail will provide connections to major population centers in Hampton Roads, providing recreation, health and wellness opportunities to hundreds of thousands of Virginia residents – many of whom come from historically underserved communities. The trail will be a hub connecting residential communities, tourism attractions, historical sites, educational institutions, and recreational facilities throughout Eastern Virginia. This regional trail system will be approximately 190 miles when complete.

The Birthplace of America Trail traces the history of the first settlement of the new world in [Jamestown, VA](#) (1607), highlighting the three landings prior to the founding of the first permanent English-speaking colony.



# The Logo Meaning (from the website)

**Blue** depicts the ocean/water tributaries that are so important to our region and how the settlers reached Virginia.

**Green** abstract of Virginia is reflective of where we are located.

The **white swoop** represents the trail itself.

**Three points** signify the three landing areas of the Virginia Company expedition prior to establishment at Jamestown (Cape Henry, Point Comfort and Claremont).

The **Birthplace of America Title** on the right side of the logo reflects how this area influenced the rest of the eastern seaboard and helped spread the colonial spirit.

The **left side is intentionally blank** – reserved space for our partner trails and future branches off the main trail system.

Our project traces the establishment of our nation as we sought freedom through the **first landings, the first revolution, and the second revolution**. As we know, freedom was not truly established until the actions of the Civil War started the process for **freedom for all Americans**, regardless of the color of our skin, religion or beliefs.

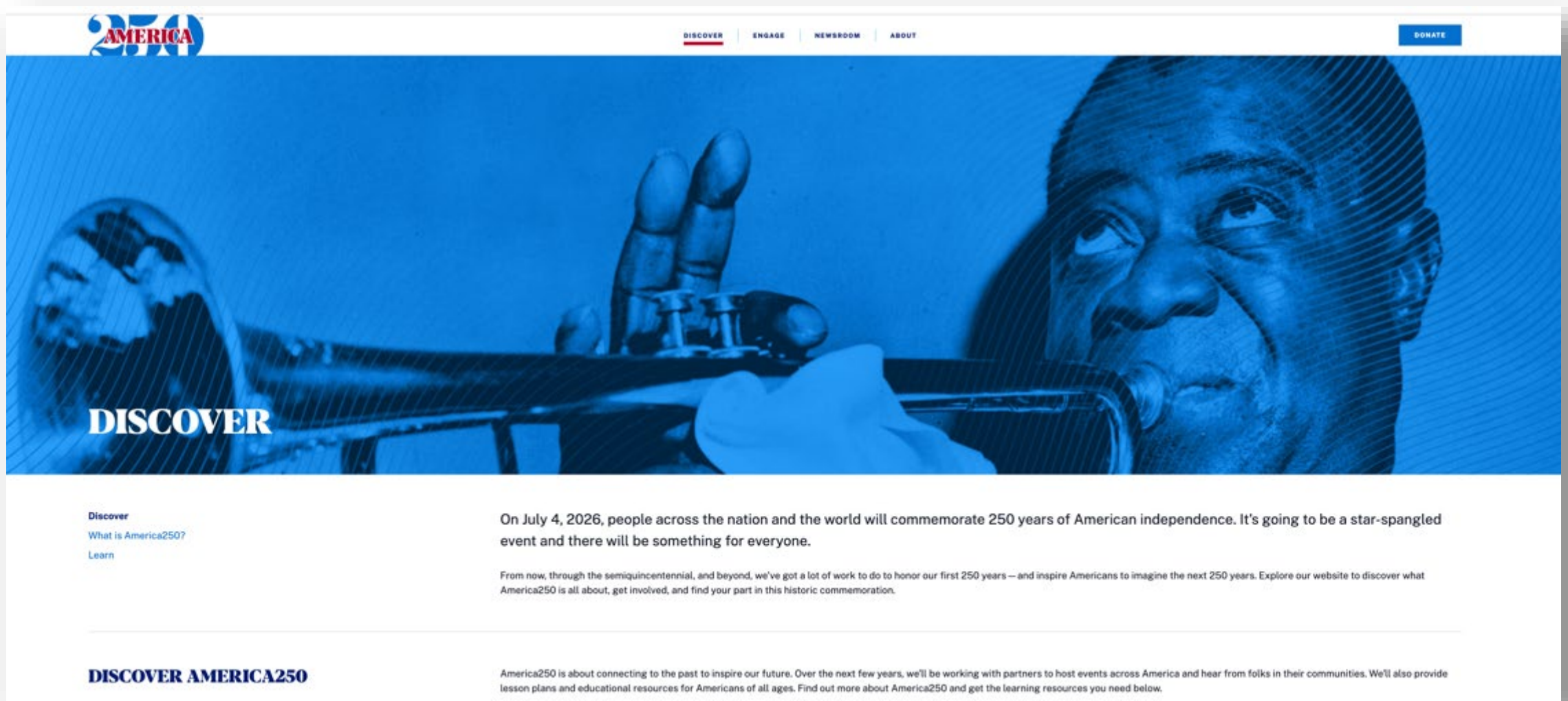
The Birthplace of America Trail will highlight the importance of our region as we bring forth health benefits, economic benefits, and transportation alternatives. But much more important – the bridge that brings forth an understanding of our human nature and our **instinctive desire to live in harmony**.



