

# HUCKLEBERRY TRAIL PLAN

New River Valley



PART 1 ● 2022





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PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The Huckleberry Trail Plan was developed through a collaborative partnership, between the New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (NRVMPO), Town of Blacksburg, Town of Christiansburg, Montgomery County, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry, and the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC).

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The Huckleberry Trail has a long history of serving the Montgomery area as a primary alternative transportation route. During the first half of the 20th Century, a passenger train transported cadets to and from Virginia Tech four times each day. The last steam engine train run occurred in 1958; however, the Huckleberry namesake carries on today. The first mile of track was converted to a nature trail in 1966 and the next 3.5 miles of the Huckleberry Trail were completed nearly 30-years later in the mid-1990s. By 1995 the trail stretched 5.75-miles, from the public library in Blacksburg to the NRV Mall in Christiansburg.

Today the Huckleberry Trail is nearly 15 miles, from Jefferson National Forest, through Blacksburg, along the outskirts of Virginia Tech campus, creek-side in Montgomery County, and continues stretching further into Christiansburg. It's been nearly 60 years since the first mile of trail was complete and its reputation has grown as an invaluable community asset. The purpose of this plan is to capture ideas about the future of the trail and begin to identify areas that are mutually beneficial for collaboration.

The first goal of the plan was to document how the Huckleberry Trail is managed today. The plan includes information on existing trail conditions and assets, operations and maintenance standards, future design and construction standards, and funding resources. The plan also reflects on interviews with other long-distance trail managers and trail influencers. Several questions were explored, such as: How have trails affected local downtown economies and can they be a reliable alternative transportation route? How many restrooms do we need per linear mile of trail? Do you plow snow or leave it? If we want to share our trail and attract visitors, what might their expectations be?

This initial Huckleberry Trail Plan documents potential areas for collaboration and also aspects of the trail that are important to retain locally. The plan also provides information that is intended to be used for ongoing conversations about the Huckleberry Trail of tomorrow.





With growing interest in creating local and regional trail connections, Friends of the Huckleberry, identified the opportunity to create a Huckleberry Trail Plan as a first step towards defining future goals. In September 2021, the New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (NRVMPO) partnered with the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC) to begin work on facilitating the development of the Huckleberry Trail Plan. The scope of work included developing a strategy for collaboration among local partners and to evaluate and implement formal policies for future trail development or maintenance. The plan would be a first step towards establishing a stronger sense of place, and identify methods to increase continuity and consistency of user experiences.



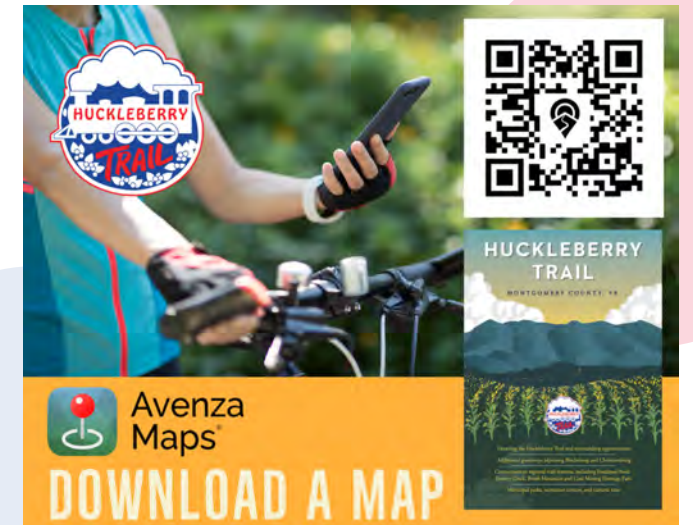
### TASK 1: DEVELOP A PLAN FOR COLLABORATION

Collaboration and transparency are familiar spaces for local governments in Virginia’s New River Valley. Trail partners expressed interest in collaborating on the following:

1. **MAINTAINING THE EXISTING TRAIL AT A HIGH STANDARD**  
Focus on trail clearances when trimming vegetation or installing new amenities, regular mowing and clearing of debris, combating graffiti and vandalism quickly.
2. **CONTINUING TO EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE TRAIL AND CONNECTIONS TO OTHER ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION ASSETS**  
Asphalt surface material, accessibility for users of all abilities, connecting to local trails and transit stops.
3. **DEVELOPING 3-4 “GATEWAY” TRAIL ACCESS LOCATIONS**  
Uniquely branded just for the Huckleberry and consistent appearance and amenities at each location.
4. **STREAMLINING EVENT COORDINATION**  
Create a universal form that is compatible in the towns and county, create a shared calendar, participate in bi-annual partner meetings.
5. **IDENTIFYING MORE WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE**  
Volunteers can be coordinated by owners or partners for non-construction activities, developing a new trail ambassadors volunteer program, creating alternatives to benches for donations (tree groves, planting areas, etc.).

### TASK 2: ASSET AND OPPORTUNITY MAPPING

The Friends of Huckleberry, along with GIS specialists at the towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, and Virginia Tech, recently updated and improved the accuracy of geospatial trail information. A high-quality map is now available for purchase in either print or smart phone app formats. Both mapping resources include the full length of the Huckleberry plus over 45 additional miles of community trails. A free version of the map will also be available to the public soon.



Staff of the New River Valley Regional Commission picked up where local trail partners left off, and performed field visits to locate and photograph trail assets for the entire length of trail. The Inventory of trail assets included: benches, trash receptacles, water refill, viewsheds, surface conditions, signage, and much more. The information is now available to local trail partners for future mapping products and maintenance inventories.

### TASK 3: BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES + DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Each trail partner has established general routine maintenance goals and construction standards. The Huckleberry Trail is a public facility that is managed by local Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments, along with other recreational areas in each community. This plan documents some of the common goals for maintenance and operations of the trail. In addition, common design considerations and practices that are recommended by the National Parks Service and Federal Highway Administration are documented based on the surrounding trail environment (rural, suburban, and urban).

Trail routine maintenance and operation goals include suggestions for mowing intervals, responding to vandalism, and coordinating volunteers. Design standard recommendations provides information about trail width as it relates to capacity, trail clearances, and trail amenities.



**TASK 4: GAINING AN OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVE**

The trail planning team completed two interviews with existing longer-distance trail managers and also invited a trail tourism expert, placemaker, and professional coach to facilitate a full-day workshop.

January 18, 2022, the project management team met with Mr. Mark Whaley, Park Operations Specialist, and Mr. Kevin Casalenuovo, W&OD Railroad Park/Trail Manager. The Washington and Old Dominion Railroad (W&OD) Regional Park is often referred to as one of the skinniest parks in Virginia, and includes a 45-mile trail that runs through urban centers and beautiful countryside in Northern Virginia.

February 24, 2022, Amy Camp of Cycle Forward traveled to the New River Valley to lead a trail assessment, present on the topic of unlocking the potential of trails, and facilitate a group discussion about the future of the trail. Ms. Camp specializes in coaching and supporting local leaders and communities in trail town development, strengthening heritage tourism, and accessing the outdoor recreation economy.

April 1, 2022, the project management team met with Ms. Cat Anthony, Executive Director of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF). The Virginia Capital Trail snakes along the James River and State Route 5 for 52-miles. The trail connects the Commonwealth’s capital of Richmond to the historic capitals of Jamestown and Williamsburg.



**TASK 5: PREPARE TRAIL PLAN**

Regional partners continue to make investments and pursue competitive funding opportunities to expand and/or improve trail assets each year. As an example, the Town of Christiansburg and Montgomery County pursue Transportation Alternatives funding, a statewide competitive funding opportunity, for \$200k-\$300k (max award) every other year. Historically, Montgomery County has served as the applicant, and the Town of Christiansburg has matched well beyond the required 20% to complete more significant phases of new trail development.

The Town of Blacksburg will be investing in resurfacing its entire trail segment and also widening the typical section to ten feet later this year; Virginia Tech is enhancing trail amenities and maintaining a robust online interactive map; and the Friends of Huckleberry just installed new mile marker posts and is actively developing organizational priorities so that it can continue to be a strong partner and trail advocate.

The Huckleberry Trail Plan, Part 1 identifies several ideas about potential trail amenities and examines how others could contribute and share responsibilities. Additional commitments of time and other resources could be necessary to implement new trail management goals or capital investments. Fortunate for our team, others have traversed similar conversations across the nation. Some topics are easier to discuss and can be implemented much more quickly. For example, one of the visiting trail managers/influencers has been working on a consistently branded wayfinding plan for more than eight years. However, local Huckleberry Trail partners are all open to the concept of creating consistently branded premier trail access points or gateway trailheads.

Trail partners are encouraged to review and update a shared Action Plan on an annual basis. The initial version of the Action Plan is included in this document.

#	TOP 3 List interesting takeaways + conversation points		
	CYCLE FORWARD	NOVA PARKS	VCTF
1	Local trail partners discussing early visioning work for the future of the Huckleberry Trail.	Every community (along the trail) has an individual sense of ownership.	Offers a Trail Ambassadors Program: volunteers who provide info, bike repair, etc.
2	Hearing success stories of other communities.	Currently uses National Parks Service standards to guide trail amenities.	Maintains a “how to” resource to streamline event planning.
3	Pulling back the curtain to discuss potential obstacles over morning coffee.	Does not plow snow to preserve pavement condition.	Promotes the trail through formal marketing initiatives.

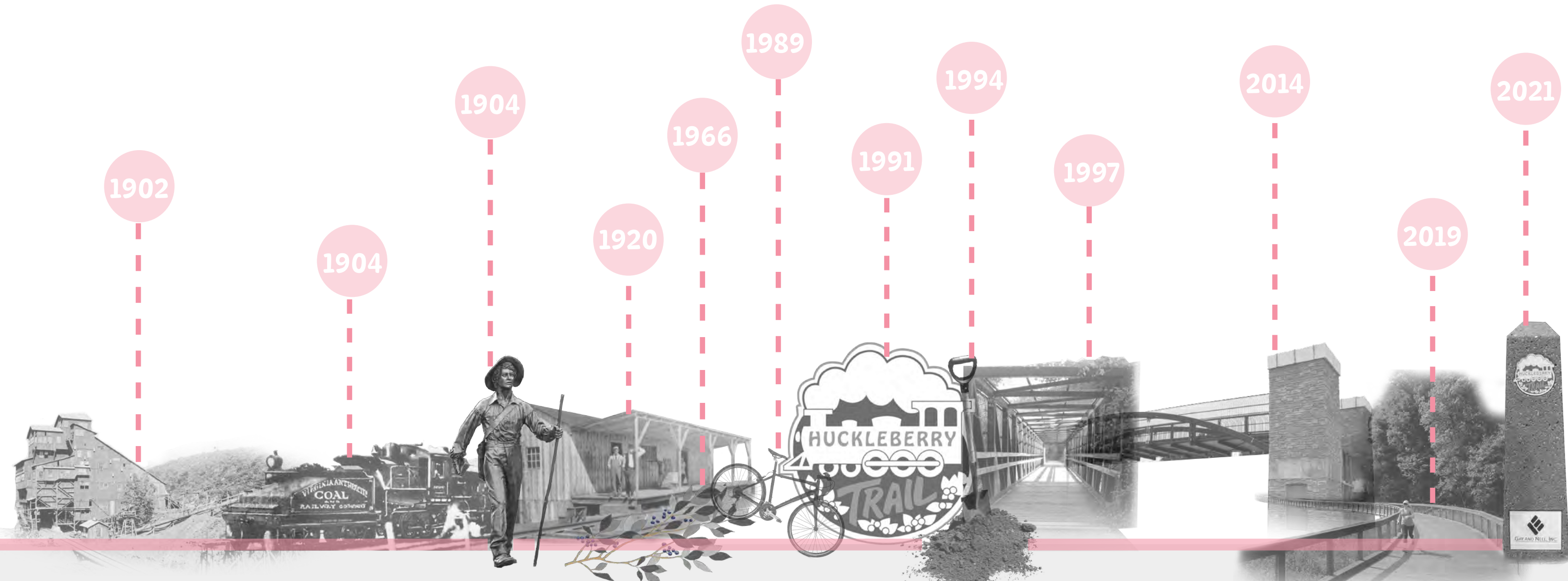




BACKGROUND + CONTEXT

12





**1902** Virginia Anthracite Coal Rail Company

**1904** Railroad linked Merrimac Mine to Cambria Depot

**1904** Rail extended to Blacksburg + VT

**1920** Passenger Rail to Blacksburg- Huckleberry namesake  
Mid-1900s Rail use dwindles

**1966** Depot closed + rail line abandoned

J.C. Garrett (VT) helps build nature trail (present day 1st mile)

**1989** Montgomery County requests a bike plan to be developed +  
a group of citizens formed to review plans

**1991** Friends of the Huckleberry established

**1994** Construction begins on first three miles of trail

**1997** First 5.75 miles complete, connecting Blacksburg to  
Christiansburg

**2014** Trail extended South to Christiansburg Recreation Center  
Renva Knowles Bridge is built across 114

**2019** Huckleberry North connection complete  
Huckleberry South extended to Independence Blvd.

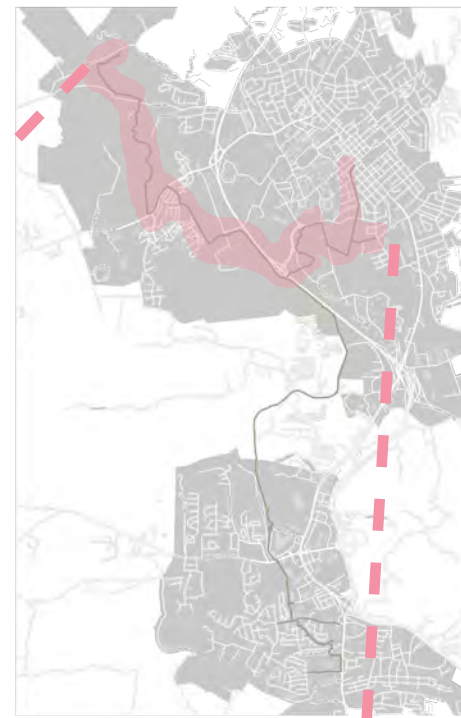
**2021** Trail mile markers installed the entirety of the trail



EXISTING ASSETS MAP  
HUCKLEBERRY NORTHERN SEGMENTS

- Mile Marker
- Parking
- Restroom
- Drinking Water
- ⚙️ Bike Fix-it Station
- Park
- Picnic Area
- 🚶 Huckleberry Trail
- 🛣️ Roads
- 🏠 Buildings
- 🏘️ Town Boundaries

KEY



BLACKSBURG

The Huckleberry Trail North- a key bike/ped connector between town and Virginia Tech - lined with mature trees that feature an established canopy - nice transitions between town, home, and green environments - higher chances of contact with others and opportunities for solitude.

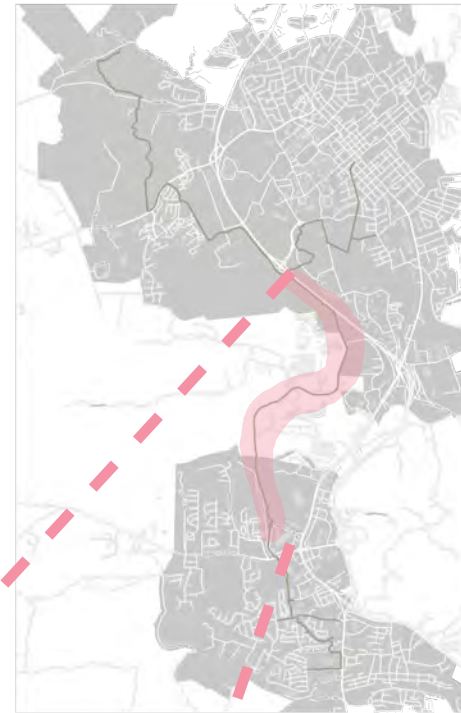




**EXISTING ASSETS MAP**  
**HUCKLEBERRY SOUTHERN SEGMENTS PART 1**

- Mile Marker
- Parking
- Restroom
- Drinking Water
- Bike Fix-it Station
- Park
- Picnic Area
- Huckleberry Trail
- Roads
- Buildings
- Town Boundaries

KEY



MONTGOMERY

One of the flattest segments of trail along the Huckleberry and perhaps the most well suited for trail users of all abilities - meanders creek-side and forested bottoms - creates connections to historical coal mining areas - paved parking and bike share available - higher chances of solitude.





**EXISTING ASSETS MAP**  
**HUCKLEBERRY SOUTHERN SEGMENTS PART 2**

- Mile Marker
- Parking
- Restroom
- Drinking Water
- ⚙️ Bike Fix-it Station
- Park
- Picnic Area
- 🚶 Huckleberry Trail
- 🛣️ Roads
- 🏠 Buildings
- 🏡 Town Boundaries

KEY












CHRISTIANSBURG

The Huckleberry Trail South- iconic bridge across bustling Peppers Ferry Road - a new feeling that is well maintained and features commercial/ urban vibe - new park construction and great opportunities for more connections - higher chances of contact with others and opportunities for solitude.

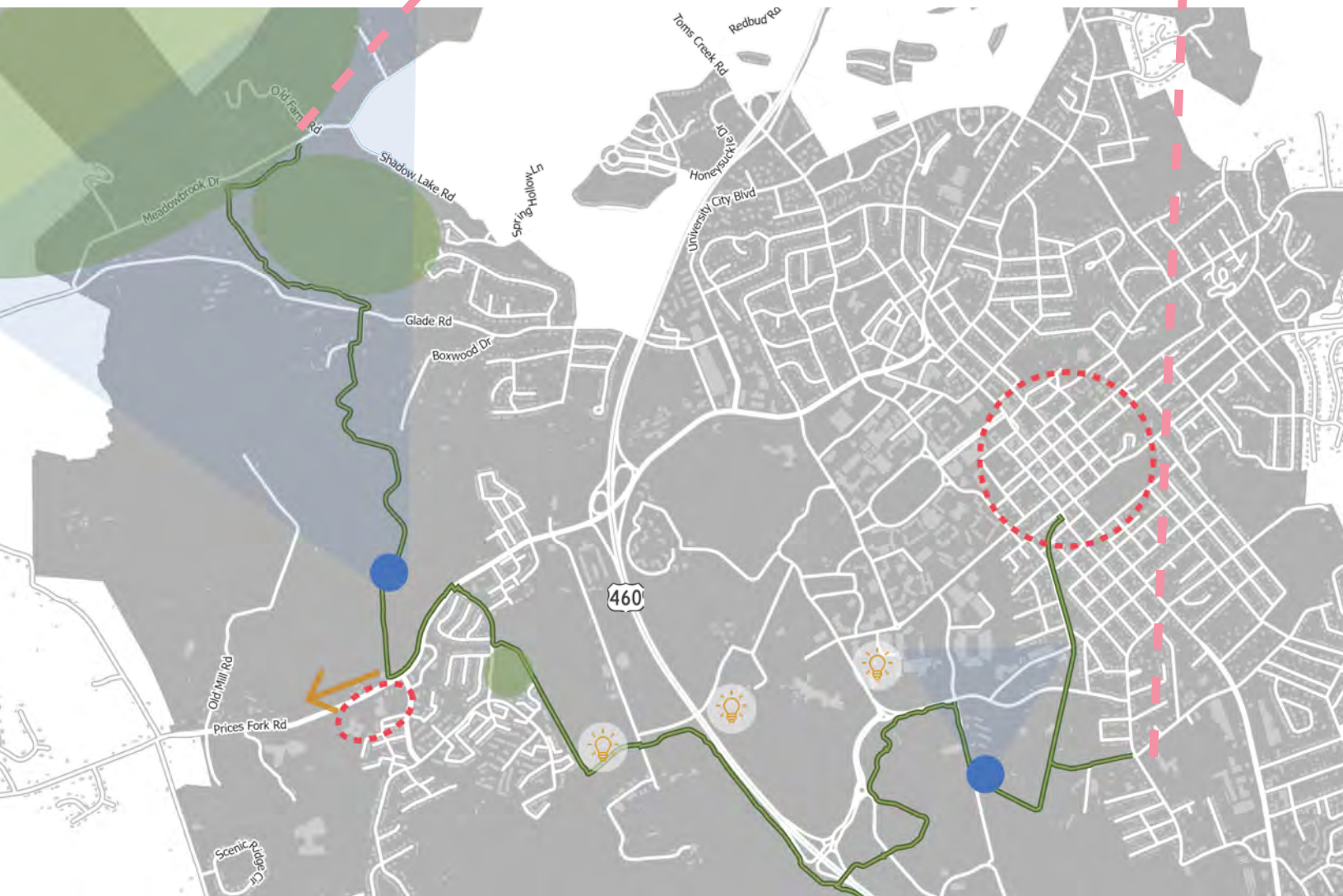
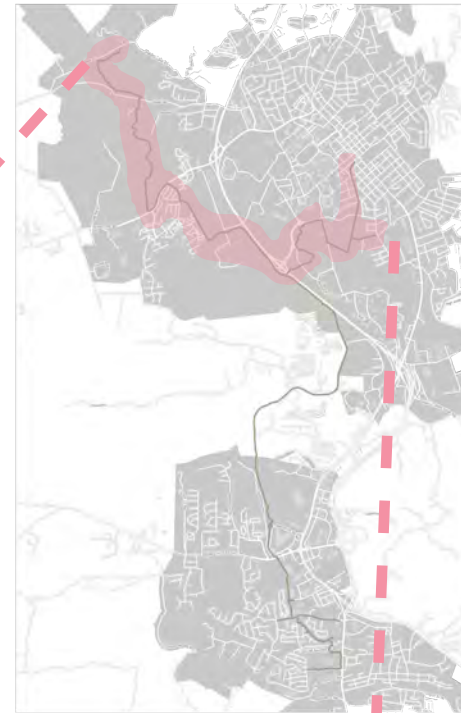