# The BoAT Trail

*as the trail's name*

# Pro: Ties into the America 2026 Anniversary



The screenshot shows the top portion of the America250 website. At the top left is the 'AMERICA 250' logo. To its right are navigation links: 'DISCOVER', 'ENGAGE', 'NEWSROOM', and 'ABOUT'. Further right is a 'DONATE' button. The main visual is a blue-tinted photograph of a man playing a trumpet. The word 'DISCOVER' is overlaid in white on the left side of the image. Below the image, there is a 'Discover' section with a sub-link 'What is America250?' and a 'Learn' link. To the right of this is a paragraph of introductory text. At the bottom left, there is a 'DISCOVER AMERICA250' link. At the bottom right, there is a paragraph of text describing the website's mission.

**AMERICA 250**

[DISCOVER](#) | [ENGAGE](#) | [NEWSROOM](#) | [ABOUT](#) [DONATE](#)

**DISCOVER**

**Discover**  
What is America250?  
[Learn](#)

On July 4, 2026, people across the nation and the world will commemorate 250 years of American independence. It's going to be a star-spangled event and there will be something for everyone.

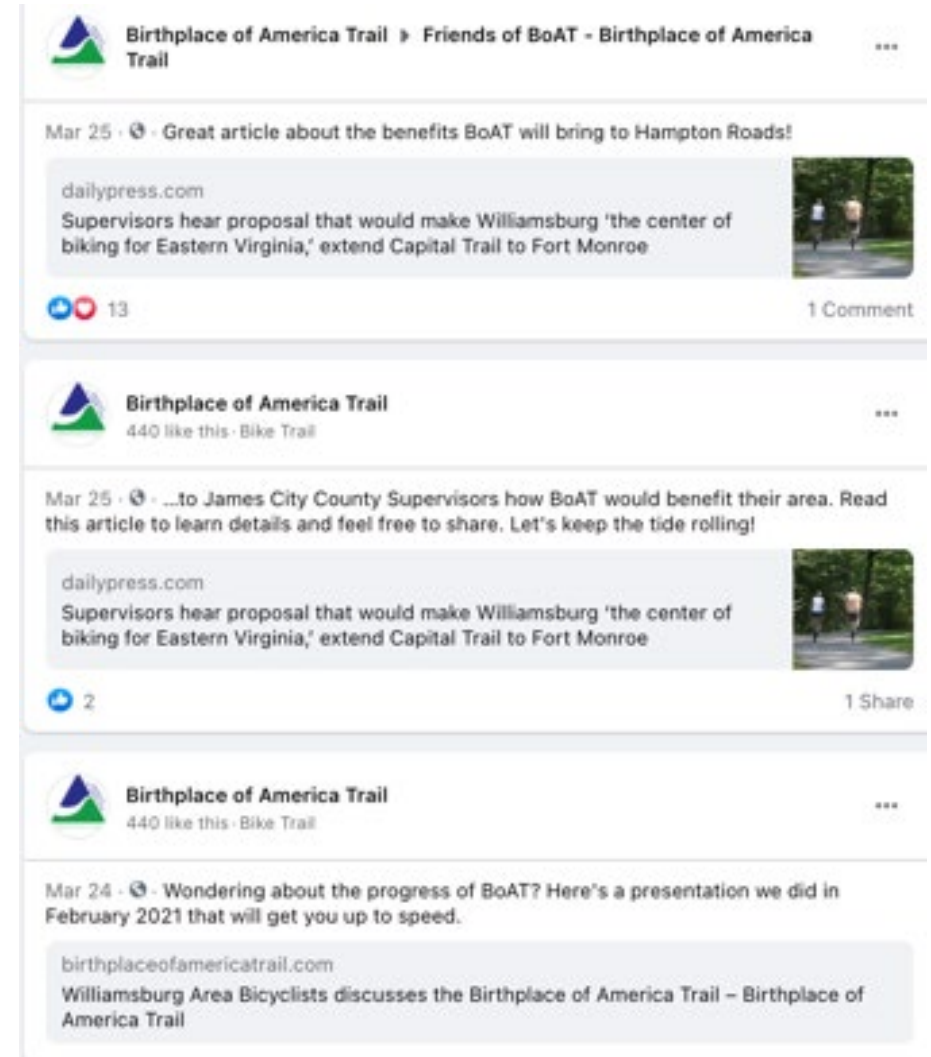
From now, through the semiquincentennial, and beyond, we've got a lot of work to do to honor our first 250 years — and inspire Americans to imagine the next 250 years. Explore our website to discover what America250 is all about, get involved, and find your part in this historic commemoration.

**DISCOVER AMERICA250**

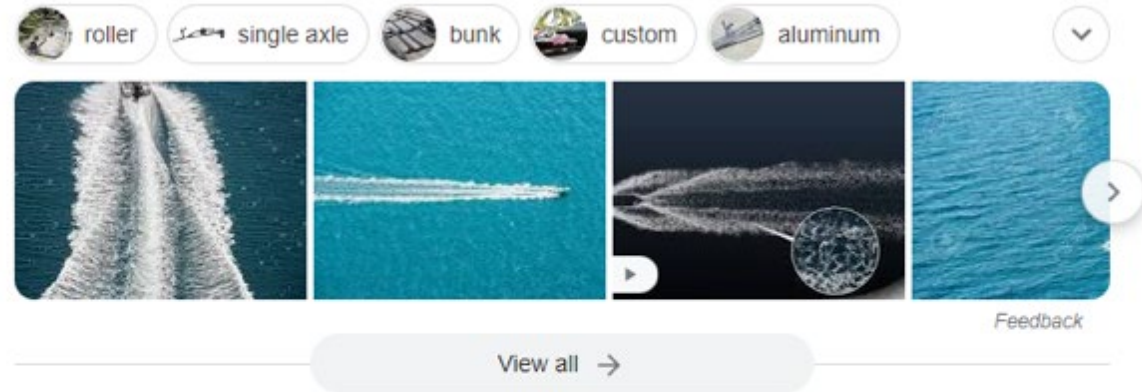
America250 is about connecting to the past to inspire our future. Over the next few years, we'll be working with partners to host events across America and hear from folks in their communities. We'll also provide lesson plans and educational resources for Americans of all ages. Find out more about America250 and get the learning resources you need below.

**Con:  
The Name  
“Birthplace of America Trail”  
Will Morph  
into Just  
“BOAT” Trail**

*Already see examples of this happening in social media . . .*



# Google “BoAT Trail” .... And you’ll just find Boat craft references



<https://www.southeasternmarine.net> › boats-trailers-for-... ⋮

## All Inventory | Southeastern Marine | Richmond Virginia

Results 1 - 14 of 14 — Check out our entire inventory of **boats**, pontoons, trailers, and outboards for sale - Southeastern Marine is a marine dealership located ...