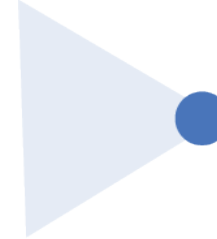
**OPPORTUNITY AREA MAP**  
**HUCKLEBERRY NORTHERN SEGMENTS**

-  Educational Adjacency
-  Significant Viewshed
-  Business/ Activity Area
-  Park
-  Engagement Opportunity
-  Huckleberry Trail
-  Roads
-  Buildings
-  Town Boundaries

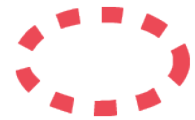
KEY



EDUCATIONAL ADJACENCIES INCLUDE:  
Kipps Elementary, Blacksburg Middle School, Blacksburg High School, Virginia Tech, MFRL



SIGNIFICANT VIEWSHEDS INCLUDE:  
North views toward Brush Mountain and superb vantage points of Virginia Tech



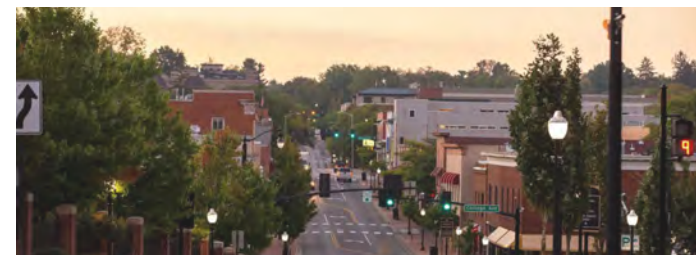
BUSINESS/ ACTIVITY AREAS ALONG THE TRAIL INCLUDE:  
Hethwood Square Shopping Center and the 16 blocks of Downtown Blacksburg, Gables, First and Main Street, Moss Arts Center



PARKS/ PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AREAS INCLUDE:  
Brush Mountain Wilderness, Heritage Community Park and Natural Area, Hethwood Pond + Playground, Gateway Trail, MTB Skills Park












ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:  
Stroubles Creek, Historic Smithfield Plantation, Virginia Tech's Duck Pond and Hahn Horticulture Garden

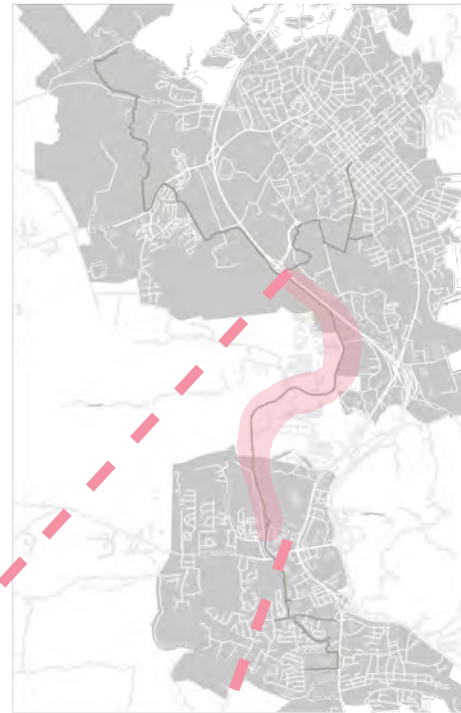





**OPPORTUNITY AREA MAP**  
**HUCKLEBERRY SOUTHERN SEGMENTS PART 1**

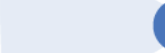
-  Educational Adjacency
-  Significant Viewshed
-  Business/ Activity Area
-  Park
-  Engagement Opportunity
-  Huckleberry Trail
-  Roads
-  Buildings
-  Town Boundaries

KEY




-  EDUCATIONAL ADJACENCIES INCLUDE:  
Virginia Tech's Corporate Research Center


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-  SIGNIFICANT VIEWSHEDS INCLUDE:  
East-West Rail corridor


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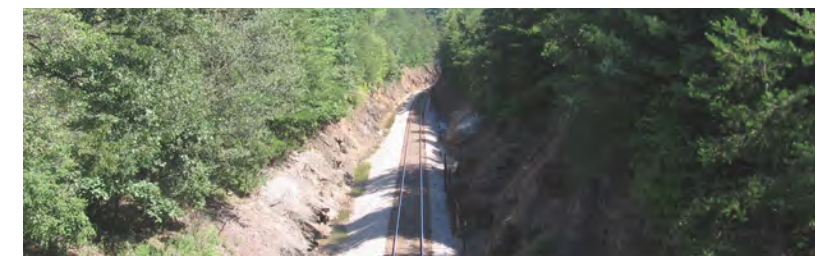
-  BUSINESS/ ACTIVITY AREAS ALONG THE TRAIL INCLUDE:  
LewisGale Hospital + Medical Services

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-  PARKS/ PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AREAS INCLUDE:  
Coal Mining Heritage Park + Loop Trail and Mid County Park










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-  ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:  
Unique trail geology and Corning plant interpretive area





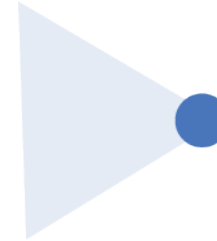
**OPPORTUNITY AREA MAP**  
**HUCKLEBERRY SOUTHERN SEGMENTS PART 2**

-  Educational Adjacency
-  Significant Viewshed
-  Business/ Activity Area
-  Park
-  Engagement Opportunity
-  Huckleberry Trail
-  Roads
-  Buildings
-  Town Boundaries

KEY



EDUCATIONAL ADJACENCIES INCLUDE:  
New River Community College Christiansburg Site and Christiansburg High School



SIGNIFICANT VIEWSHEDS INCLUDE:  
Westward mountain views and Christiansburg residential development



BUSINESS/ ACTIVITY AREAS ALONG THE TRAIL INCLUDE:  
Uptown Christiansburg, Oak Tree Shopping Plaza, Downtown Christiansburg



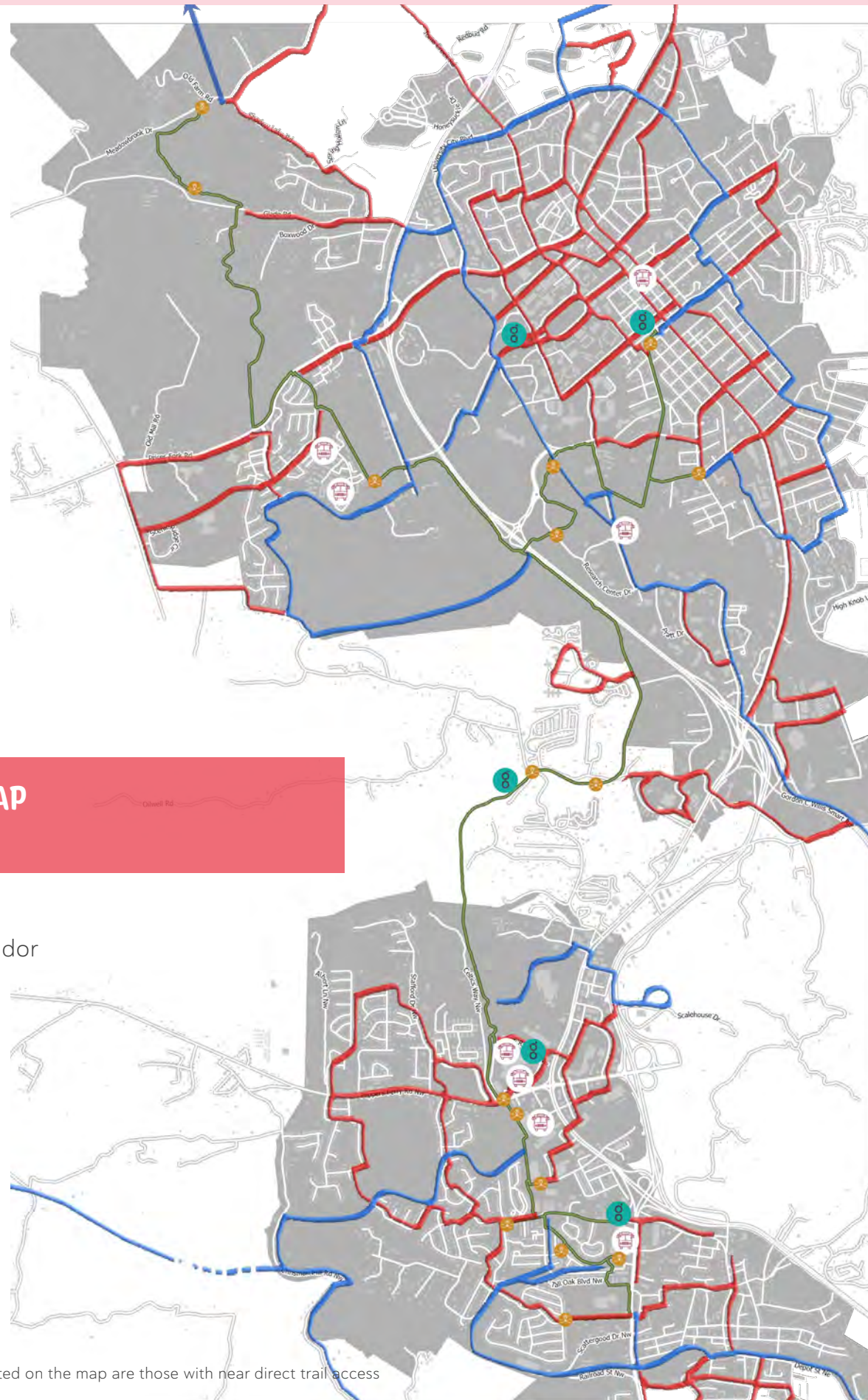
PARKS/ PUBLIC OPEN SPACE AREAS INCLUDE:  
North Christiansburg Regional Park



ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDE:  
Christiansburg Institute



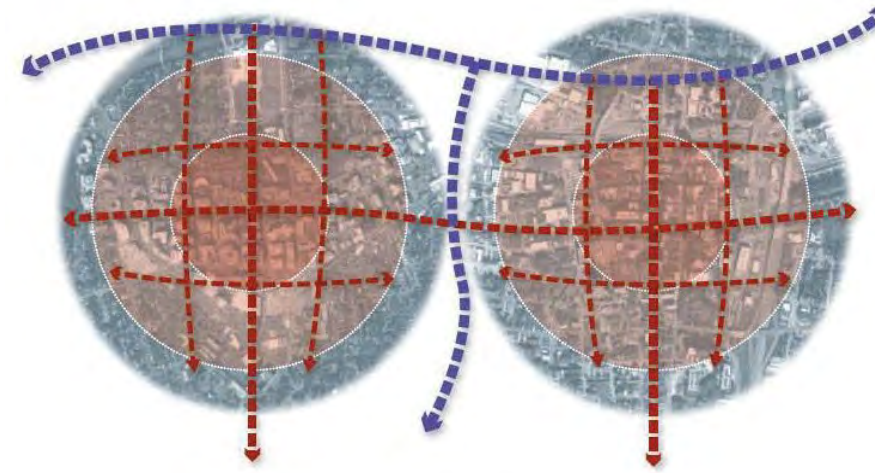




**CONNECTIVITY MAP  
HUCKLEBERRY TRAIL**

- Through Corridor
- Placemaking Corridor
- Bike Share
- Bus Stop
- Access Point
- Huckleberry Trail
- Roads
- Buildings
- Town Boundaries

Note: Transit and Bike Shares depicted on the map are those with near direct trail access



Through corridor (Blue): Moderate speed, limited traffic conflicts and connects Multimodal Districts.

Placemaking Corridor (Red): Lower speed, interaction between modes, and connects areas with Multimodal Districts.

The New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization (NRVMO) maintains a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for the urbanized areas of the New River Valley. A multimodal systems plan consists of selected corridors that demonstrate an interconnected transportation system for automobiles, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians. The Huckleberry Trail serves as a through corridor that is intended to connect travelers from one activity center to another. Within each population and employment (activity) center there is a spectrum of activity density that assists planners and engineers to determine what level of service is needed, and further, how to distribute trips across multiple mode choices.

Creating transportation options for underserved populations, ensuring linkages and reliability, increasing access to activity centers, and supporting active lifestyles are all goals that the NRVMO strives to achieve. The Huckleberry Trail is a terrific example of public infrastructure that aims to achieve those goals. The trail also creates connections to bus stops, bike share stations, and local bike/ped infrastructure.







# BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES + DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS



TOWN OF  
**Blacksburg**  
VIRGINIA



OWNER  
TRAIL MANAGEMENT  
PLANNING + COMPLIANCE  
TRAIL EXPANSION / CONNECTIONS

**VT** VIRGINIA  
TECH™

TRAIL PARTNER  
LAND OWNER + ACQUISITION  
MAPPING  
FUNDRAISING + VOLUNTEER SUPPORT





Today, the Huckleberry Trail is a community asset and a shared responsibility that is maintained by five trail partners, including the towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, Montgomery County, Virginia Tech, and Friends of the Huckleberry. The trail creates opportunities for commuting, active recreation, and building community social health. Each trail partner contributes in different ways, and considering that the initial mile of trail was constructed more than 50 years ago, each partner is also in vastly different stages of trail development and enhancement.

The Parks and Recreation Departments of the of Blacksburg and Christiansburg, and Montgomery County serve as the primary point of contact for trail inquiries and reporting issues. Local Public Works, Police, and EMS departments also have important supporting roles in maintaining trail clearances and coordinating organized events. Friends of The Huckleberry works with local trail owners to promote, fund, construct, and maintain the trail. Virginia Tech collaborates with the Town of Blacksburg to keep the trail conditions on campus in good condition. The table (below) provides a snapshot of trail partner contributions towards everyday trail maintenance.



Huckleberry Trail partners are effectively utilize existing in-house resources for trail management. Some of the typical maintenance routines are very similar, between one partner's approach and another, and common maintenance goals could be established, should sufficient resources and capacity allow. The table (below) highlights some of the most common practices and provides strategies that could assist with creating a more consistent user experience, throughout the full length of trail.

TRAIL STAKEHOLDER	Roles in Routine Maintenance							
	Ownership/ Liability	Mowing + Vegetation	Trash + Litter Removal	Snow Removal	Vandalism	Trail Access	Wayfinding Signage (On Trail)	Trail Maps
Town of Blacksburg	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
Town of Christiansburg	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Montgomery County	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	○
Virginia Tech	○	●	●	●	●	○	○	○
Friends of the Huckleberry	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●




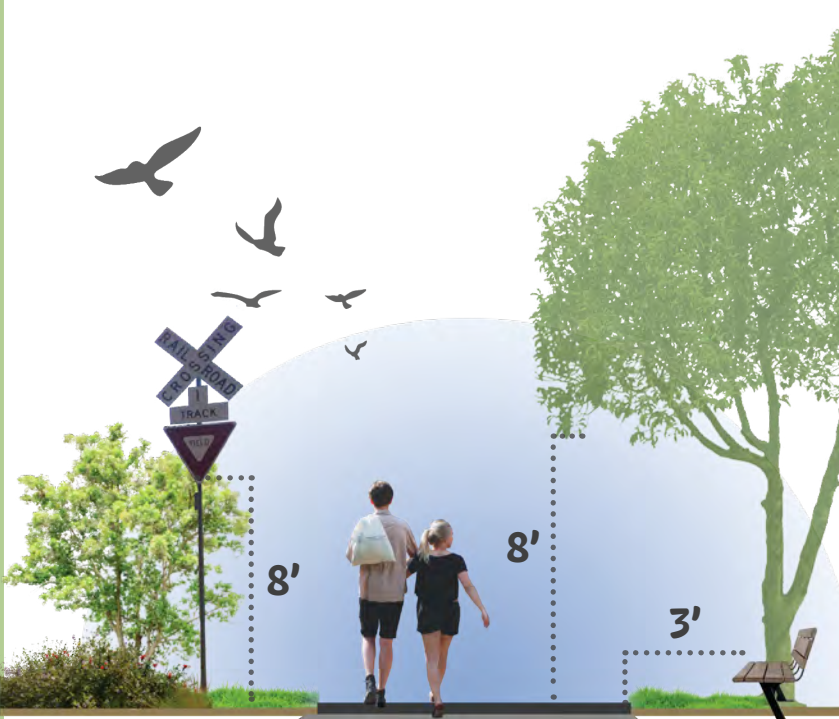
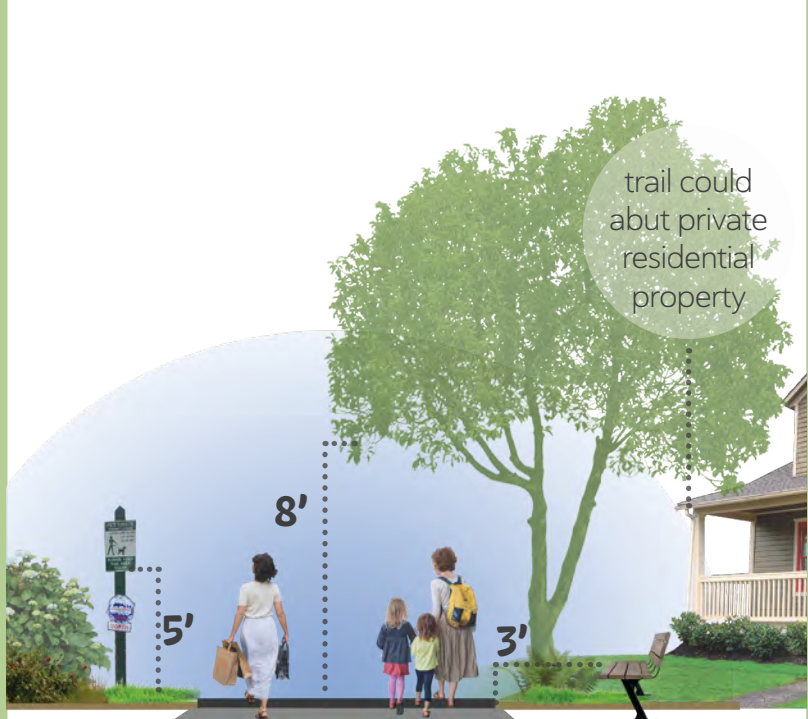
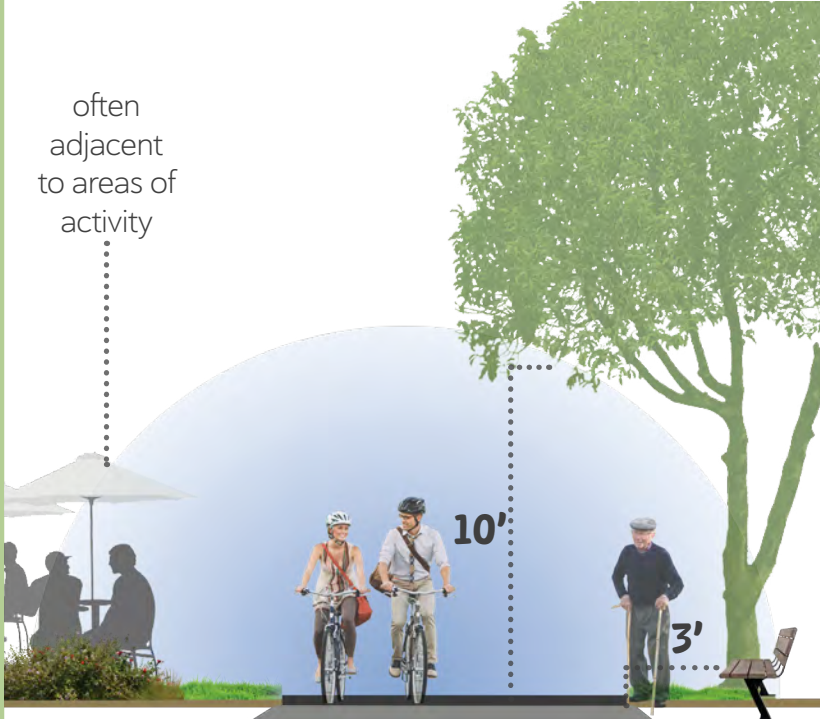
Responsible: ● Contributor: ○ N/A: ○

Frequency/ Goal	Trail Routine Maintenance + Operations Goals							
	Mowing	Trimming Vegetation	Sweeping	Trash + Litter Removal	Snow Removal	Vandalism	Coordinate Volunteers	Coordinate Events
about every 10 days	monthly inspection, best management practices checklist, as needed	monthly inspection, best management practices checklist, as needed	weekly, encourage users to take with them	48 hours or less, unless weekend*	weekly inspection, best management practices checklist, graffiti within 48 hours or less as needed	owner and/or partner managed for trail clean-up + routine maintenance	owner managed, single form + shared calendar, bi-annual meetings + monthly updates	
Responsible Party	Trail Owners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners + Partners	

Note: Trail Owners, for the purpose of this table, include the towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Montgomery County. Trail Partners, for the purpose of this table, include Virginia Tech and Friends of Huckleberry. However, Virginia Tech does assist with mowing and snow removal.  
\*Cross country skiers and dog sledding community members enjoy snow being on the trail.





TRAIL SETTING (1)  DESIGN FEATURE	RURAL 	SUBURBAN 	URBAN 
trail width(2)	8-10 feet, perceived 2-lane operation, up to 300 one-way users per hour	9-11 feet, perceived 2-3 lane operation, up to 300 one-way users per hour	10-12 feet, perceived 3-lane operation (beginning at 11 feet width), up to 500 one-way users per hour
gateway trail head(2) <small>(min one per trail owner)</small>	ADA parking, well-maintained and Huckleberry Trail branded kiosk information area, bike fix-it station	Rural + water, vehicular wayfinding to parking areas, QR codes to access trail resources (no cost and for purchase)	Suburban + restroom, emergency stations, connections to transit
local trail head spacing (3)	Local owner standards, spacing every 10-miles or less	Local owner standards, spacing every 5-miles or less	Local owner standards, spacing as needed/available
vegetation	Plantings should be consistent with the surrounding natural environment, combat invasive species, and help define the trail edge.	Plantings should respond to adjacent properties, regularly maintained, and follow CPTED standards.	Plantings should be used to further define entrances, naturally guide users to points of interest, and could be more robust considering proximity to resources.
rest stops/ rest areas (2)	Spacing typically more than 3-miles- location awareness signage, seating, bike racks	Spacing typically every 2-3 miles- rural + bike fix-its, picnic table, trash/recycling bins	Spacing typically every 2-3 miles or less- suburban + emergency stations, restroom access
typical section  trail width lateral/overhead clearance on-trail amenity setback signage standard	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>8-10'</b></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>9-11'</b></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>10-12'</b></p>



Two, approximately one-mile sections of trail in Blacksburg and Montgomery County, were identified as areas for priority maintenance and to feature for their ease of access. The two “blue ribbon” sections were selected due to the adjacency to handicapped parking, trail gateway accessibility, gentle running and cross slope, and trail amenities with further accommodations.

To add to the variety of trail experiences, users have the opportunity to enjoy an ADA accessible natural surface trail adjacent to the Huckleberry Trail “blue ribbon” section that meanders through Coal Mining Heritage Park.

The Federal Highway Association has noted the importance of designing pedestrian facilities to meet the needs of all users. The FHWA has defined many of these different types of users (3):

- Stroller users
- Wheelchair users
- Individuals with limited balance
- Individuals with a vision impairment
- Individuals with cognitive impairments
- Individuals with emotional impairments
- Individuals who are obese
- Crutch or support cane users
- Individuals with low fitness levels
- Older Adults
- Children



SIGNAGE WITH DIVERSE USERS IN MIND

MAINTENANCE PRIORITY (4)  
Provide information on accessibility when training maintenance personnel

LESS SIGNIFICANT SLOPE PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL USERS  
Running slope < 5%  
Cross slope < 2%

ACCESSIBLE AMENITIES  
36”x48” clear + traversable landing pad next to bench



9-11'



This section highlights feedback received from subject experts and existing trail managers. Subject experts participated in field visits and virtual meetings to share their own maintenance goals, experience working with multiple trail partners, and lessons learned.

**BUILD A GREAT ASSET FOR THE NEXT GENERATION**

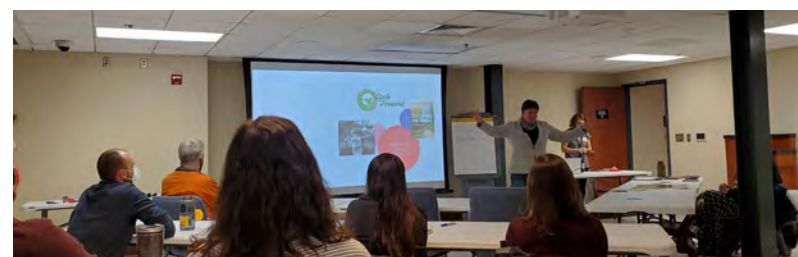
**UPLIFTING THE TRAIL TO A NEW LEVEL**

**RICHER AND BROADER COLLABORATION AMONGST STAKEHOLDERS AND WITH THE COMMUNITY**

**CONNECTIVITY ULTIMATELY RESULTING IN OUR AREA BECOMING A "DESTINATION MOUNTAIN TOWN" ETC.**

SEEKING EXPERT ADVICE  
POST-IT NOTE COMMENTS FROM  
AFTERNOON STAKEHOLDER  
ENGAGEMENT SESSION FACILITATED  
BY AMY CAMP OF CYCLE FORWARD

*Cycle Forward*



On February 24, 2022 Amy Camp of Cycle Forward facilitated a full-day stakeholder engagement session which brought together many key Huckleberry Trail stakeholders, from tourism professionals to land conservation activists. The goals of the workshop included:

- Begin a dialogue around developing a local trail culture and trail-supporting communities
- Discuss how to achieve clear and consistent communications between stakeholders, community members, trail users, and trail maintainers
- Engage and encourage participating stakeholders, unlocking their creative energy as part of the larger Huckleberry Trail Planning process

Morning trail visits that encouraged people to Observe, Participate, and Reflect on their trail experiences. The “participate” portion was an electronic individual assessment of each trail location. Participants shared their insights on the value of the trail location and existing/missing infrastructure and connectivity to local communities. The entire group later reflected on the morning trail visits. The afternoon included:

- The “Ideal Community” small group activity and large group discussion
- A presentation on unlocking the potential of trails and trail communities
- A large group discussion about the three trail locations
- A strategic discussion concerning planning for the future of the trail

Nearly every person in attendance spoke out sharing their perspectives during the afternoon session. Themes that emerged around desired trail expansions, increased community connectivity, and equity and inclusion are consistent with trail-related objectives and best practices observed in other areas.

**QUIRKY, DELIGHTFUL AND SURPRISING ELEMENTS WE CAN INCLUDE ALONG THE TRAIL.**

**-BE FUNCTIONAL FOR COMMUTING TO WORK, SHOPPING, SCHOOL ETC. -AN ENTRY POINT FOR USERS OF ALL ABILITIES -AN AESTHETICALLY PLEASING EXPERIENCE**

**-CONSISTENT BRANDING IN SIGNAGE -MARKETING THAT TELLS THE STORY OF THE TRAIL(S) -COMMUTER "CLUB" EDUCATION ABOUT HOW TO COMMUTE BY BIKE**

**LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT (REMOVE INVASIVES- CELEBRATE NATIVES, LIKE THE HUCKLEBERRY)**



**NOVA PARKS**  
EXPERT FEEDBACK



January 18, 2022, the project management team met with Mr. Mark Whaley, Park Operations Specialist, and Mr. Kevin Casalenuovo, W&OD Railroad Park/Trail Manager. The Washington and Old Dominion Railroad (W&OD) Regional Park is often referred to as one of the skinniest parks in Virginia, and includes a 45-mile trail that runs through urban centers and beautiful countryside.

The NOVA Parks (as the organization came to be known in 2014) was established under the Virginia Park Authorities Act in 1959. The Regional Authority represents Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudon Counties, and the Cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax. Today NOVA Parks maintains over 12,000 acres of Virginia parks.

Best management practices and trail tips shared during the conversation included:

- Every community has a sense of trail ownership
- Currently using National Parks Service standards for trail signage and amenities
- Currently maintaining four restrooms + community businesses encourage trail users to use facilities and patron downtowns
- Doesn't formally manage trail amenity styles - focuses on trail clearance for users
- User behavior is the #1 issue (sporting vs. family users)
- Doesn't maintain trash collection - encourages users to take trash with them
- Graffiti and vandalism are encountered weekly - goal of 72-hours for correcting
- Does not currently plow and will discontinue pre-treatment of snow to preserve pavement markings and preserve water quality
- Coordinated events must begin and end at a location that is away from the trail
- Beginning to incorporate QR codes at trail heads and interpretive signed areas
- Currently provides mile-markers at every half-mile and at intersections

**VIRGINIA CAPITAL TRAIL FOUNDATION**  
EXPERT FEEDBACK

April 1, 2022 the project management team met with Ms. Cat Anthony, Executive Director of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation (VCTF). The Virginia Capital Trail snakes along the James River and State Route 5 for 52-miles. The trail connects the Commonwealth's capital of Richmond to the historic capitals of Jamestown and Williamsburg.

Since September 2004, the VCTF has served as a nonpartisan advocacy partner to provide expertise, raise public awareness, and to seek funding contributions to enhance the trail experience. In the beginning, the foundation was essential to the completion of the trail by raising public awareness and seeking construction funding. Today, the VCTF continues to serve as a resource, community builder, and connector to other trails in the Commonwealth.

Best management practices and trail tips shared during the conversation included:

- Collaboration and cultivation of strong relationships is a guiding principle
- VCTF maintains a "how to" resource for event planning (community police and EMS departments are often the coordinating entity)
- Trail segments and trailheads are owned by local community and DOT partners
- Formal MOUs are in place with many of the trail owners
- Localities retain flexibility to implement their own placemaking initiatives
- Vehicular navigation signage about the trail aligns with community standards
- On-trail wayfinding signage guides users to points of interest and avoids listing specific businesses
- Coordinates two full-trail volunteer clean-up days
- Volunteer construction projects are limited to licensed contractors
- Current newsletter has about 10,000 subscribers and a 40% open rate
- Coordinates 800 volunteers annually, April - October
- Trail Ambassadors program - a group of dedicated, trained volunteers who provide information assistance, basic first aid, bike repair, report trail issues, and clean up litter







## PLAN FOR COLLABORATION

44



Collaboration and transparency are familiar spaces for local governments in Virginia's New River Valley. Economic and workforce development, public utilities, and emergency services are just a few of the areas where NRV communities pool resources. Each year, local government partners meet to review budgets for the upcoming fiscal year and also to confirm collaborative initiatives. Regional transportation interests include attracting passenger rail to Christiansburg and creating the Valley-to-Valley Trail, which will connect the New River Trail State Park to the Radford Riverway, the Huckleberry Trail, and the Roanoke Greenway System.

The Huckleberry Trail is an important regional asset and trail partners continue to make investments and pursue competitive funding opportunities to expand and/or improve the trail assets each year. Individual priorities include: the Town of Blacksburg will be investing in resurfacing the trail and also widening the typical section to ten feet later this year; the Town of Christiansburg continues to build new trail and extend it further south into downtown; Montgomery County has additional phases planned for the Coal Miners Heritage Park area that will create new rest areas and improve ADA access; Virginia Tech is enhancing trail amenities and maintaining a robust online interactive map; and the Friends of Huckleberry just installed new mile marker posts and is actively developing organizational priorities so that it can continue to be a strong partner and advocate.

In addition to the trail work that is already underway, trail partners expressed interest in collaborating on a few topics:

1. MAINTAINING THE EXISTING TRAIL AT A HIGH STANDARD  
Focus on trail clearances when trimming vegetation or installing new amenities, regular mowing and clearing of debris, combating graffiti and vandalism quickly.
2. CONTINUING TO EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE TRAIL AND CONNECTIONS TO OTHER ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION ASSETS  
Asphalt surface material, accessibility for users of all abilities, connecting to local trails and transit stops.
3. DEVELOPING 3-4 "GATEWAY" TRAIL ACCESS LOCATIONS  
Uniquely branded just for the Huckleberry and consistent appearance and amenities at each location.

This section provides an overview of the key findings and recommendations identified through the planning process. To create consistency with other local, regional, and statewide transportation plans, next steps/goals are divided in to two parts: 1) Action Plan, and 2) Vision Plan. Goals identified in the Action Plan reflect ideas that have the most consensus, as well as activities and/or investments that are existing today. The Vision Plan includes ideas that may require further planning and conversations about compatibility, for both the Huckleberry Trail and the partners who maintain it. Generally, both plans are intended to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, but not less than every five years.



PRECEDENT



Trail Expansion + Connectivity

Improving Access for Users of All Abilities

Trail Mapping + Information

Event Planning

Volunteer Support

Trail Landscaping

Trail Adjacent Attractions

Gateway Trail Access

Integrity of Local Brand

Incorporation of Local History + Art

Wayfinding + Signage (on trail)

Fundraising

Consistency of Trail Amenities

Promotion as a Destination Trail

**ACTION PLAN ITEMS**      **CONTINUED CONVERSATIONS**      **VISION PLAN OPPORTUNITIES**

Icons: Trail map, Wheelchair, Open map, Calendar, Three hands, Trees, Bicycle and wrench.



ID	GOAL	PARTNERS	INITIATION TARGET	COST
1	Maintain existing Huckleberry Trail segments	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	ongoing	Utilize existing resources
2	Continue expanding the Huckleberry Trail South and increase connections to other alternative transportation assets (trails, transit, rail, etc.)	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	ongoing	\$\$\$ avg per year
3	Collaborate to develop consistently branded Gateway Trailheads	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Friends of the Huckleberry	Fall 2023	\$\$\$ each gateway
4	Improve and/or create new access to the most user-friendly sections of trail	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Friends of the Huckleberry	Spring 2027	\$\$ per location
5	Collaborate to update and/or create new trail mapping, free and for purchase versions	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Spring 2023	Utilize existing resources
6	Incorporate local history and art along the trail	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of Huckleberry, Blacksburg Regional Art Association, Christiansburg Institute, Christiansburg Arts Advisory Board, Montgomery Museum, Christiansburg "Public" Arts Advisory Board	Spring 2024	\$ per location
7	Develop and maintain a streamlined approach to event planning	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Spring 2024	Utilize existing resources
8	Huckleberry Trail Partners & Managers Meeting, bi-annually, Spring & Fall	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Fall 2022	Utilize existing resources

\*\$- <10k  
 \$\$- 10k-50k  
 \$\$\$- >50K

ID	GOAL	PARTNERS	COST
1	Create additional ranges of opportunities for fundraising initiatives (tree groves, restroom areas, gateways, bike repair, etc.)	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Utilize existing resources
2	Create more opportunities and options for volunteers to contribute year-round	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Utilize existing resources
3	Construct pedestrian bridge over Prices Fork Rd at the end of Sheffield Dr	Blacksburg, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Unknown
4	Install wayfinding signage for intersecting trails, points of interest, and amenities	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Friends of the Huckleberry	Unknown
5	Collaborate to develop a best management practices plan for healthy trail vegetation	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	\$ per partner
6	Collaborate to develop a trail capital improvement plan to guide fundraising investments	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Utilize existing resources
7	Establish a formal MOU to create a Trail Ambassadors Program	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of Huckleberry	Unknown
8	Promote the Huckleberry as a destination trail in tourism campaigns	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Unknown
9	Develop and maintain consistent standards for trail amenities and technology	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Unknown
10	Install blue-light emergency stations every half-mile mark and in low traffic and/or areas that remain dark	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	\$ per station
11	Install bollards where trail intersects with parking areas and other roadways	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	\$ per location





## NEXT STEPS



The Huckleberry Trail is an important asset for the New River Valley’s transportation network. As such, the NRVMPPO’s Technical Advisory Committee advises acknowledging the trail as a critical roadway/commuter route. Special events, maintenance and construction, and other activities should mitigate any potential impacts that would otherwise hinder continuous through bicycle and pedestrian traffic during daylight hours. Collaboration and transparency are familiar spaces for local governments in Virginia’s New River Valley. Through a series of one-on-one meetings and review and input from the NRVMPPO’s Technical Advisory Committee, trail partners expressed potential interest in collaborating on the following next steps:

1. **ESTABLISH A BI-ANNUAL MEETING**  
Spring meeting could focus on anticipated special events/scheduling and collaborative trail maintenance activities. Fall meeting could focus on developing/incorporating/expanding Huckleberry Trail brand, identifying fundraising initiatives, and acknowledging key trail partners/contributors.
2. **MAINTAINING THE EXISTING TRAIL AT A HIGH STANDARD**  
Continue focus on trail clearances when trimming vegetation, regular mowing and clearing of debris, combating graffiti and vandalism quickly
3. **CONTINUING TO EXPAND AND ENHANCE THE TRAIL AND CONNECTIONS TO OTHER ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION ASSETS**  
Continue supporting the expansion of the Huckleberry Trail and connections population and employment centers/clusters
4. **DEVELOPING 3-4 “GATEWAY” TRAIL ACCESS LOCATIONS**  
Develop a uniquely branded premium kiosk just for the Huckleberry, and develop cost estimates to create consistency of appearance and amenities at each location
5. **STREAMLINING EVENT COORDINATION**  
Continue exploring the creation of a universal form that is compatible in the towns and county, and creating a shared calendar
6. **IDENTIFYING MORE WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE**  
Explore establishing a new trail ambassadors volunteer program and creating alternatives to benches for donations (tree groves, planting areas, etc.)