<https://www.southeasternmarine.net> › boat-trailers-for-s... ⋮

## Boat Trailers For Sale | Richmond VA - Southeastern Marine

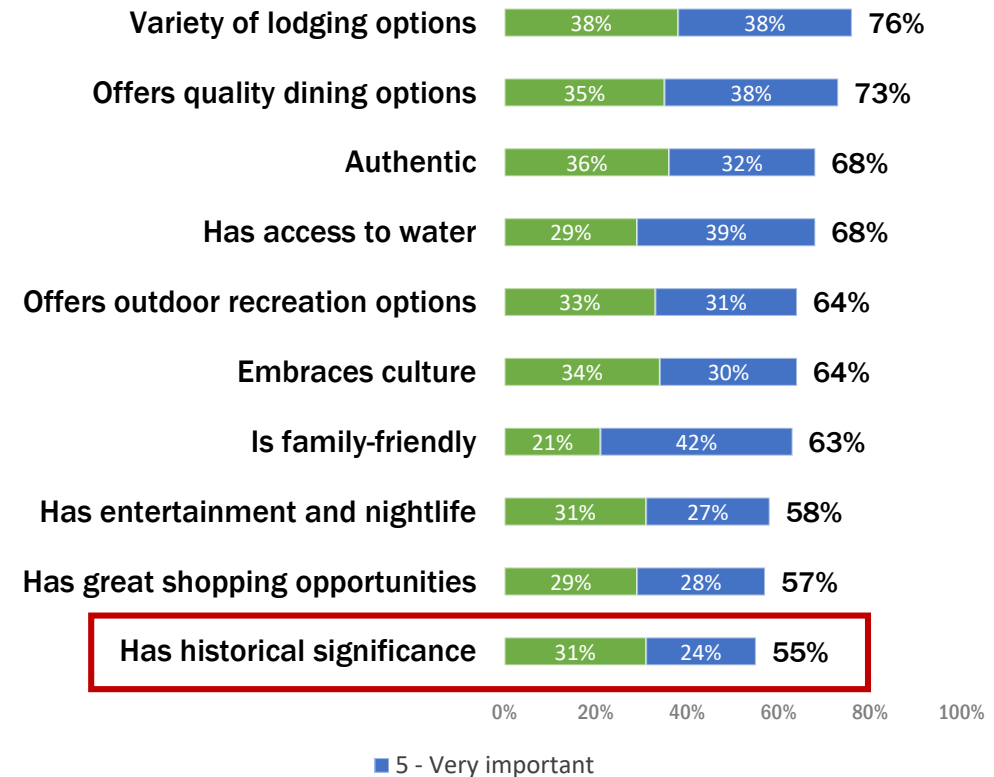
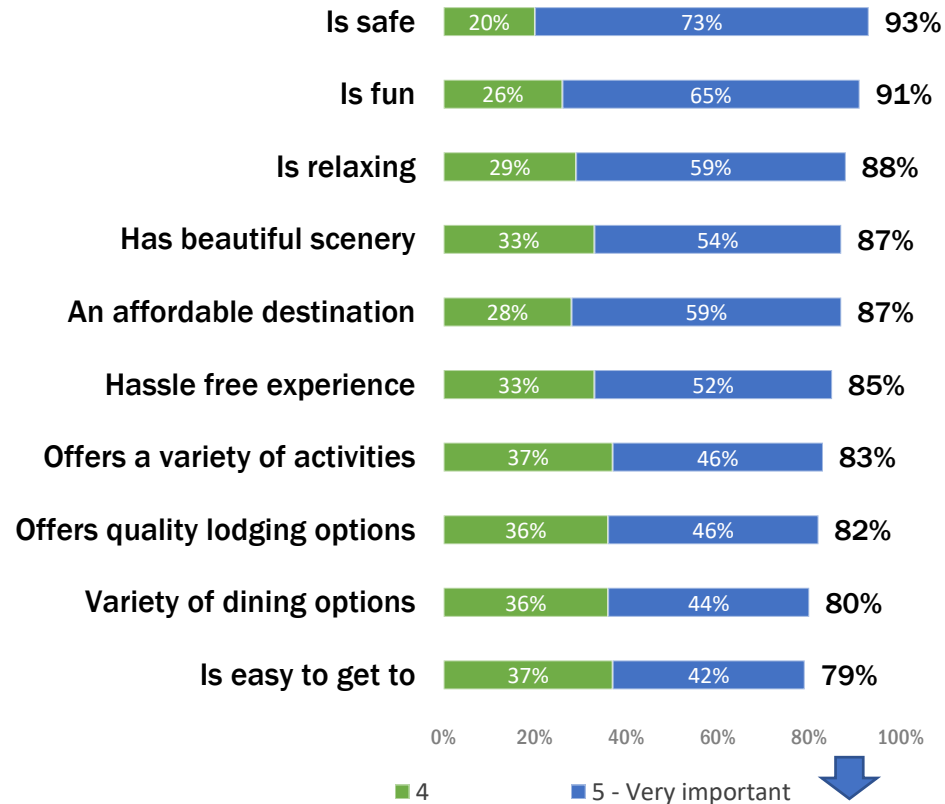
Results 1 - 14 of 14 — You won't find a better **boat trailer** anywhere else. Stop by Southeastern Marine today and see what we have in stock!

<https://www.facebook.com> › Marketplace › Richmond ⋮

## Boat Trailers for sale in Richmond, Virginia - Facebook

New and used Boat Trailers for sale in Richmond, Virginia on Facebook Marketplace. Find great deals and sell ... 2000 Load Rite **boat trailer** in Richmond, VA.

# Con: A Direct Connection with History Is Not Likely To Be a Large Draw for Trail Users/Visitors



n = 1,536

SIR Research: The following is a list of attributes that can characterize or be used to describe a vacation or getaway in general. How important is each of the following attributes to you:



# History is Complicated and Can Be A Source of Tension/Disagreement

While it's critical for more Americans to understand our nation's history, making "history and heritage" the cornerstone of a multi-use trail could make things difficult.

## For example: Bacon's Castle

Bacon's Rebellion was formed in 1676 after then Colonial Governor William Berkely **refused to aid Bacon in the killing and forceful removal of Native Americans from Virginia.** The rebels chased the Governor from Jamestown and ultimately torched the settlement.