# HUCKLEBERRY TRAIL PLAN

## APPENDICES

- A. List of References
- B. Cycle Forward  
    Summary Report  
    Workshop Agenda, Survey, and Input
- C. NOVA Parks Meeting Summary
- D. Virginia Capital Trail Foundation Meeting Summary
- E. Trail Routine Maintenance & Operations Goals (full table)
- F. Trail Amenity Inventory (full table with location info)
- G. Draft Plan TAC Presentation
- H. ECJ/NAACP Workshop Agenda
- I. Virginia Tech Survey and Summary





## APPENDIX A: RESOURCES

1. North Country Trail Handbook: Planning, Design, Construction, Maintenance. 2019. National Park Foundation. Retrieved from: [https://northcountrytrail.org/files/trail-management/NCT%20Handbook\\_Planning-Design-Construction-Maintenance\\_2019.pdf](https://northcountrytrail.org/files/trail-management/NCT%20Handbook_Planning-Design-Construction-Maintenance_2019.pdf)
2. Paved Trails Study, National Parks Service, National Capital Region. 2016. National Park Service. Retrieved from: <https://s26562.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/NPS-Paved-Trails-Study-Final-Reduced.pdf>
3. Evaluation of Safety, Design, and Operation of Shared-Use Paths Final Report. 2006. US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Research Development, and Technology, Turner-Fairbank Highway Research Center, 6300 Georgetown Pike, McLean, VA 22101-2296.
4. Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails. 2012. The Forest Service and United States Department of Agriculture. Retrieved from: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Accessibility-Guide-Book.pdf>

## APPENDIX B: CYCLE FORWARD

Amy Camp Visit

24 February 2022

General thoughts about Huckleberry Trail:

- Envisioning kids in the space
- Integration of art
- Trail town program (check out Pittsburg)
- Extending an invitation to potential partners
- Accessibility is important
- Expansion of all other trail types/systems - increasing connectivity
- Outreach and buy-in from trail owners
- Funding resources to promote trail
- Connecting to population centers
- Utilizing the County bridge over 460 Bypass - Connecting park to trail
- Equity and inclusion
- Celebrating current accomplishments
- Do we tell the story?
- Communication between users and owners - increasing and simplifying
- Contributing resources

Trail Sections:

Christiansburg Segment:

- Open and Built environments, urban feel
- Continuation of Huckleberry
- Thermo markings rather than mounted signs (which are a target for theft)
- Good parking
- Lack of signage/wayfinding to the trail
- Huckleberry Trail sign on bridge over 114
- Restrooms, better connectivity to businesses could improve
- Incorporating more textures and fencing could improve feel - maybe incorporate art along segments that have both sides fenced

Montgomery/Merrimac Segment:

- Connecting trailer parks to trail (if desired by community)
- Existing trailer park is building trails on property
- Specimen trail, bathroom
- Kiosks were gray
- Maybe incorporate emergency devices or contact info
- Flat, good parking, very accessible
- Opportunity for a family picnic at Coal Miners Heritage Park - what more could be incorporated to maximize the benefits in this wide section of trail?
- Potentially incorporate art or educational information about vegetation
- Maybe incorporate QR codes to learn more
- Opportunity to incorporate history of black and white coal miners



## APPENDIX B: CYCLE FORWARD

Blacksburg Segment:

- Mature trees and flat
- Needs a gateway(s)
- Could use access to more restrooms
- Potentially relocate caboose to a trail head
- Fence, vegetations, and no trespassing signs along the trail
- Backyards desire vegetative buffer, even with invasive plants
- Creative designs along trail
- Programming
- Love the monkey bars - would like to see more climbing structures
- Drainage in areas where trail and built environment has settled

## APPENDIX B: CYCLE FORWARD // WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

9:30-11:45 Morning Trail Visits (Asset Collection and Intentional Observation)

Participants will visit the following trail stations, providing their own transportation to sites. Facilitators will be on site to provide guidance and instruction. Participants will be asked to respond to survey questions via their personal technology (phone/ 5G accessible tablet). Each facilitator will have backup paper surveys if needed.

Ideal arrival times (to catch all instructions and group conversation):

First site, 9:30 a.m.

Second site, 10:20 a.m.

Third site, 11:10 a.m.

PERSONALIZED INSTRUCTIONS:

First site, 9:30 a.m. Blacksburg (200 Miller St SW, Blacksburg, VA 24060)

Parking at the Trailhead Parking area

Meet at Trailhead across Miller St.

Second site, 10:20 a.m. County (805 Merrimac Rd, Blacksburg, VA 24060)

Parking at the Trailhead Parking area

Meet at Trailhead off High Top Road

Third site, 11:10 a.m. Christiansburg (110 New River Rd, Christiansburg, VA 24073)

Parking at the lot to the left of the Regal Cinema

Meet at Renva W. Knowles Bridge access point

Noon Social Lunch at Montgomery County Government Center Multipurpose Room 1

Lunch will be provided and participants will have further opportunities to engage with trail asset identification if they wish.

12:45-3:45 Strategy and Planning Session

Strategy session will take place at Montgomery County Government Center. PLEASE review parking instructions attached.

## APPENDIX B: CYCLE FORWARD // SURVEY RESULTS

North Trail Station Assessment: 200 Miller Street, Blacksburg, VA

**Q1 What are you noticing as you walk this section of trail? What are you noticing about the trail, about your surroundings, about how you feel in the space?**

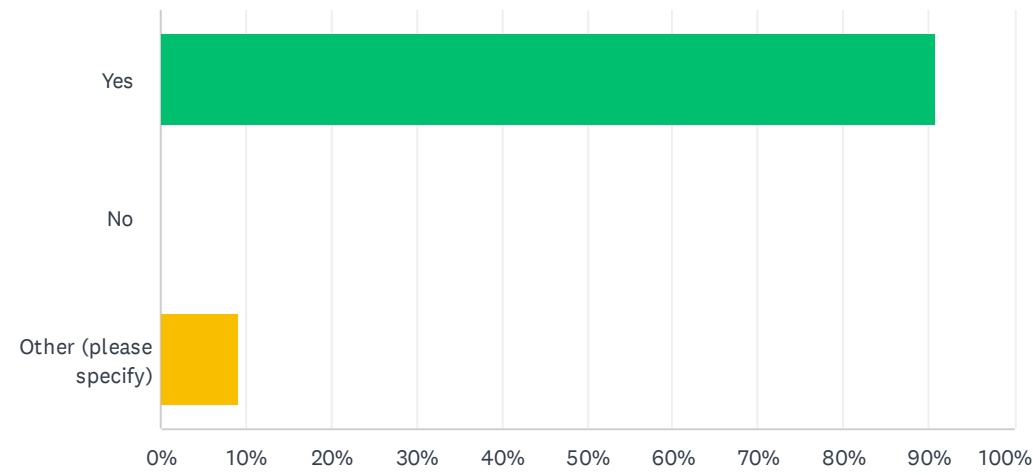
Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Traffic, maintained well, some branches hanging on trail! Lot's of bamboo	2/24/2022 10:34 AM
2	Peaceful safe relaxing welcoming	2/24/2022 10:34 AM
3	This is a residential, suburban section, tree-lined, very much like a park. It's wooded but not far from houses which makes it feel safe	2/24/2022 10:34 AM
4	Nice separation between trail and vehicular traffic of adjacent road. Well established canopy and landscaping. Good trail surface. Calming surroundings. Quiet and peaceful.	2/24/2022 10:24 AM
5	Combination of manicured park and invasive species. Very few native plants	2/24/2022 9:52 AM
6	Inviting, clean, patterns, color, contrast, symmetry .Old and new. Provides for a calm. traffic noises.	2/24/2022 9:51 AM
7	Greenery, bird sounds, person cutting across trail, water puddling, fence provides nice barrier that's see through, mostly quiet aside from cars passing by on Harrell, I went in and out of feeling like I was in the town and felt transported when there was greenery around me. The trees and other greenery help frame the trail. It was mostly clean - one piece of trash. Pleasant experience. Lots of places to stop and sit	2/24/2022 9:50 AM
8	Tree canopy pavement in good condition easy access from neighborhood homes birds benches rain some drainage issues berm provides natural border flowers wide path visually inviting	2/24/2022 9:50 AM
9	The interface between the trail and the residential structures. The constructed access point and goat trails. The age of kiosk and benches. Condition of pavement-roots. Bamboo. English Ivy. Width of trail to accommodate two people wide with umbrellas.	2/24/2022 9:50 AM
10	Sounds of rain, birds, and light traffic. Lots of nice mature trees and screening shrubs. Wide trail with lots of space to move. Some areas with water puddling. Feels comfortable and familiar.	2/24/2022 9:49 AM
11	Small bump/cracked section needs repaired. I like the spacing of the seating. This is one of my favorite sections because of the tree canopy and flatness	2/24/2022 9:49 AM



### Q2 Does this part of the trail feel distinct or special?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

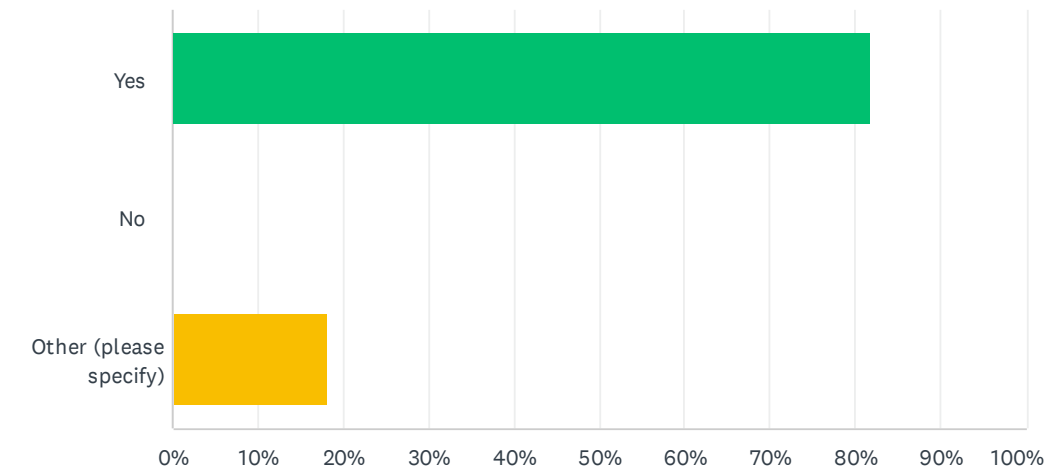


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	90.91% 10
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	9.09% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	It is a bit hidden and signage not really apparent.	2/24/2022 9:56 AM

### Q3 Is there a gateway point to enter/leave the trail at this location (e.g. a piece of art or a welcome sign)?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



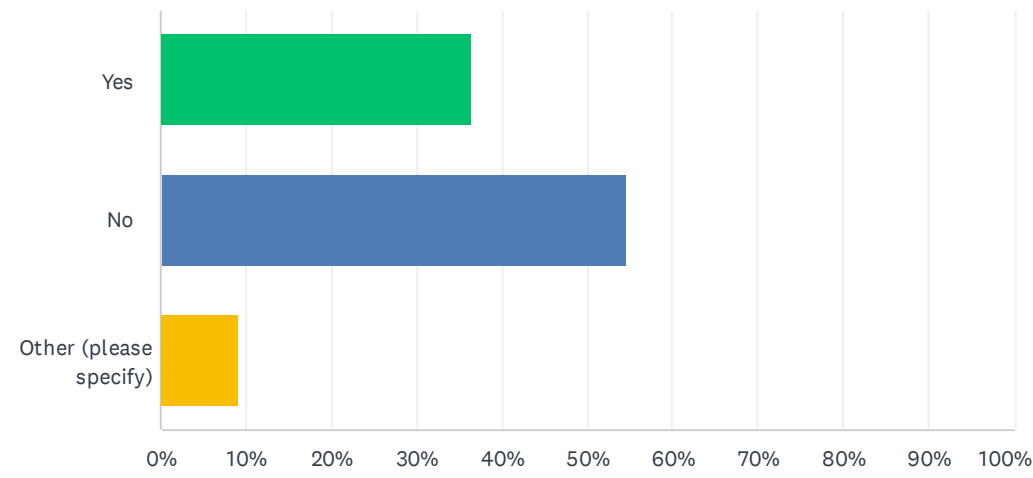
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	81.82% 9
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	18.18% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Sort of. The trail kiosk kind of provides that but it doesn't call out that you're on the huckleberry trail	2/24/2022 10:02 AM
2	There is a kiosk but it's not exceptional. Would like to see art and an anchor kiosk.	2/24/2022 9:55 AM



### Q4 Is there adequate signage to find the trail from town?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

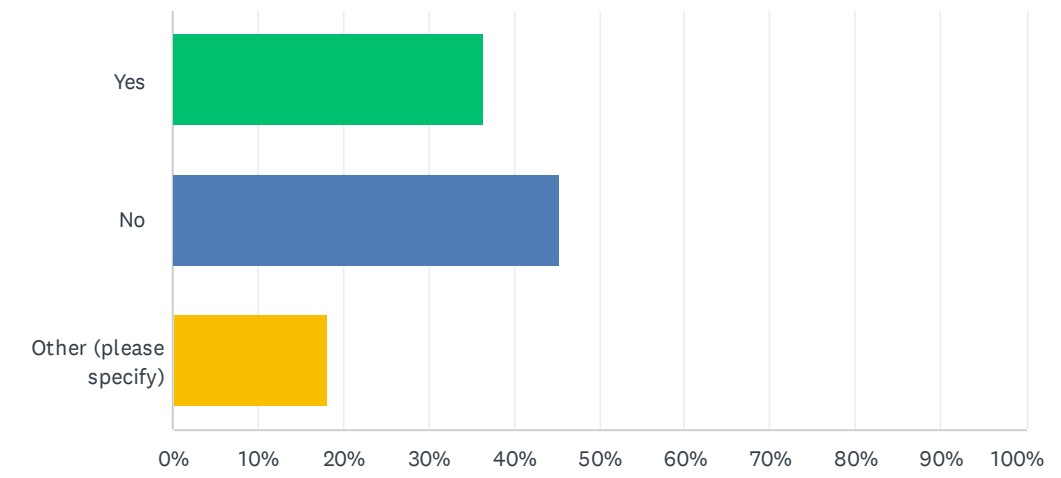


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	36.36% 4
No	54.55% 6
Other (please specify)	9.09% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Yes but it may still feel difficult to find for first time users	2/24/2022 9:58 AM

### Q5 Is there adequate signage from the trail leading to town?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



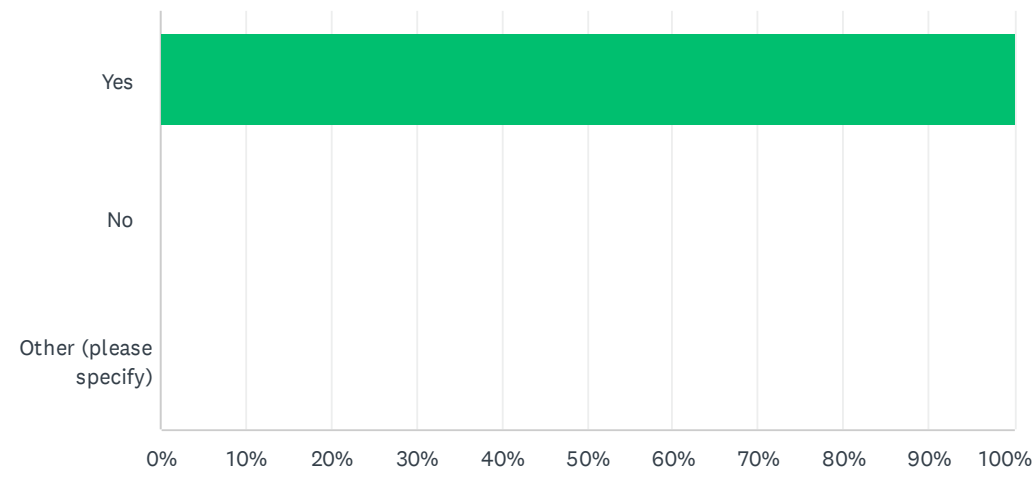
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	36.36% 4
No	45.45% 5
Other (please specify)	18.18% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	A map has been placed on the welcome board, which focuses on the trail and nearby destinations, but does not really focus on getting to downtown.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	Not that I see	2/24/2022 9:56 AM



### Q6 Is there an informal kiosk and map at this trail access?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

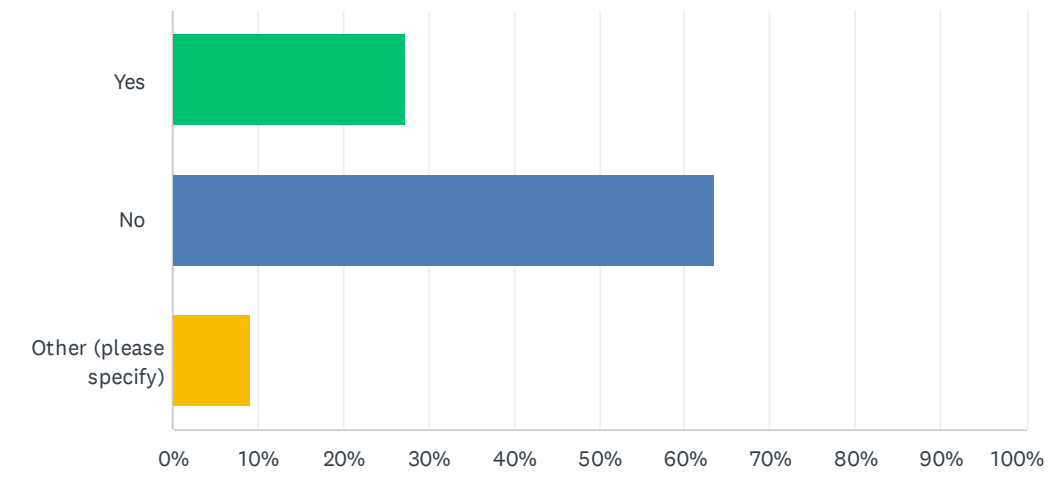


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00% 11
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q7 Is there interpretive information at this trail access?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



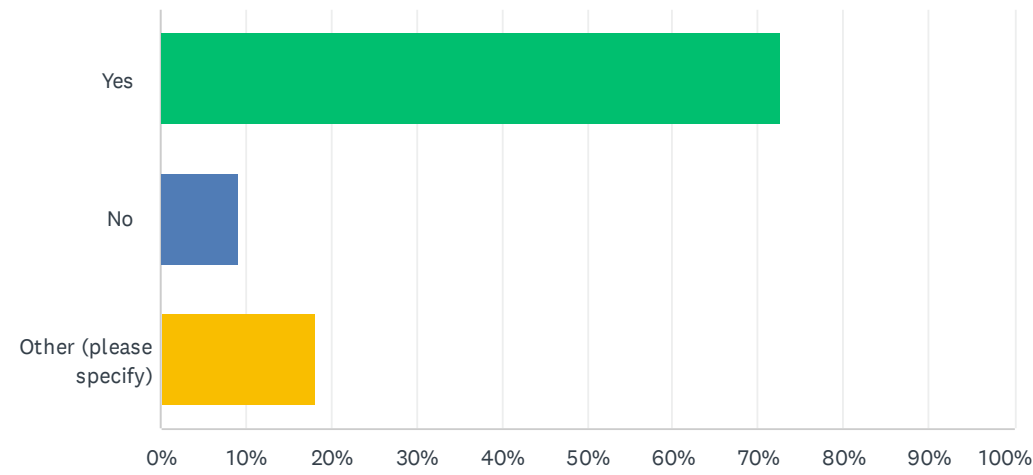
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	27.27% 3
No	63.64% 7
Other (please specify)	9.09% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not enough	2/24/2022 9:56 AM



### Q8 Does the trail at this location (including trailhead amenities) seem accessible to you?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

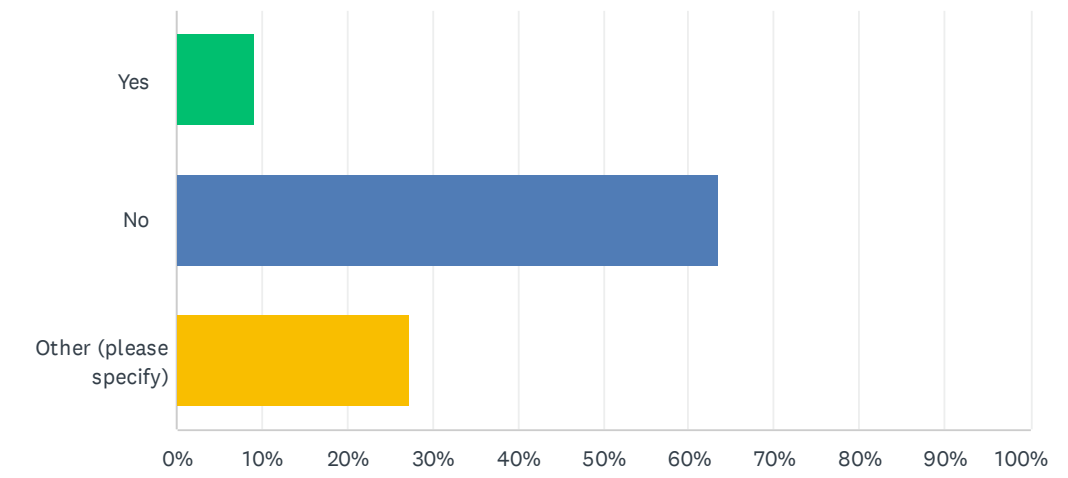


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	72.73% 8
No	9.09% 1
Other (please specify)	18.18% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Yes, but it's not really clear where to park unless you know that piece of information. I would imagine a wheel chair user may have a hard time getting from the lower parking lot to the trail.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	They are easy to locate but the surface may be challenging for some users	2/24/2022 9:58 AM

### Q9 Are there flush toilet facilities available to the public?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



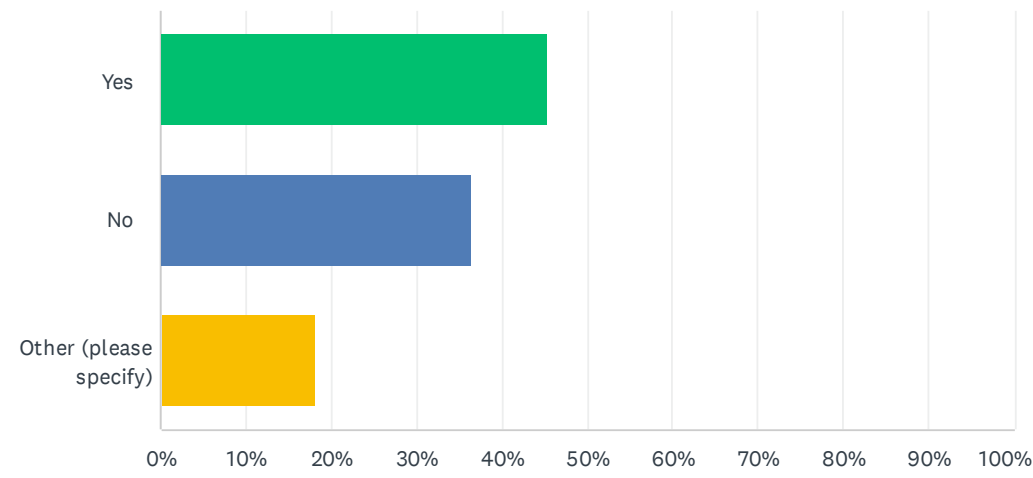
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	9.09% 1
No	63.64% 7
Other (please specify)	27.27% 3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Apparently not, but the public nearby library has restrooms inside, operated by Montgomery County.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	At the library	2/24/2022 11:13 AM
3	At the library	2/24/2022 9:53 AM



### Q10 Are there picnic tables, pavilions, or shelters?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

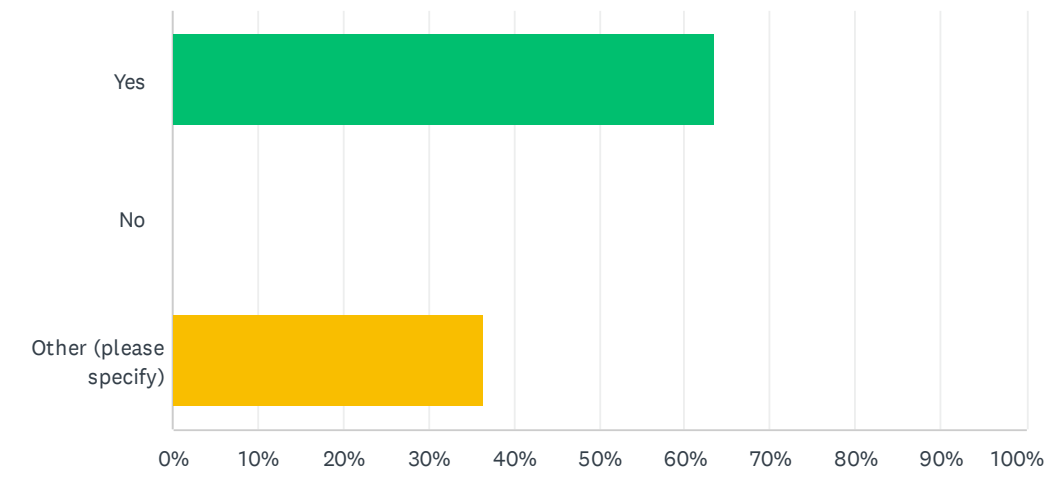


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	45.45% 5
No	36.36% 4
Other (please specify)	18.18% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	There is a picnic table, bench, and trash can each of which are wooden and need an overhaul.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	There is a picnic table shortly after the trailhead and several benches	2/24/2022 9:58 AM

### Q11 Are there bike racks?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



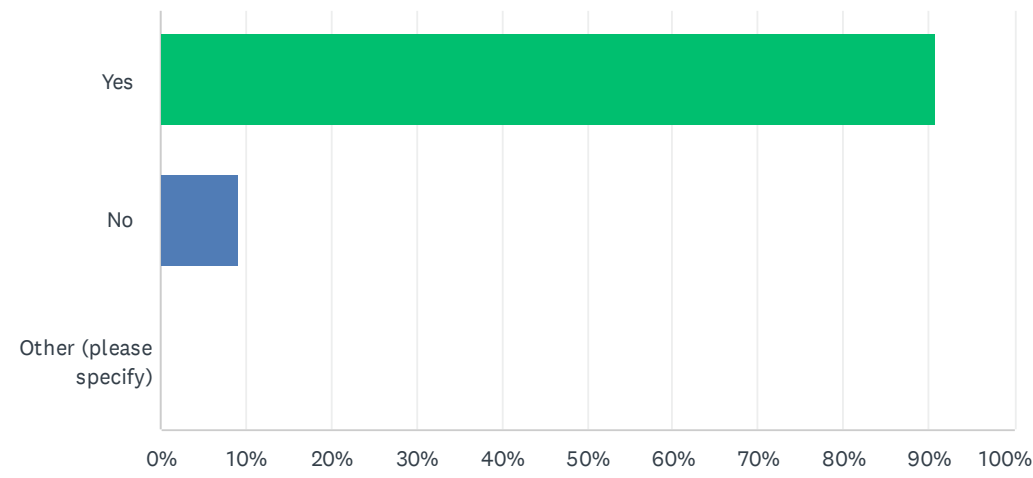
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	63.64% 7
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	36.36% 4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Yes, but there are exclusively for the regional Roam NRV bike share bikes. The nearby library has bike racks too but many people, especially visitors, may not realize they are there. However, I am not sure how important bike racks are as most people are simply riding or walking and there may not need to be racks here. They'd be more important at nearby restaurants, etc.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	Only for bike share	2/24/2022 10:02 AM
3	There are bike share bike racks but not for other users	2/24/2022 9:58 AM
4	Roam bike racks	2/24/2022 9:53 AM



### Q12 Are there trash receptacles near the trail entrance?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

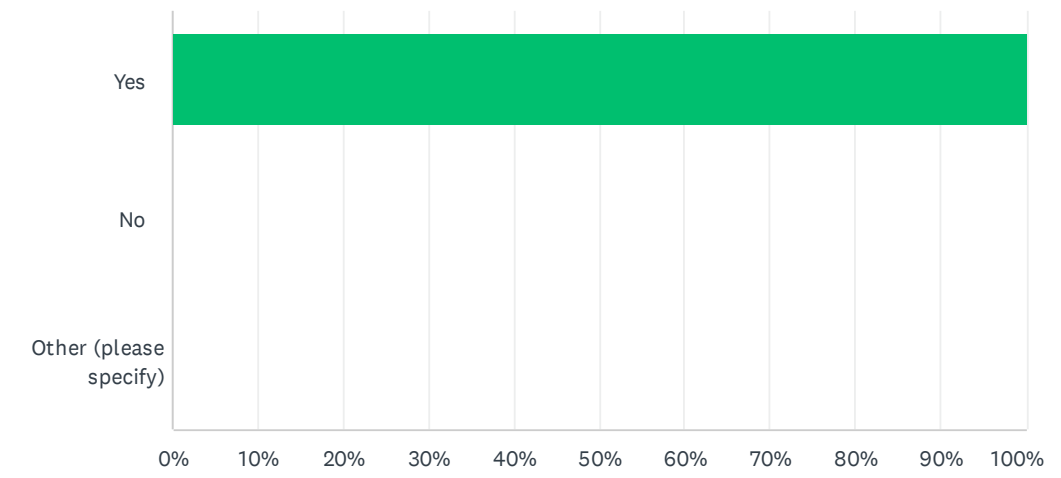


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	90.91% 10
No	9.09% 1
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
There are no responses.		

### Q13 Is there cell phone reception?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



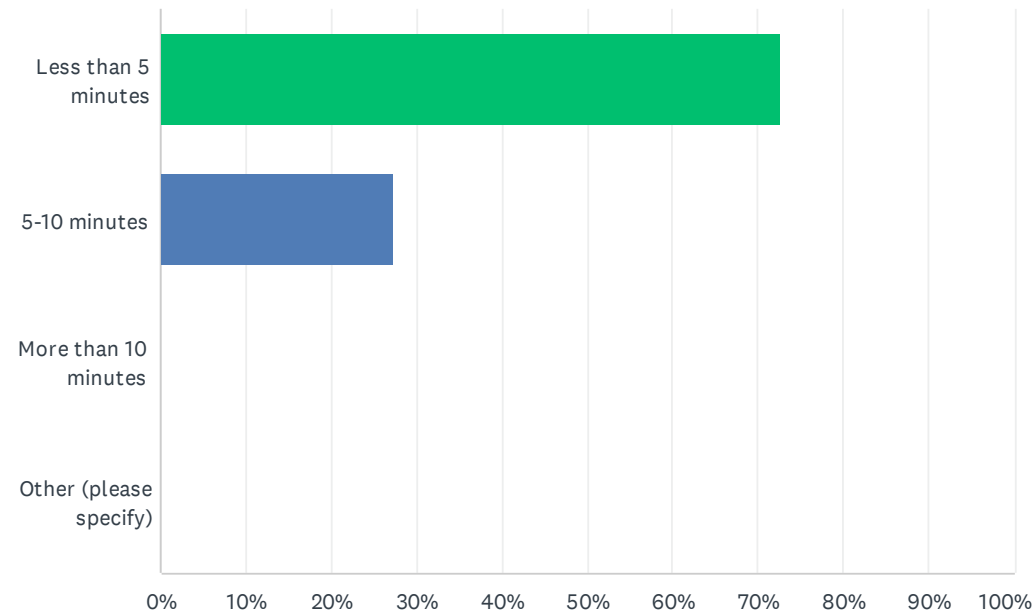
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00% 11
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
There are no responses.		



### Q14 How long might it take to bike to the nearest business services?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

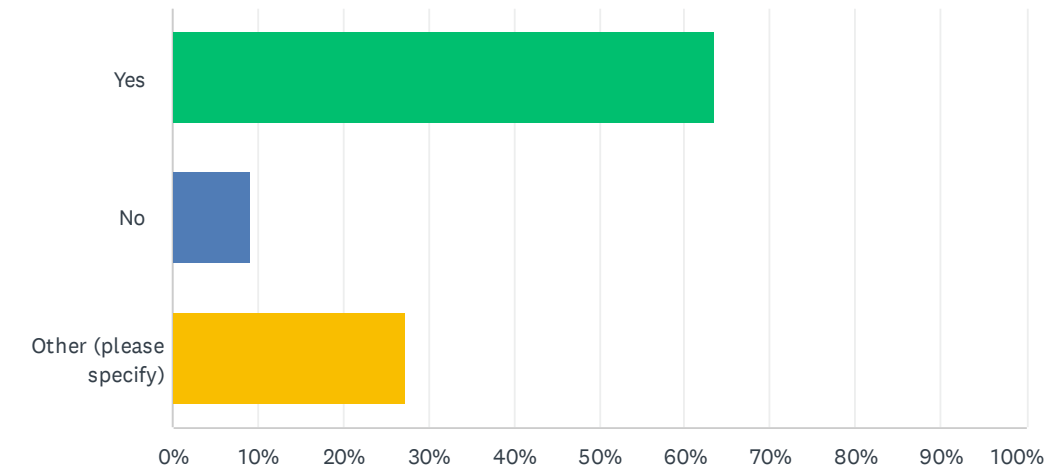


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than 5 minutes	72.73% 8
5-10 minutes	27.27% 3
More than 10 minutes	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q15 Is it easy and safe for people to bike or walk between this trail access and business services? Consider elevation changes, signage, sidewalks, bike lanes, and vehicular traffic.

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



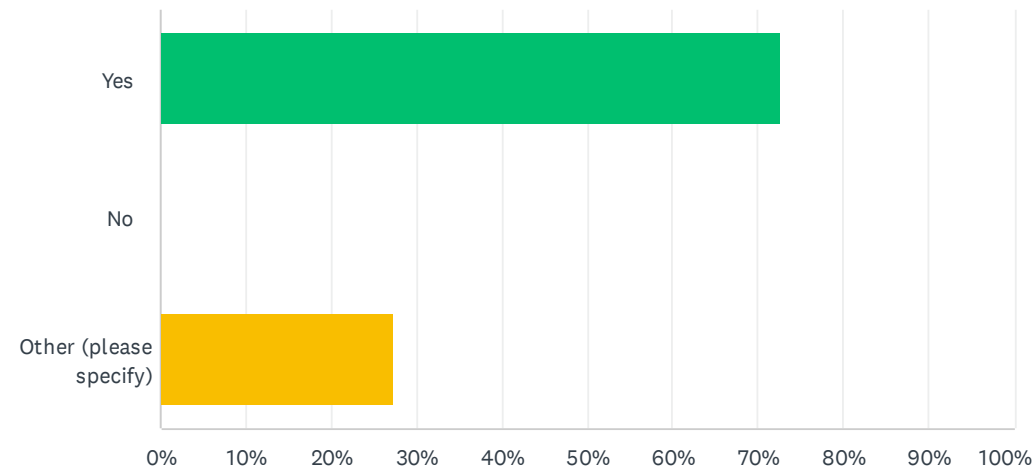
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	63.64% 7
No	9.09% 1
Other (please specify)	27.27% 3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	It is relatively safe, if you are an experienced rider and are comfortable riding on the shared path, and then within traffic downtown. Many people (young kids and college students) ride on the sidewalks downtown, including on Main Street, and there is a somewhat unknown law/rule that riding downtown is not allowed. It is buried in the town code there are a few signs up about it, but the rule seems to be rarely discussed, and rarely enforced.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	It is easy for confident users but not all users. There are no protected facilities	2/24/2022 9:58 AM
3	Improvements could be made	2/24/2022 9:55 AM



### Q16 Are local people near this part of the trail knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the trail?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

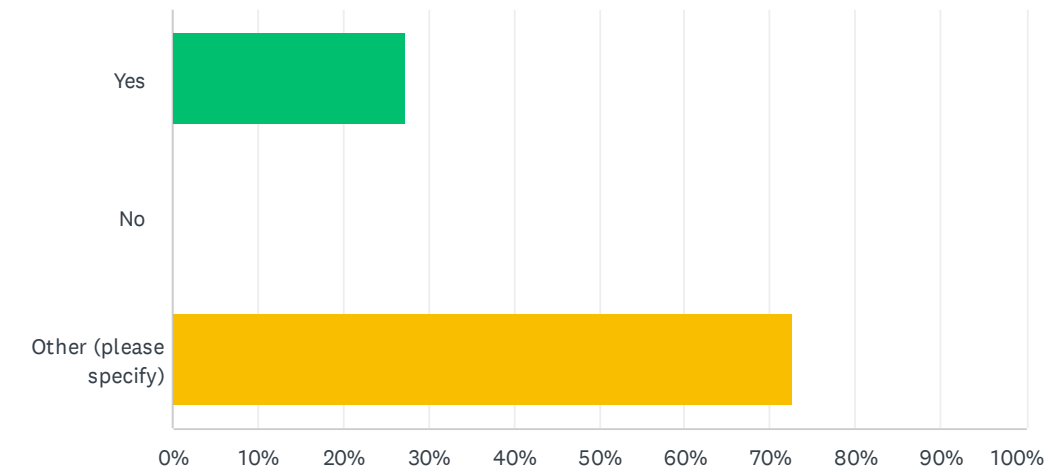


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	72.73% 8
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	27.27% 3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I am not sure. I imagine some residents living along or near the trail choose these homes in some cases to be near the trail and have access to it. On the other hand, during football games and at other times, I imagine some residents dislike the trail because it is overwhelmed and crowded.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	Not sure. My best guess is it's a mixed bag with the students	2/24/2022 10:02 AM
3	Not sure	2/24/2022 9:56 AM

### Q17 Do business owners and other locals exhibit warm hospitality toward trail users?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	27.27% 3
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	72.73% 8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I am not sure. I've never heard of a business catering to or having any sort of specials for trail users or cyclists.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:13 AM
3	unsure	2/24/2022 10:26 AM
4	Not sure	2/24/2022 10:02 AM
5	Not sure	2/24/2022 9:56 AM
6	Not sure	2/24/2022 9:55 AM
7	We've never measured this	2/24/2022 9:55 AM
8	Not sure	2/24/2022 9:54 AM



### Q18 What is working well about the trail at this location?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	It has all the bones for a nice, welcoming gateway. I understand there may be some interest already in re-doing/improving the sign, and that should proceed. It's fairly worn out and could be more functional, and should be updated more often. I am not sure of the policy but it could be an old fashioned "bulletin board" for public events if it was done right, with a protocol to allow those interested to contact the Town or another authority to have postings reviewed and then posted for events, lost animals, lost items, etc.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	Well marked, flat easy section of trail. Quickly accessible to residents	2/24/2022 11:13 AM
3	Attractive and good parking	2/24/2022 10:40 AM
4	Quiet, peaceful. Accessible.	2/24/2022 10:26 AM
5	Trees frame the trail. It's close to popular destinations	2/24/2022 10:02 AM
6	Easy access from downtown and adequate parking for recreational users.	2/24/2022 9:58 AM
7	Very inviting and parking though limited is available during business hours	2/24/2022 9:56 AM
8	Accessible parking	2/24/2022 9:55 AM
9	Easy access for students and downtown residents	2/24/2022 9:55 AM
10	Downtown	2/24/2022 9:54 AM
11	Grocery store easily accessible by this location + bike lane, as well as bike shop. Corridor into downtown	2/24/2022 9:53 AM

### Q19 What inspires you about this part of the trail?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 2

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	It's picturesque and has been "mile zero to one" since the start, as far as I know. The location near the library and into downtown and near VT and some nice public streets are all welcoming and provide good connections. It feels like a central, important area – the fact that the library was a train station may be part of the allure to this location too.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	The community feeling, being close to businesses and residences	2/24/2022 11:13 AM
3	Beginning and history	2/24/2022 10:40 AM
4	Natural environment is intact	2/24/2022 10:26 AM
5	It is wide and comfortable and feels like a relief from the more urban environment.	2/24/2022 9:58 AM
6	The proximity to town access	2/24/2022 9:56 AM
7	Inviting and exciting	2/24/2022 9:55 AM
8	The tree canopy and quickly enveloping into nature	2/24/2022 9:55 AM
9	Urban trail connection	2/24/2022 9:54 AM
10	This part of the trail always seems serene to me	2/24/2022 9:53 AM



### Q20 Is there anything else you want to share?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 6

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	2 big items: 1) IMPROVE THIS GATEWAY: As a gateway, and probably the 1st original mile, this area is crowded at times. A painted centerline might be useful to keep people to the right especially here a near the big turn at mile 0.9. Some of the edges are crumbling, and some roots are causing major (already painted) bumps/cracks that are safety and liability issues. This particular crack has been a problem for at least 3 years. The welcome sign is about a C minus; it has graffiti on the back side of it, has a dented un-maintained, empty pet-waste bag container, has parts of an old frame (presumably to hold a glass or plastic cover) just left there on the back edge, and the "rules" sign (bolted right over an old one, that should have been removed) does not have consistent, parallel construction bullets points (the grammatical structure is different for the bullets), and has at least one typo. The nearby garbage sign is on a broken foundation, and there is what looks like a pet waste or recycling bin there laying on its side, un-usable. 2) START A TRAIL AMBASSADOR PROGRAM: As with many trail systems across the country, I think it's time to consider starting a trail ambassador program. Such a program would likely need some funding to have local/regional staff with additional MPO planning funding to help facilitate it, but such a program, mostly operated by volunteers could help with: • trail clean up, • trail monitoring, • keeping localities apprised of potential risky maintenance issues (see the response to item #1 re. a pavement crack near the trail start). Volunteers would also help to: • represent the stakeholders as a presence that staff cannot easily do (I've only seen a police officer on the trail once and public works a few times over the years), • perform trail monitoring, • help trail visitors with logistics like providing directions to water and restrooms, • help with flat tires, providing maps, and other interactions. These sort of interactions between trail visitors and trail ambassadors to the other stakeholders would add up to a more robust communication mechanism between the stakeholders and the trail-user community which would be extremely valuable.	2/24/2022 12:52 PM
2	No	2/24/2022 11:13 AM
3	Na	2/24/2022 10:26 AM
4	Not at this point	2/24/2022 9:56 AM
5	Trail is in excellent condition	2/24/2022 9:55 AM
6	Nope	2/24/2022 9:54 AM

### Q1 What are you noticing as you walk this section of trail? What are you noticing about the trail, about your surroundings, about how you feel in the space?