*"Our Design [is] ... to ruin and extirpate all Indians in General."* – Nathaniel Bacon

FIGURE 3: THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA TRAIL – HISTORY AND HERITAGE



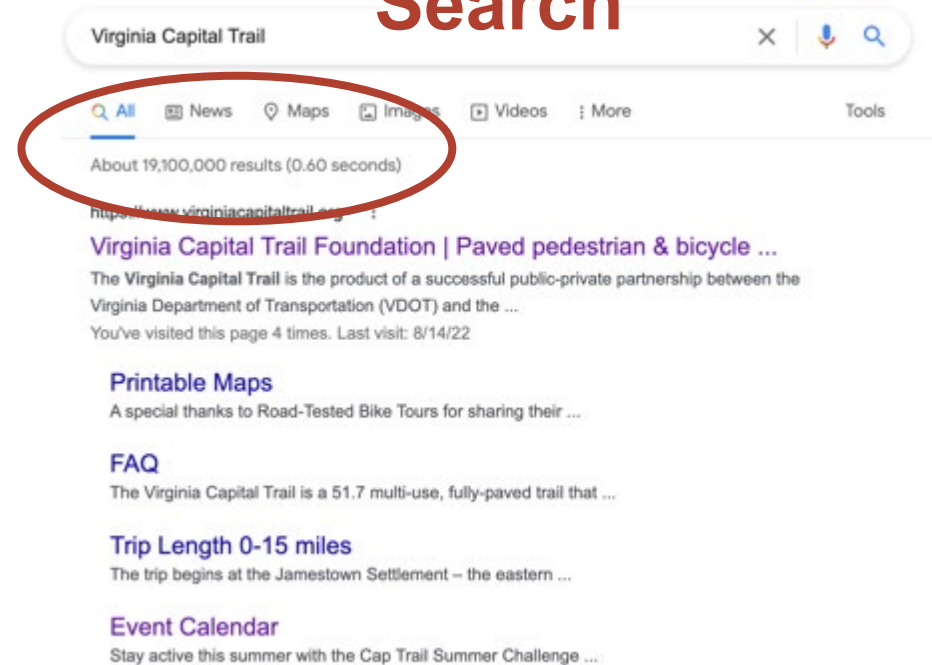
# The Virginia Capital Trail

*as the trail's name*

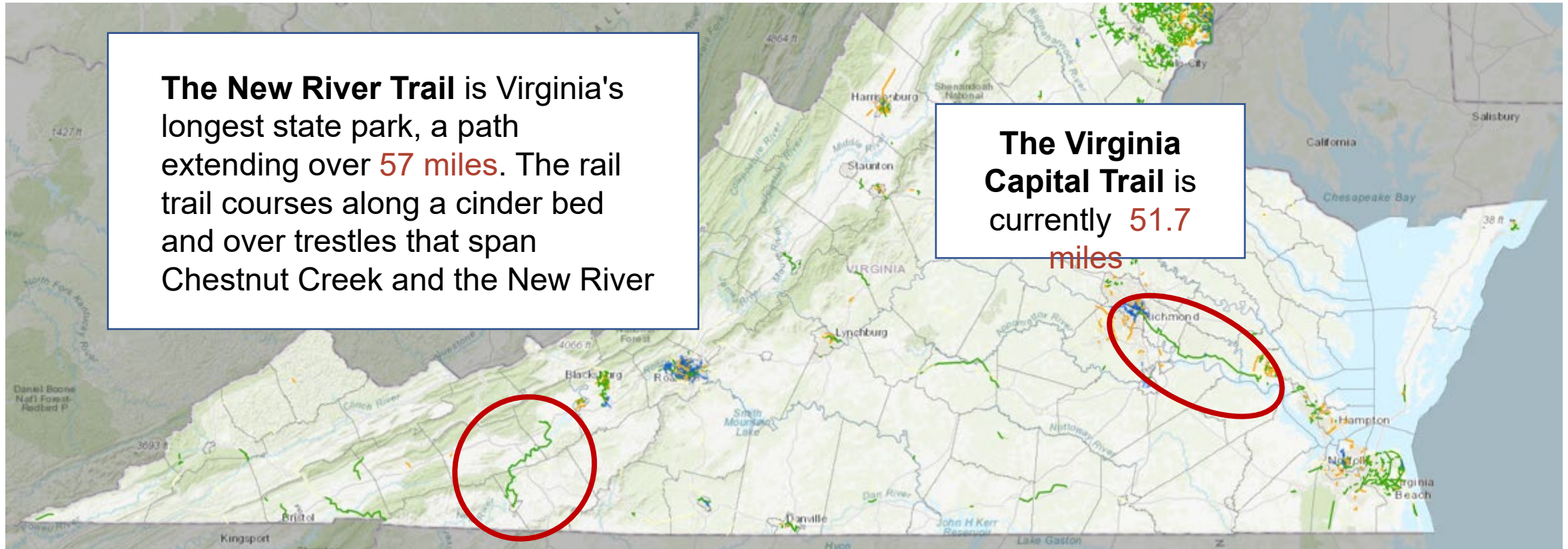
# Pro: The Virginia Capital Trail Name Has Brand Equity



**19 Million immediate references in a Google Search**



# Pro: Extending the Virginia Capital Trail Would Create the Longest Trail In Virginia *(What would be another key selling point?)*



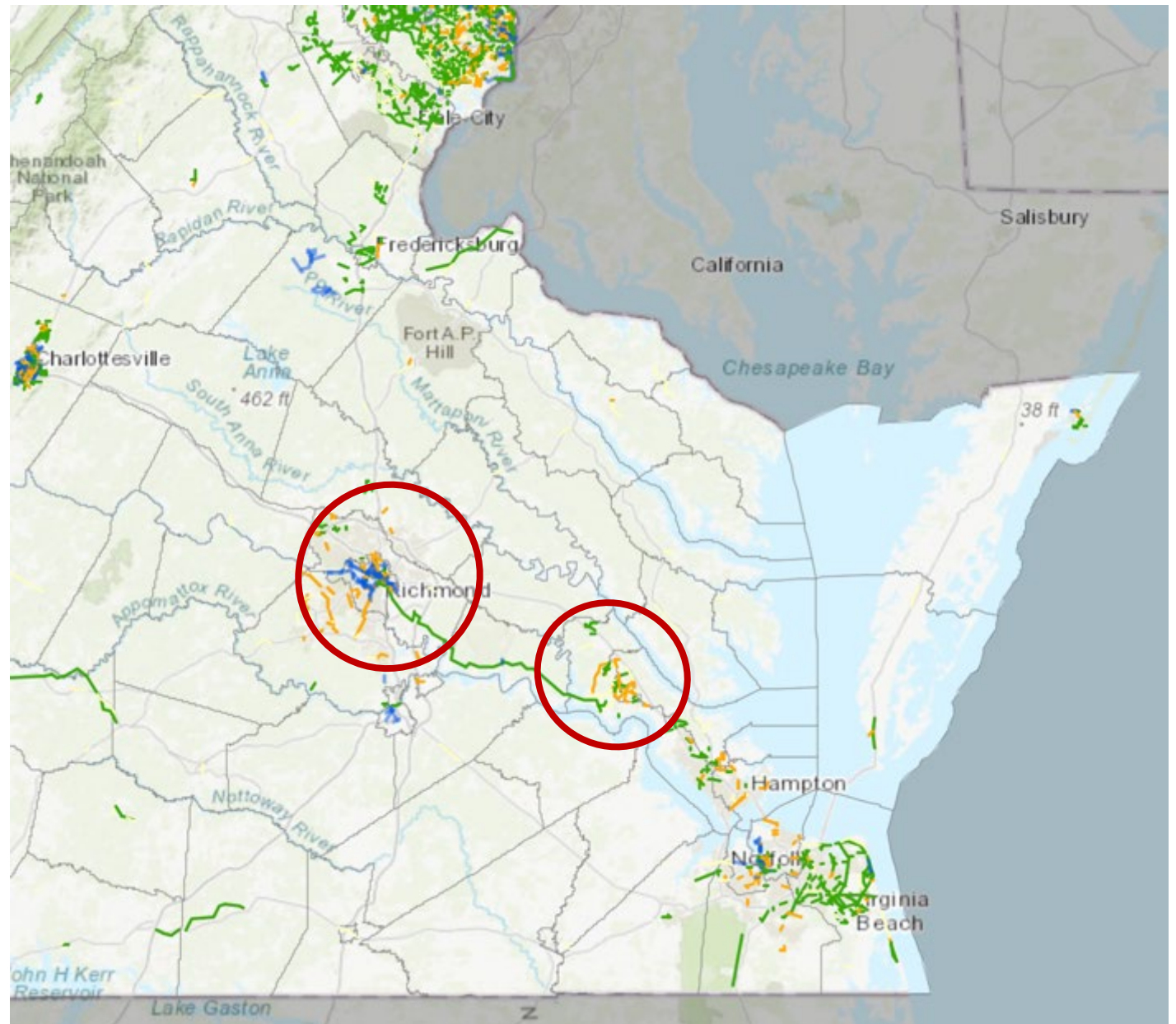
Con: No tie in:

The **Virginia Capital Name** was named for . . .

RVA is the capital city. Williamsburg is the historic capital.

The trail connects these capitals.

The only tie for the Williamsburg to Virginia Beach trail segment to the name Virginia Capital Trail is that Williamsburg is in the 757.