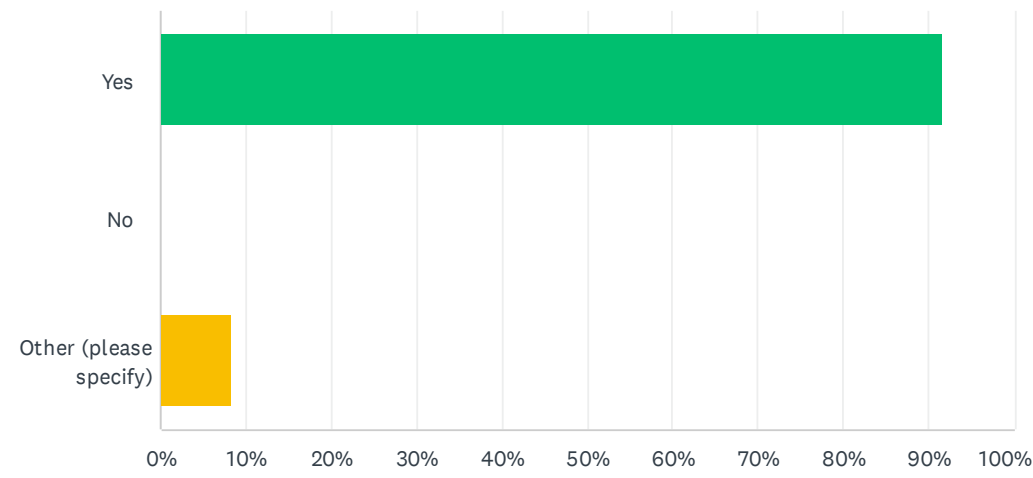
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	This is a very rural, wooded section. The trail is wide and flat with. A nice stream crossing. Also historic with the coal mining trail and exhibits. It felt a bit like the wilderness but connected to history	2/24/2022 12:16 PM
2	Good parking, trees, inviting, drainage issues, park, history,	2/24/2022 11:44 AM
3	Very natural, remote	2/24/2022 11:43 AM
4	Scenic and peaceful	2/24/2022 11:43 AM
5	Mature trees and landscape, quiet and serene. Good trail surface.	2/24/2022 11:42 AM
6	Water! The stream is up and fast. This section is nice and flat; which is good for accessibility.	2/24/2022 10:48 AM
7	Congested entrance at parking. Groomed trail.	2/24/2022 10:47 AM
8	Sounds of rain and birds. Several very large specimen trees. Uneven ground by the intersection. Flat wide trail with lots of dense trees and shrubs along it. Easy walking	2/24/2022 10:47 AM
9	Mix of manicured park and invasive plants	2/24/2022 10:46 AM
10	Quiet. Puddles. Walking away from the road, you quickly feel like you're in the middle of nowhere. Trail crossing at Merrimac feels unsafe. Side trails, but no map of where they lead. Not much signage once you move away from Merrimac. This was a pleasant experience. Multiple kiosks at Merrimac with two different maps of the huckleberry	2/24/2022 10:46 AM
11	Coal miners section - fairly secluded and wooded, can't see much development which is nice. Trail seems well maintained	2/24/2022 10:28 AM
12	Very well kept,	2/24/2022 10:06 AM
13	I think it's the best section of the huckleberry trail. More open space on sides of the trail giving a more natural feeling	2/24/2022 9:34 AM



### Q2 Does this part of the trail feel distinct or special?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

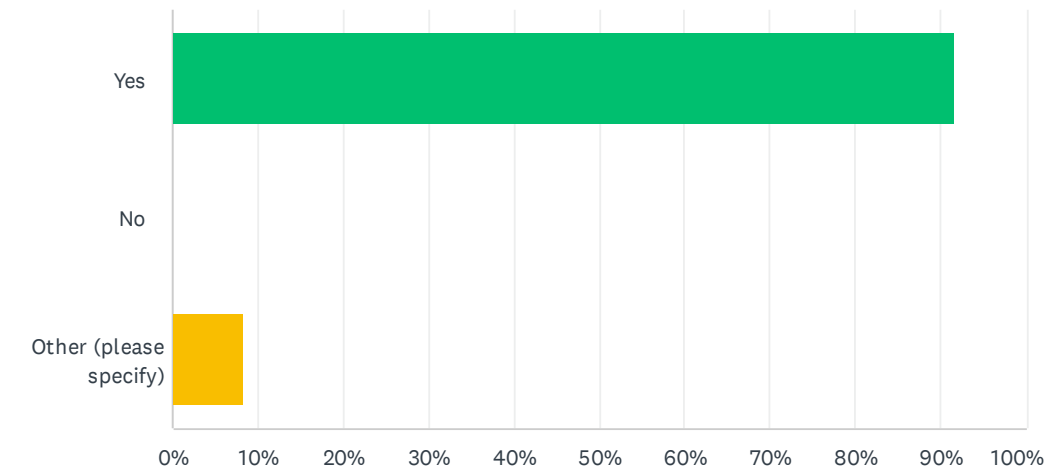


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	91.67% 11
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	8.33% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not at beginning but ones at mine equipment site , yes.	2/24/2022 10:52 AM

### Q3 Is there a gateway point to enter/leave the trail at this location (e.g. a piece of art or a welcome sign)?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



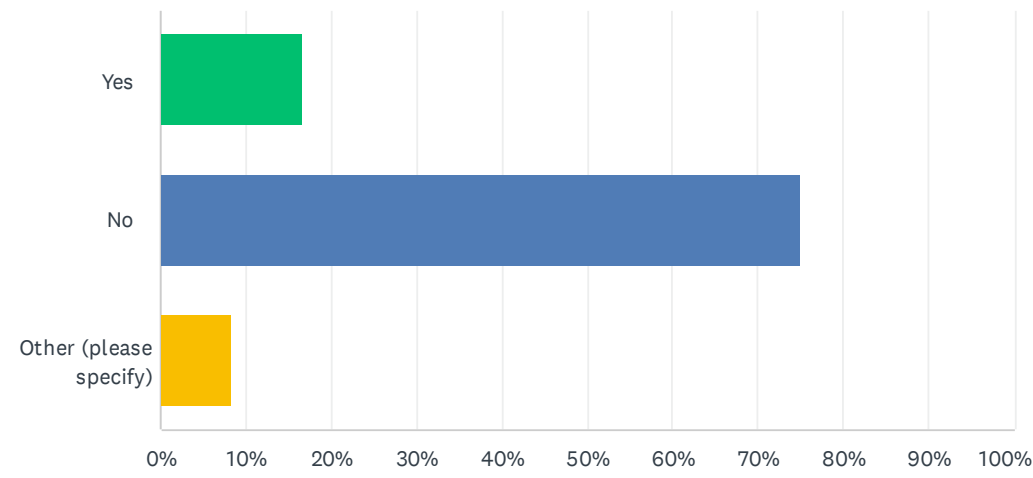
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	91.67% 11
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	8.33% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Sort of. The kiosk kind of does this but the signs for coal mining heritage park make it confusing where you are	2/24/2022 10:52 AM



### Q4 Is there adequate signage to find the trail from town?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

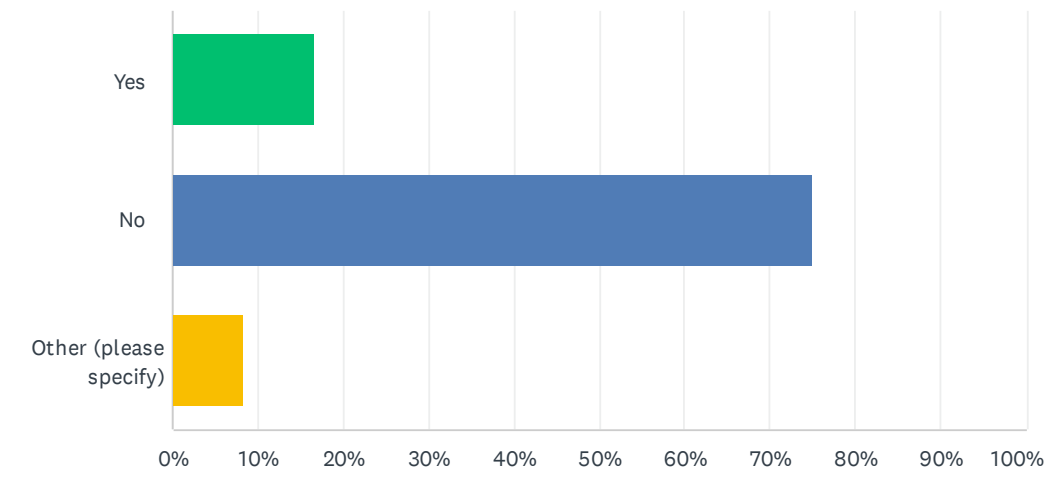


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	16.67% 2
No	75.00% 9
Other (please specify)	8.33% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not really applicable	2/24/2022 12:31 PM

### Q5 Is there adequate signage from the trail leading to town?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



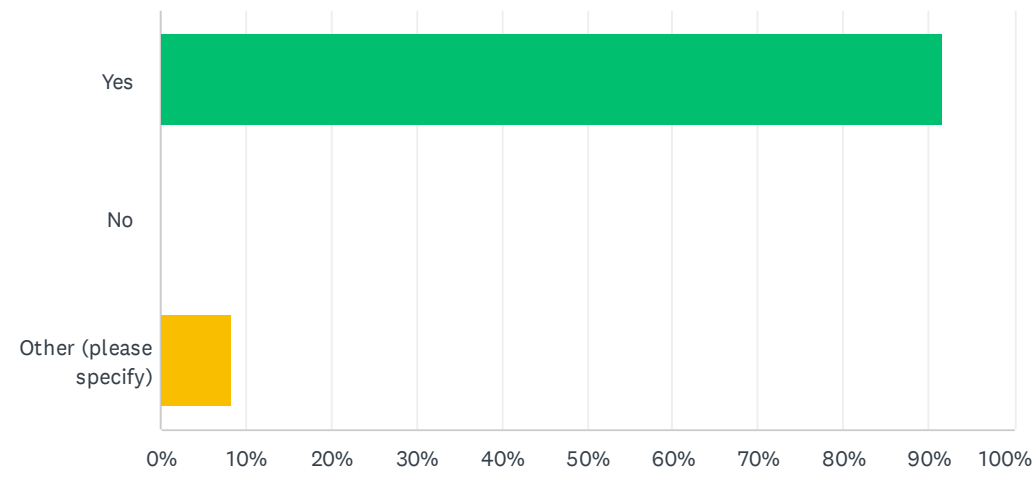
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	16.67% 2
No	75.00% 9
Other (please specify)	8.33% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	N/A	2/24/2022 12:31 PM



### Q6 Is there an informal kiosk and map at this trail access?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

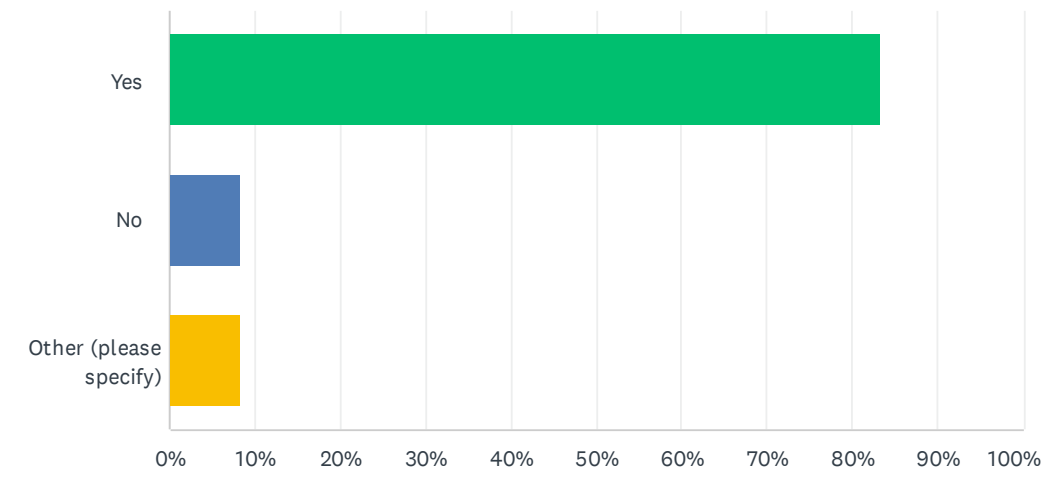


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	91.67% 11
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	8.33% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Actually there are two, which is one too many	2/24/2022 10:52 AM

### Q7 Is there interpretive information at this trail access?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



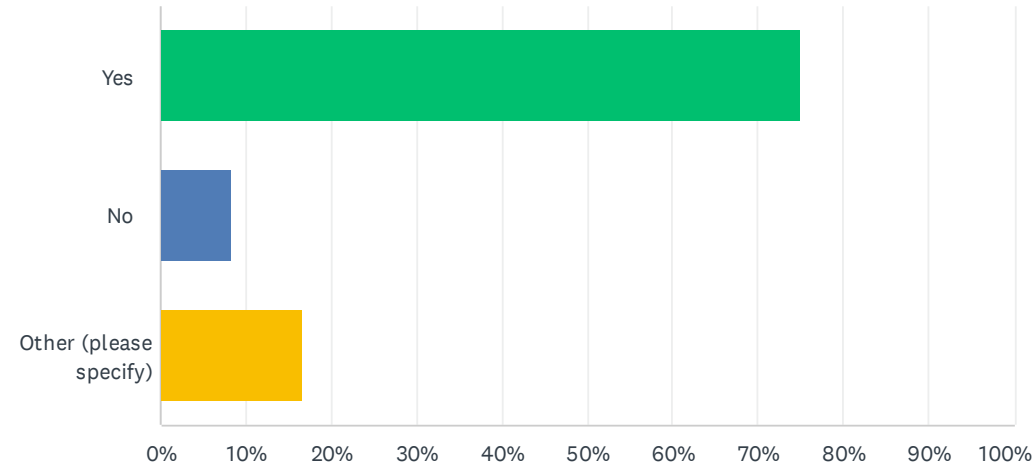
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	83.33% 10
No	8.33% 1
Other (please specify)	8.33% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not so much. Kiosk are dark in color and not super visible.	2/24/2022 10:52 AM



### Q8 Does the trail at this location (including trailhead amenities) seem accessible to you?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

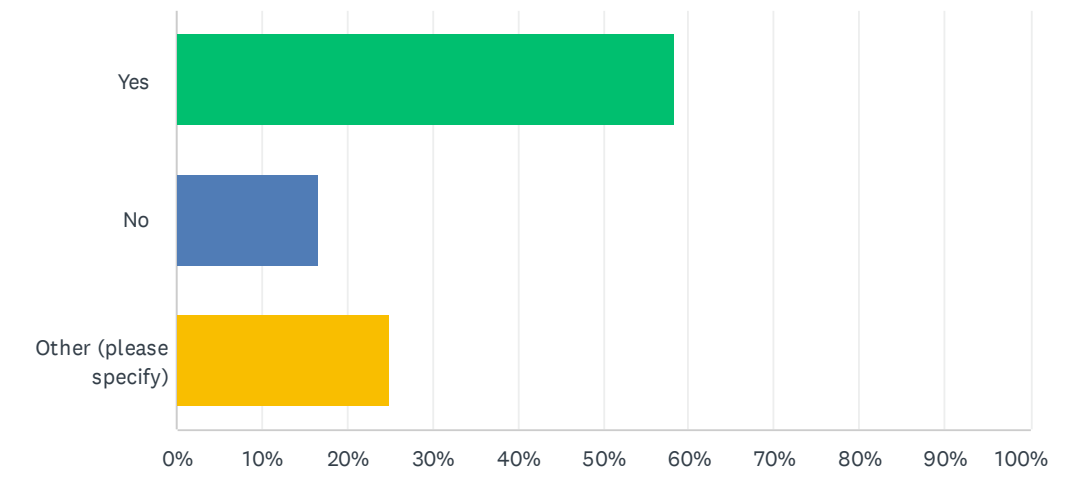


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	75.00% 9
No	8.33% 1
Other (please specify)	16.67% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Accessible but concerns on traffic speed at entrance.	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
2	Yes for the most part but could use smoother transitions	2/24/2022 10:49 AM

### Q9 Are there flush toilet facilities available to the public?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

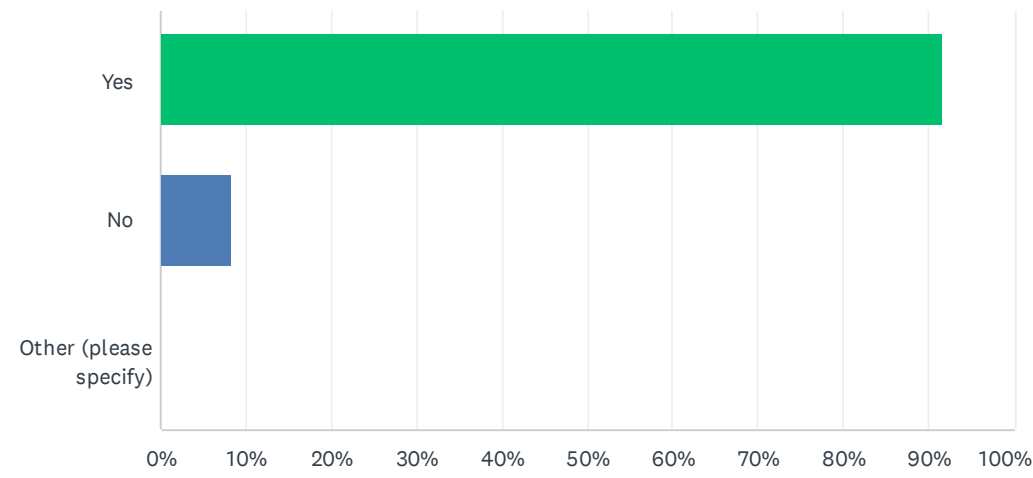


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	58.33% 7
No	16.67% 2
Other (please specify)	25.00% 3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	There's a toilet, but not flush	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
2	SMT toilet	2/24/2022 10:11 AM
3	Toilet but not flushing	2/24/2022 10:08 AM

### Q10 Are there picnic tables, pavilions, or shelters?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

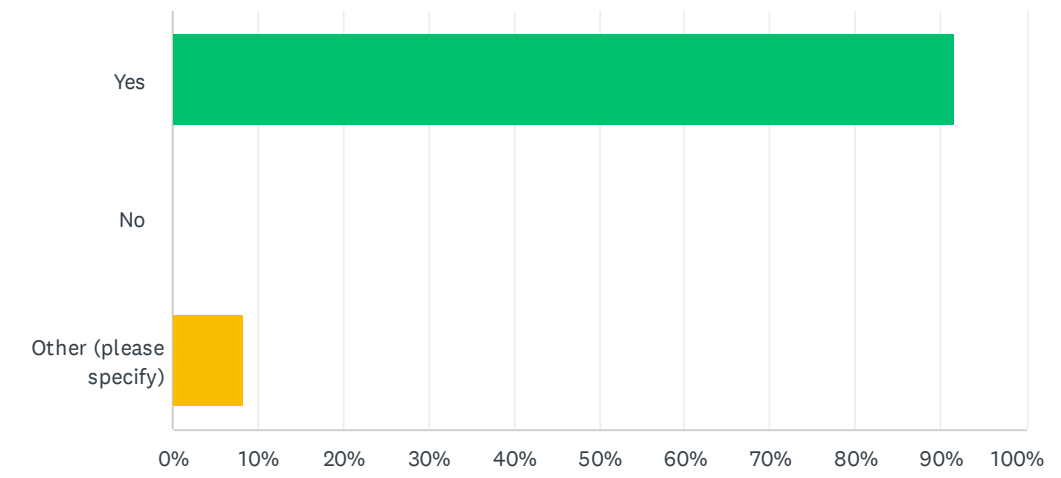


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	91.67% 11
No	8.33% 1
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q11 Are there bike racks?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