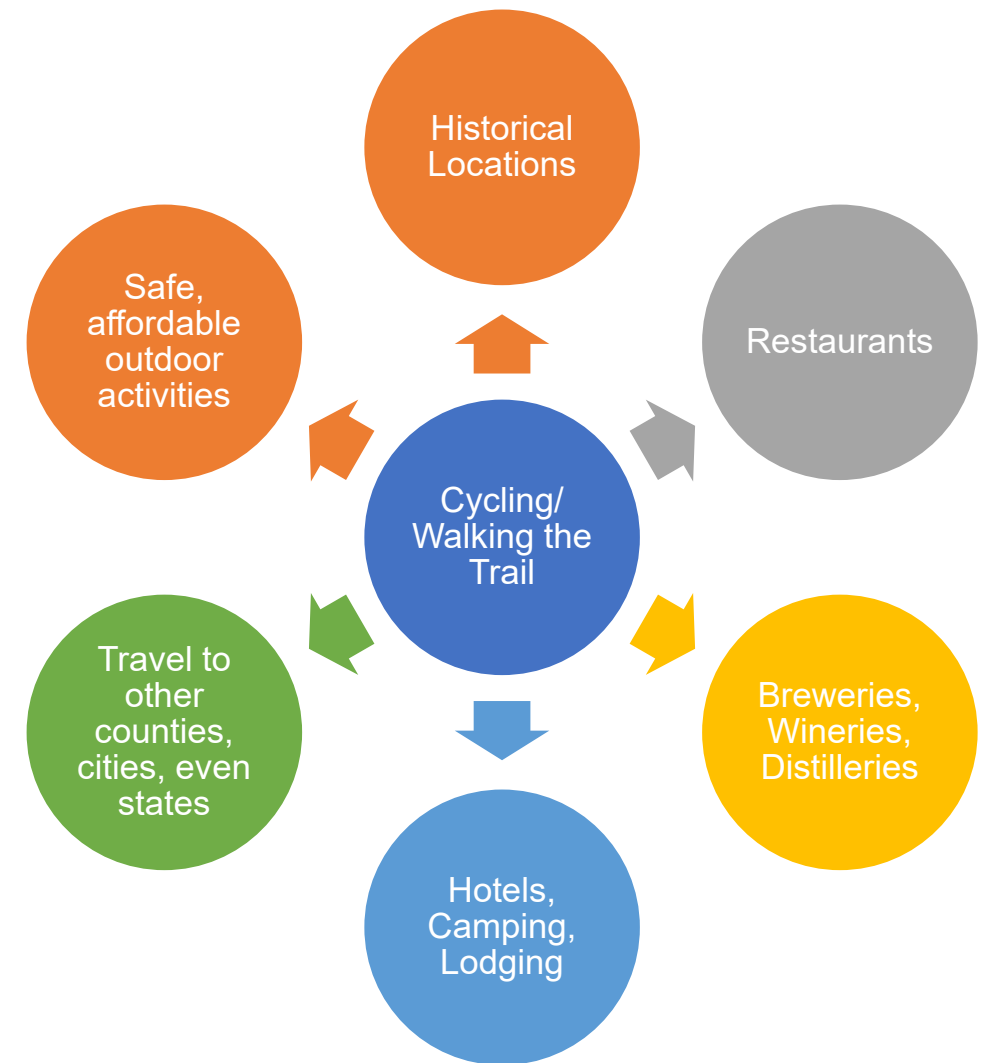
Another Name\*  
*as the trail's name*

*\*Than the BoAT or VCT name*

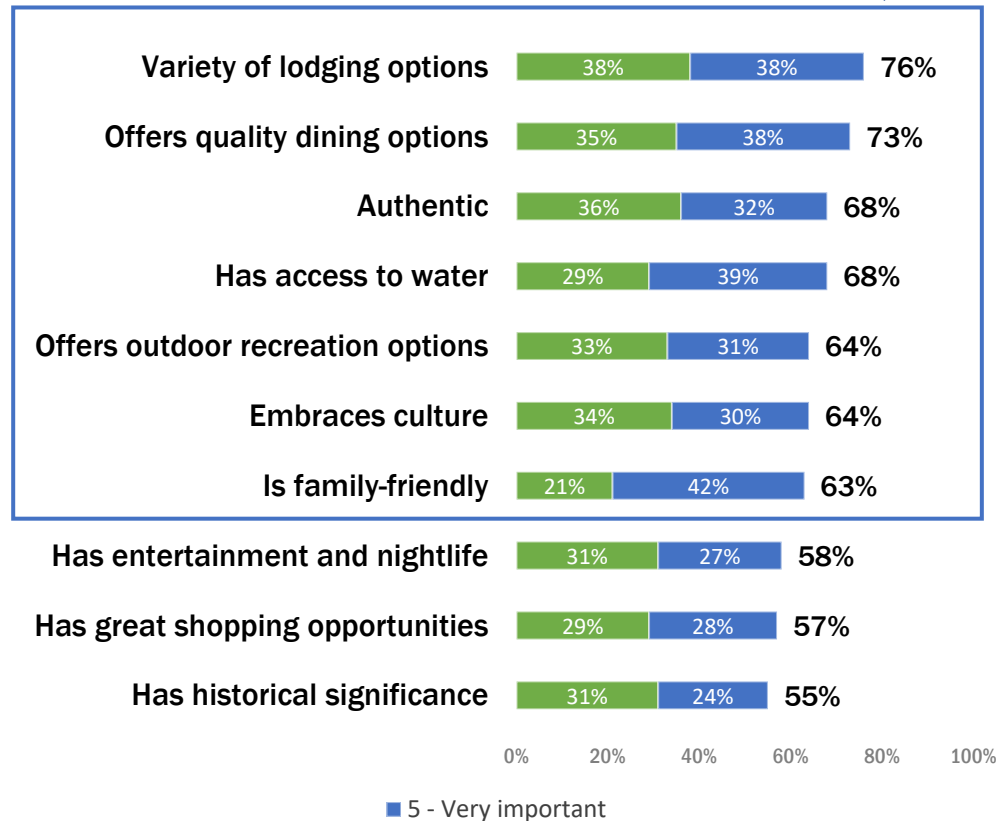
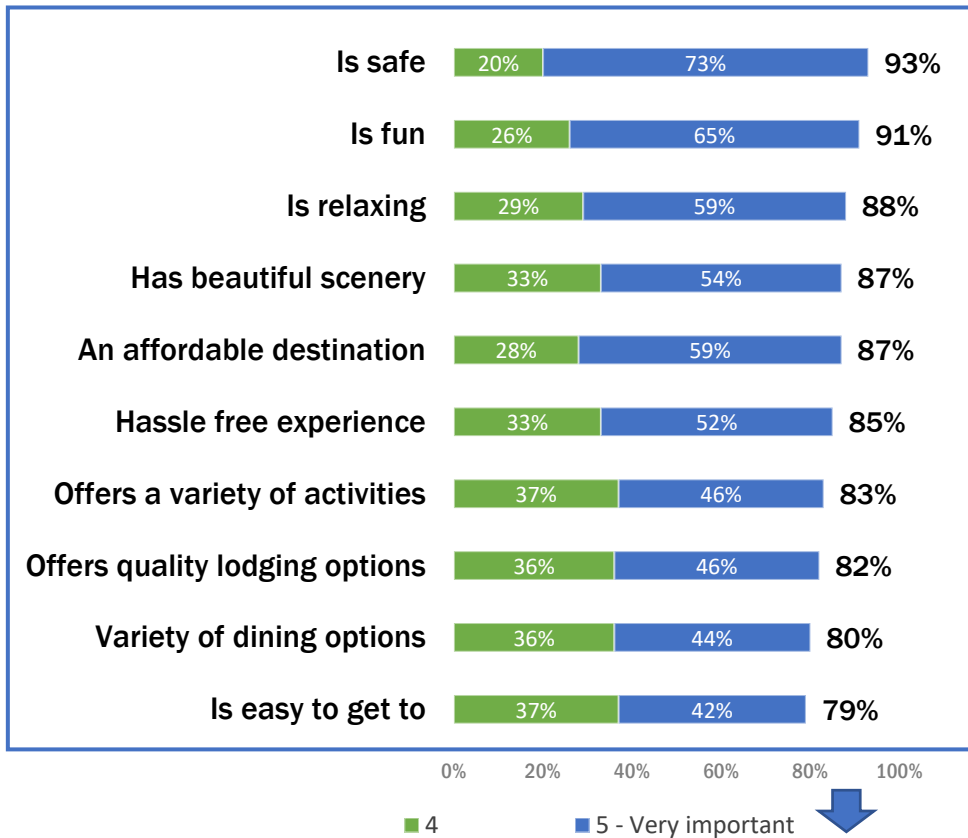
## Pro: Another Name May Leverage the Ability to Deploy the Highly Successful Tourism Marketing “Hub and Spoke” Approach



- **From cycling/walking the trail** you can explore historic sites, visit breweries and restaurants, rent a kayak, stay at a hotel and so much more. The world is your oyster using **cycling/walking the trail** as the hub.
- Focusing the trail on history narrows the hub and the spoke options and consequently the overall appeal.
- Let people build the type of experience they want. Promote all options. If they want a history trail experience, suggest places to experience.



# The Virginia Capital Trail Name May Offer Access to Almost All of the Attributes People Seek In a Vacation or Getaway.



n = 1,536

SIR Research: The following is a list of attributes that can characterize or be used to describe a vacation or getaway in general. How important is each of the following attributes to you:



# Thought Starter for RVA757 Connects *(collaborate)*



- Help facilitate a process to explore the naming topic (Note: the Fall Line Trail in Richmond just went through this exact same process).
- Through this process (what ever shape it takes), make sure all parties - the jurisdictions, HRTPO, Virginia Capital Trail Foundation, Tidewater Trails Alliance are all in.

# Onward!