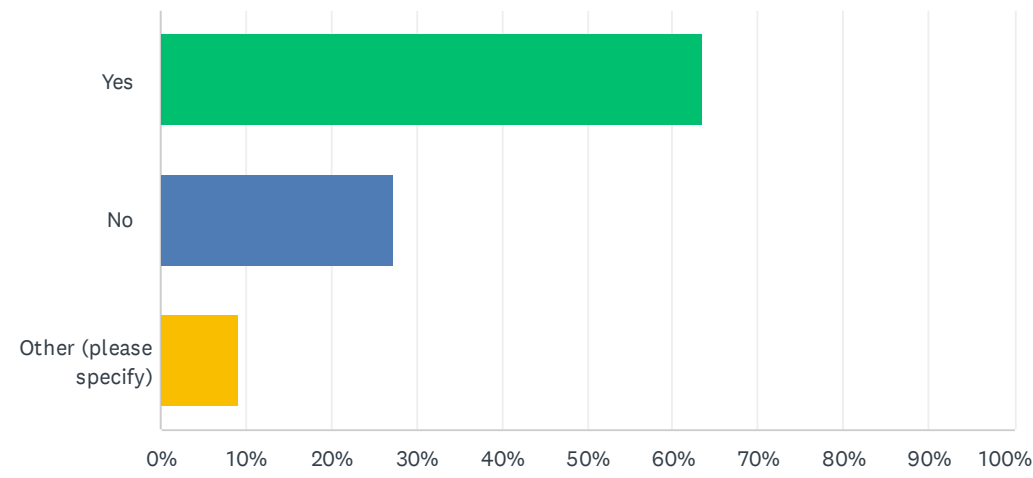
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	91.67% 11
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	8.33% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	One at the bathroom, but it would be nice to have one at the spur trails in the park	2/24/2022 10:52 AM



### Q12 Are there trash receptacles near the trail entrance?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 2

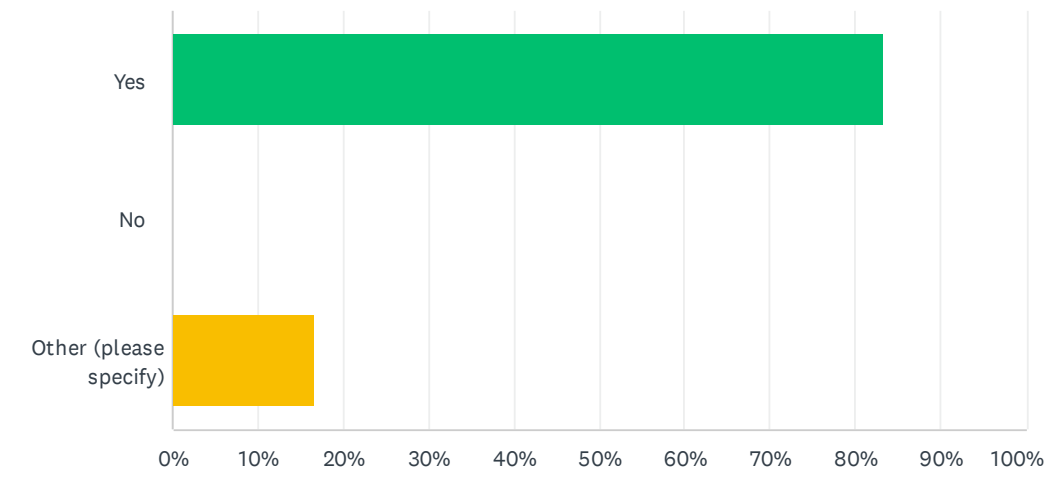


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	63.64% 7
No	27.27% 3
Other (please specify)	9.09% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not sure	2/24/2022 10:52 AM

### Q13 Is there cell phone reception?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

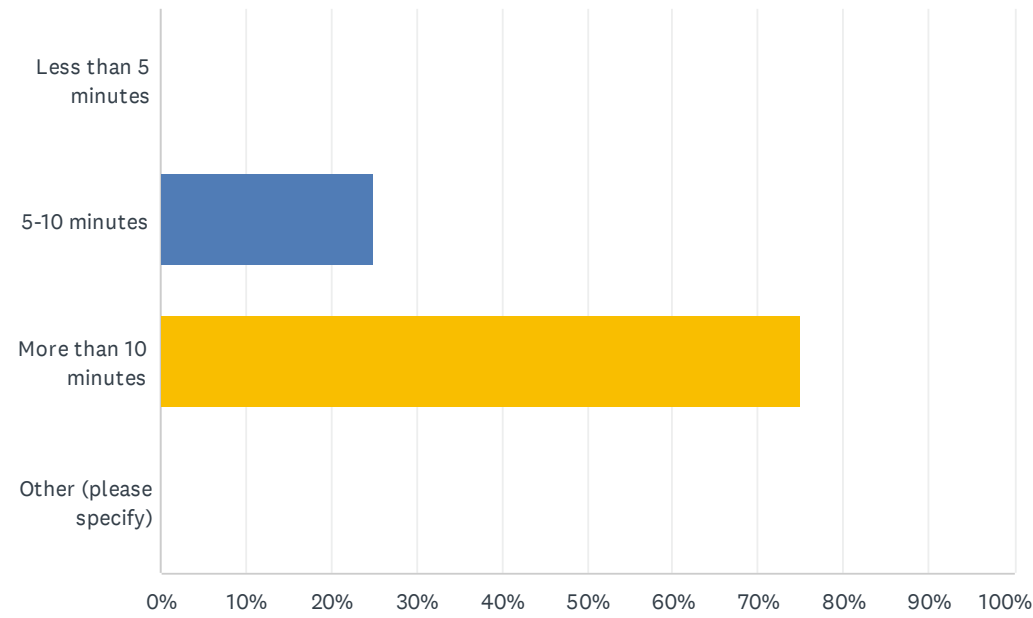


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	83.33% 10
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	16.67% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Yes but only one bar (AT&T)	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
2	Yes but a little slow	2/24/2022 10:49 AM

### Q14 How long might it take to bike to the nearest business services?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

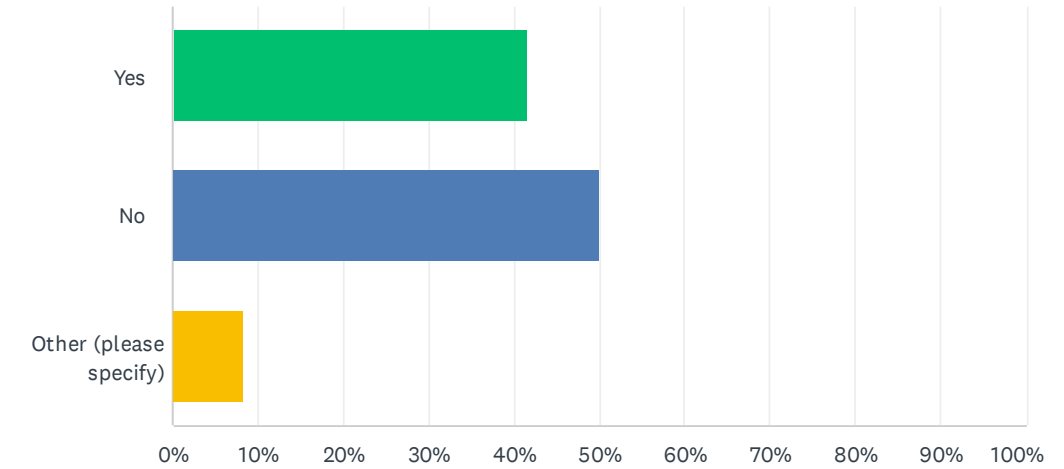


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than 5 minutes	0.00% 0
5-10 minutes	25.00% 3
More than 10 minutes	75.00% 9
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q15 Is it easy and safe for people to bike or walk between this trail access and business services? Consider elevation changes, signage, sidewalks, bike lanes, and vehicular traffic.

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



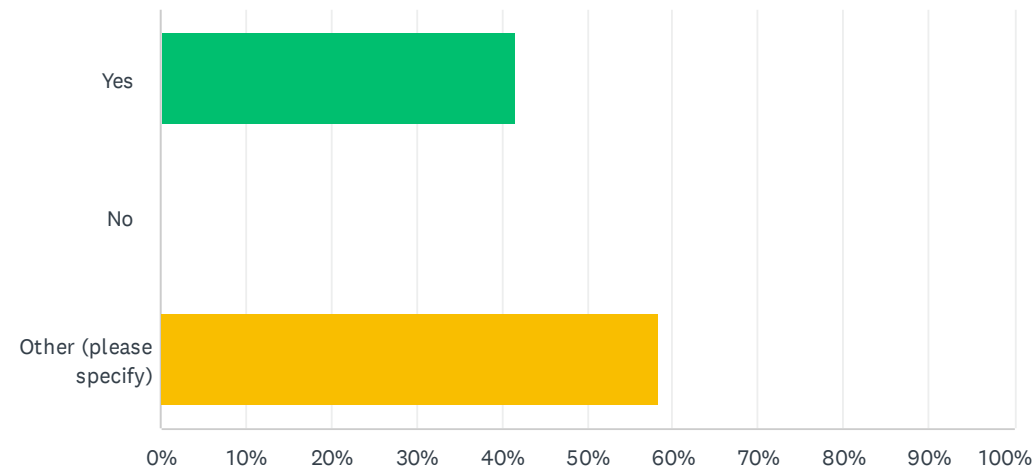
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	41.67% 5
No	50.00% 6
Other (please specify)	8.33% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Somewhat. I have felt uncomfortable as a female jogging in this section before. Signage could also be better (which direction is Merrimac Road, etc)	2/24/2022 10:52 AM



### Q16 Are local people near this part of the trail knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the trail?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

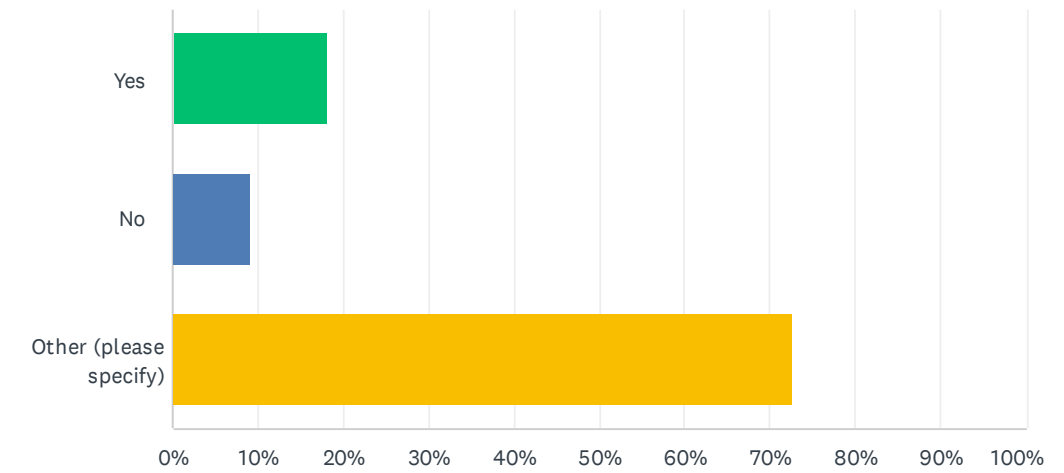


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	41.67% 5
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	58.33% 7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not sure	2/24/2022 12:31 PM
2	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:46 AM
3	Unsure	2/24/2022 11:43 AM
4	Not sure	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
5	I don't know	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
6	Unsure	2/24/2022 10:50 AM
7	Not sure	2/24/2022 10:49 AM

### Q17 Do business owners and other locals exhibit warm hospitality toward trail users?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	18.18% 2
No	9.09% 1
Other (please specify)	72.73% 8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	N/A	2/24/2022 12:31 PM
2	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:46 AM
3	Unsure	2/24/2022 11:43 AM
4	Or sure	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
5	Unsure	2/24/2022 10:50 AM
6	Don't know	2/24/2022 10:49 AM
7	Not sure	2/24/2022 10:49 AM
8	I don't know	2/24/2022 10:08 AM

### Q18 What is working well about the trail at this location?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 2

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The coal trail exhibits and auxiliary trail. The Huckleberry itself is wide, flat, accessible with modern toilet facilities.	2/24/2022 12:31 PM
2	Lovely, peaceful	2/24/2022 11:46 AM
3	Great location	2/24/2022 11:45 AM
4	Quiet and peaceful	2/24/2022 11:43 AM
5	Designated parking. What is at trail head is done well with exception of kiosk being a bit drab or not inviting to look at information.	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
6	Accessibility, little topography, bathrooms, cultural info	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
7	Accessibility, green space	2/24/2022 10:50 AM
8	Flat section of trail with more remote setting	2/24/2022 10:49 AM
9	Shows off coal mining heritage	2/24/2022 10:49 AM
10	ADA accessible	2/24/2022 10:11 AM
11	Great for ADA and Mom's or Dad's with strollers	2/24/2022 10:08 AM

### Q19 What inspires you about this part of the trail?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The quiet wooded location.	2/24/2022 12:31 PM
2	Beautiful	2/24/2022 11:46 AM
3	Peaceful	2/24/2022 11:45 AM
4	Opportunities to sit and reflect. Side trail on the coal miner loop	2/24/2022 11:43 AM
5	Going down a trail of history.	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
6	Rural aspect/secludedness, history, well maintained	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
7	NA	2/24/2022 10:50 AM
8	There used to be snakes, maybe one day they'll return	2/24/2022 10:49 AM
9	Coal mining park	2/24/2022 10:11 AM
10	Very scenic and woods on both sides	2/24/2022 10:08 AM



### Q20 Is there anything else you want to share?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 6

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	This section, a mile in each direction is my favorite.	2/24/2022 12:31 PM
2	Cold, really cold :-)	2/24/2022 11:46 AM
3	Na	2/24/2022 11:43 AM
4	Not at this point.	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
5	N/a	2/24/2022 10:52 AM
6	Not at this point	2/24/2022 10:50 AM
7	Nope	2/24/2022 10:49 AM

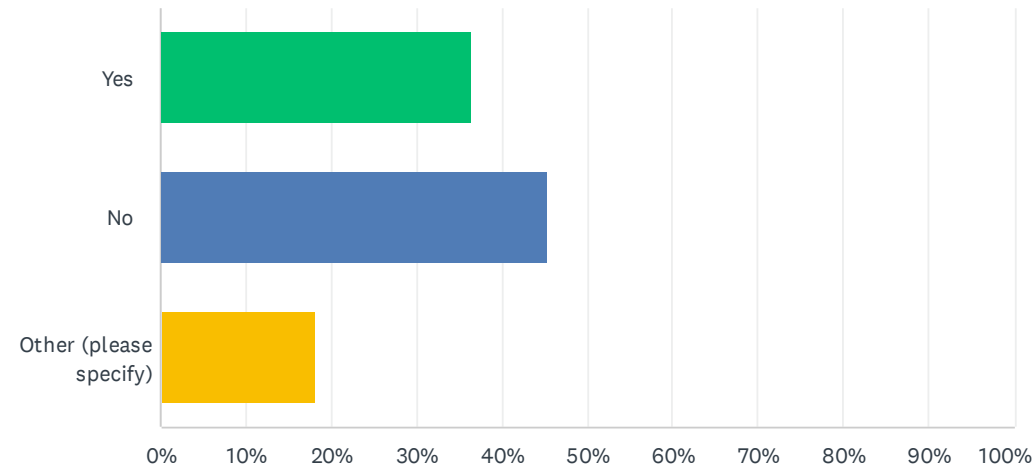
### Q1 What are you noticing as you walk this section of trail? What are you noticing about the trail, about your surroundings, about how you feel in the space?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	A lot different than the county section with businesses to one side. Not as natural	2/24/2022 11:57 AM
2	Very commercial but well maintained and well marked. Seems fairly functional as a bike/ped route for shopping. Could use more spurs to access parking lots/integration with the businesses	2/24/2022 11:46 AM
3	Noisy. More trash. A lot of destinations, but they still feel inaccessible. More hilly. Emergency call boxes. I smell fast food.	2/24/2022 11:45 AM
4	Retail you more urban. Done very nicely. I do not see signs that say Huckleberry trail very often on signage.	2/24/2022 11:44 AM
5	This section is closer to bigger businesses and has less screening. Some parts are fenced on both side which is not as comfortable an experience.	2/24/2022 11:44 AM
6	Nice bridge above grade! A bit of a harsh experience in terms of the setting: highway noise, backs of mall buildings. Nice, rolling trail after that. Pines were nice.	2/24/2022 11:06 AM
7	Impressive bridge, businesses nearby, noisy, great drainage, downhill signs for uphill, no signage at trailhead	2/24/2022 11:02 AM
8	Nice connecting section	2/24/2022 10:36 AM
9	Little delineation between the trail and adjacent businesses. Viewshed is shared with rear loading docks, vehicle parking, etc. Not many opportunities or any desire to linger or sit. Trail surface is in good condition. Opportunity to connect to future park seems easy but am unsure if it has been considered.	2/24/2022 9:47 AM
10	This section is an urban setting, bridge over 4-lane road, a section behind commercial buildings, yet the trail is wide, clean, trees to block some of the commercial area. Despite the urban setting the trail is peaceful and relatively quiet.	2/24/2022 9:47 AM
11	Urbanized area with safe linear recreation area	2/24/2022 9:46 AM
12	New park being constructed! I like this section of the trail. Great access to restaurants, businesses but also provides peaceful surroundings	2/24/2022 9:46 AM

### Q2 Does this part of the trail feel distinct or special?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

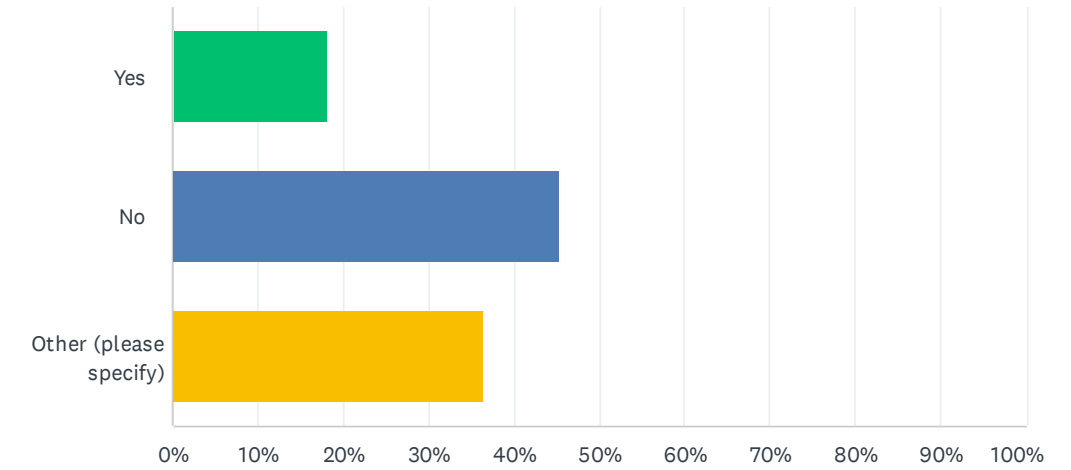


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	36.36% 4
No	45.45% 5
Other (please specify)	18.18% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	It feels distinct but not necessarily in a positive way	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
2	Bridge is definitely distinct	2/24/2022 11:04 AM

### Q3 Is there a gateway point to enter/leave the trail at this location (e.g. a piece of art or a welcome sign)?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



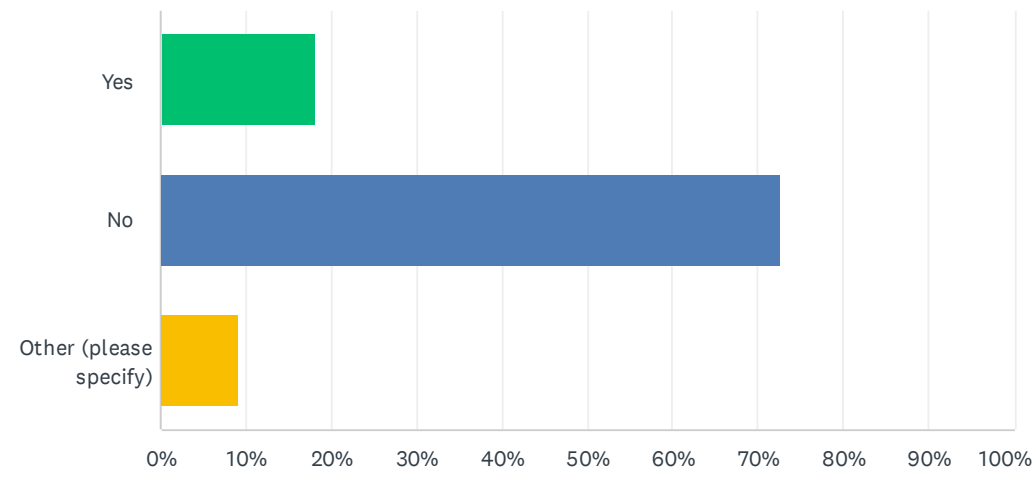
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	18.18% 2
No	45.45% 5
Other (please specify)	36.36% 4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Small directional sign	2/24/2022 11:51 AM
2	There is a directional sign but not much information	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
3	Not so apparent	2/24/2022 11:47 AM
4	Directional sign in good condition	2/24/2022 11:11 AM



### Q4 Is there adequate signage to find the trail from town?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

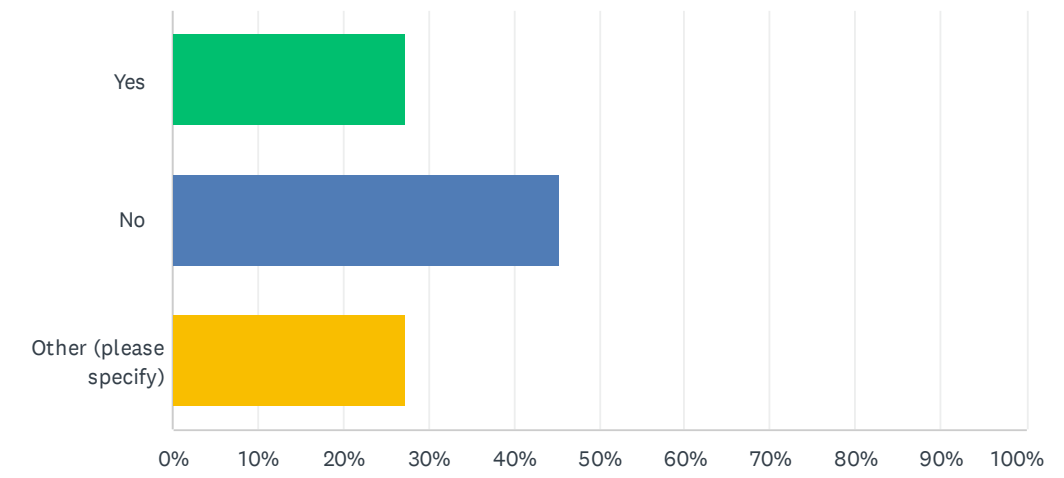


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	18.18% 2
No	72.73% 8
Other (please specify)	9.09% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:11 AM

### Q5 Is there adequate signage from the trail leading to town?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

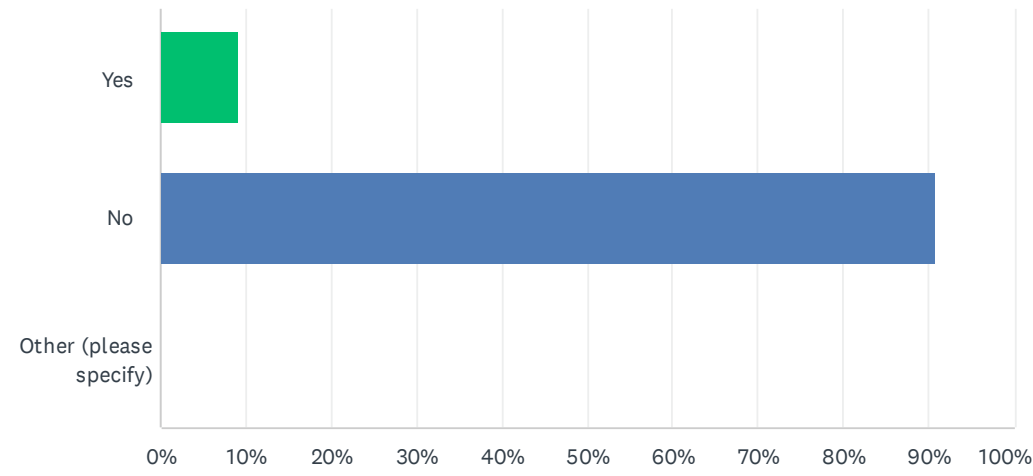


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	27.27% 3
No	45.45% 5
Other (please specify)	27.27% 3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Some signage showing distance to recreational center	2/24/2022 12:01 PM
2	There's signage, but not adequate	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
3	We are kind of in town here. There is good directional signs along the trail	2/24/2022 11:47 AM

### Q6 Is there an informal kiosk and map at this trail access?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

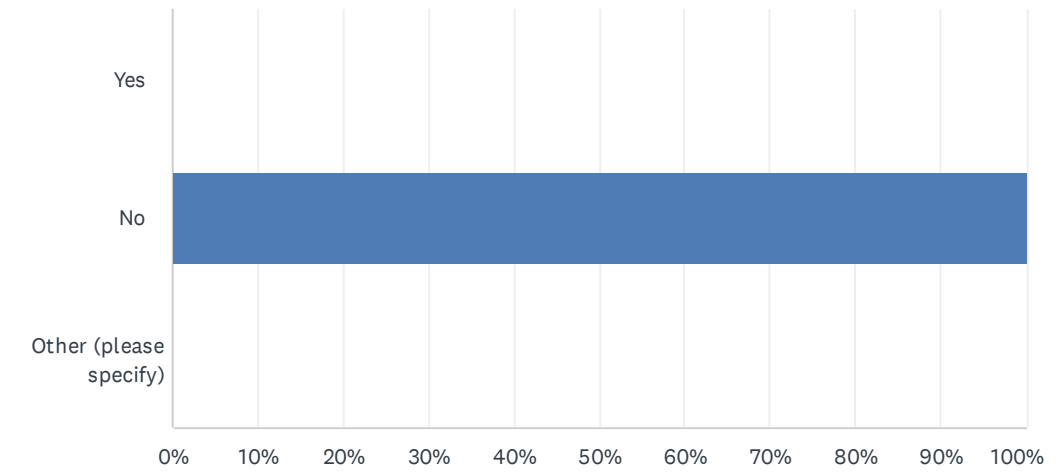


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	9.09% 1
No	90.91% 10
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q7 Is there interpretive information at this trail access?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



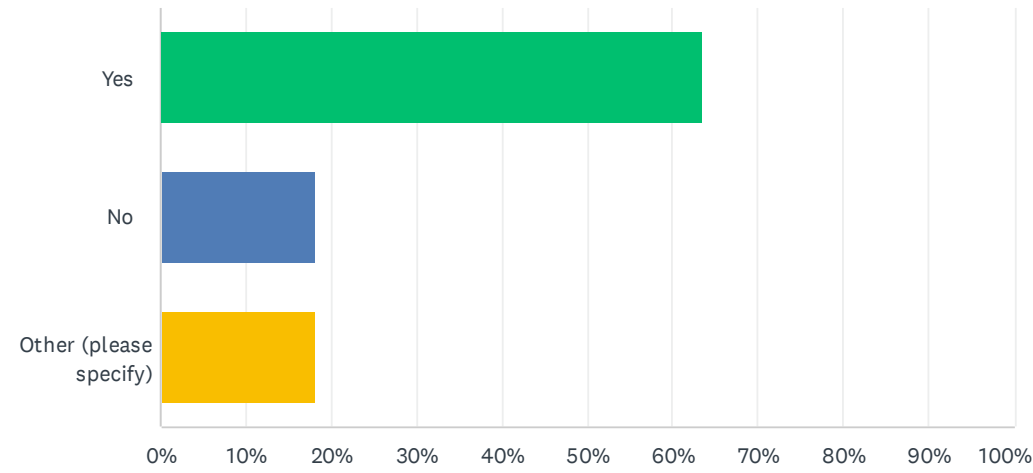
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0.00% 0
No	100.00% 11
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	



### Q8 Does the trail at this location (including trailhead amenities) seem accessible to you?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

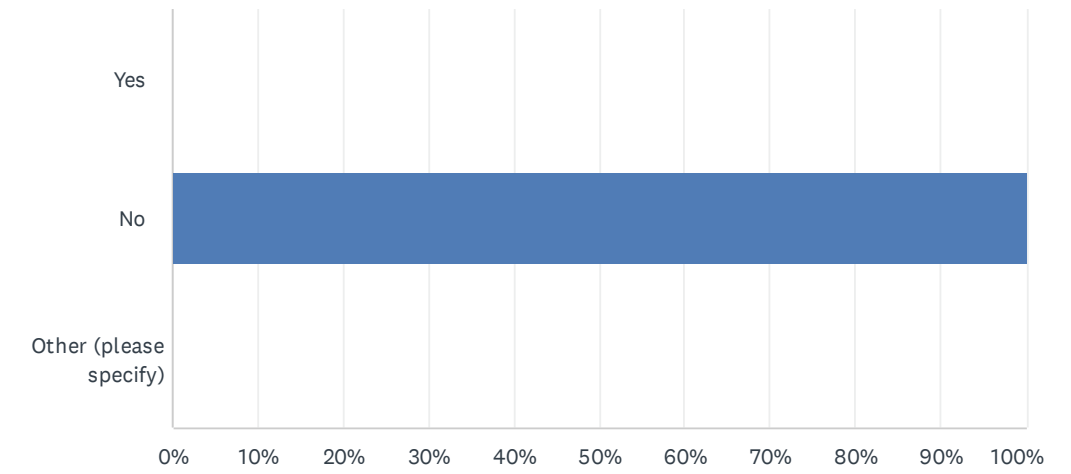


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	63.64% 7
No	18.18% 2
Other (please specify)	18.18% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Some steeper sections	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
2	Not sure in terms of grade	2/24/2022 11:11 AM

### Q9 Are there flush toilet facilities available to the public?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 2

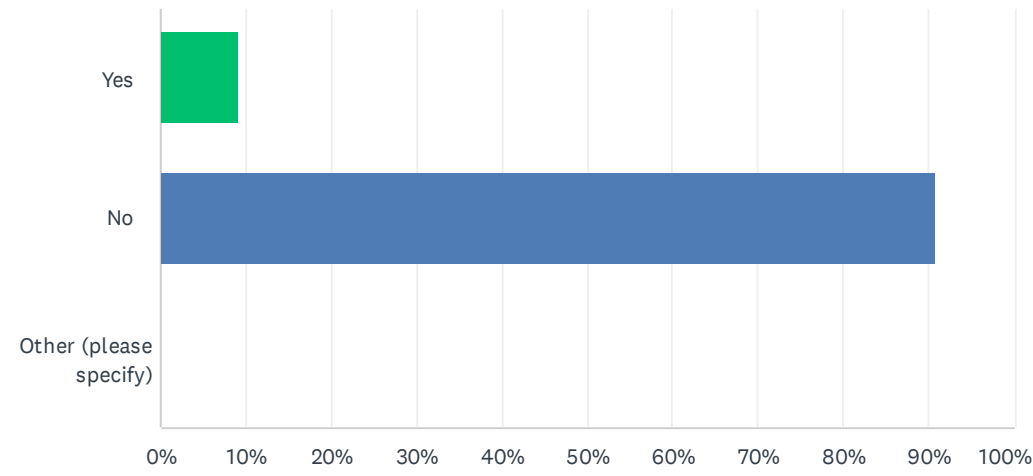


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0.00% 0
No	100.00% 10
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
There are no responses.		

### Q10 Are there picnic tables, pavilions, or shelters?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

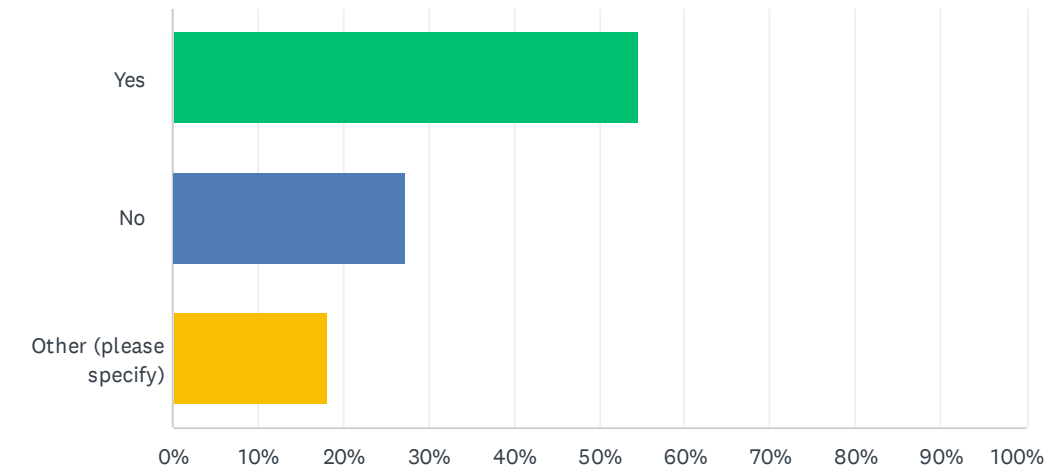


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	9.09% 1
No	90.91% 10
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q11 Are there bike racks?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



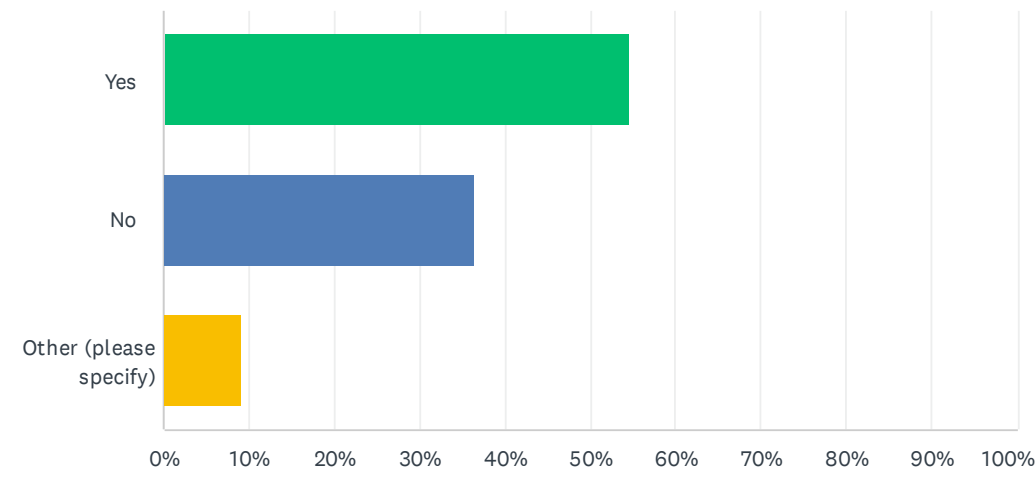
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	54.55% 6
No	27.27% 3
Other (please specify)	18.18% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I don't recall	2/24/2022 12:01 PM
2	Not sure	2/24/2022 9:51 AM



### Q12 Are there trash receptacles near the trail entrance?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

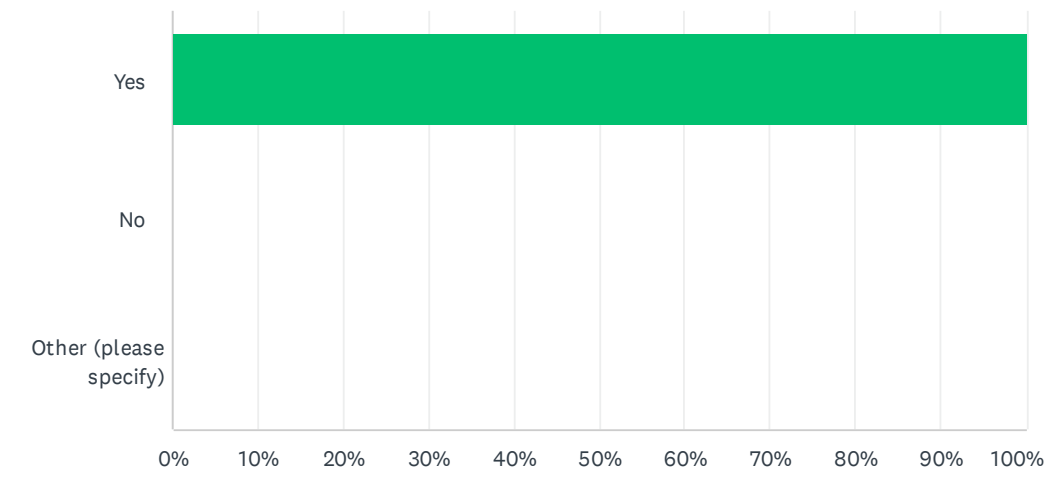


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	54.55% 6
No	36.36% 4
Other (please specify)	9.09% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not sure	2/24/2022 9:51 AM

### Q13 Is there cell phone reception?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

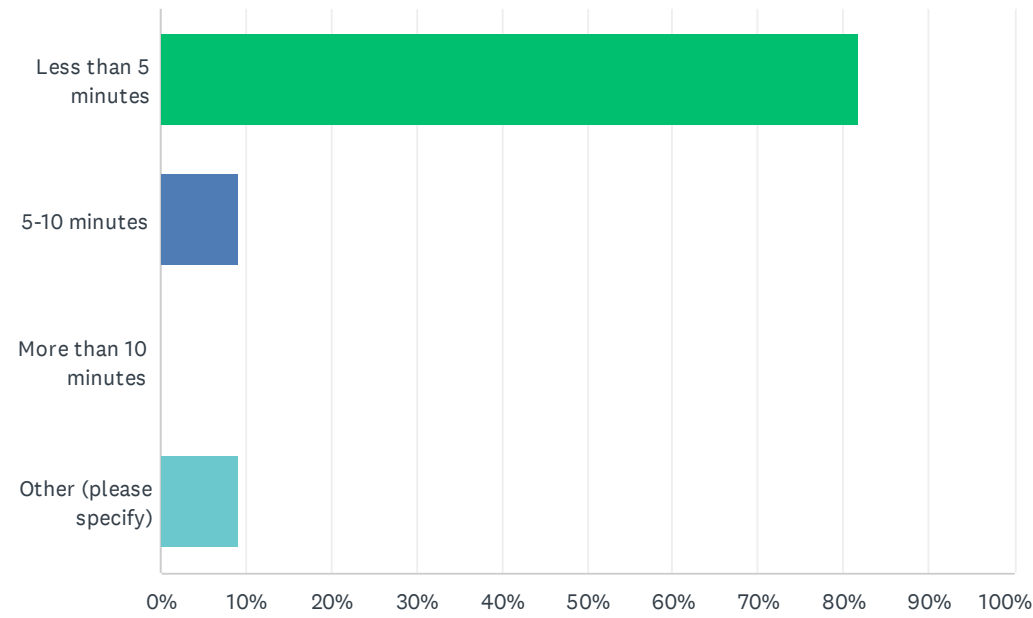


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00% 11
No	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

### Q14 How long might it take to bike to the nearest business services?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

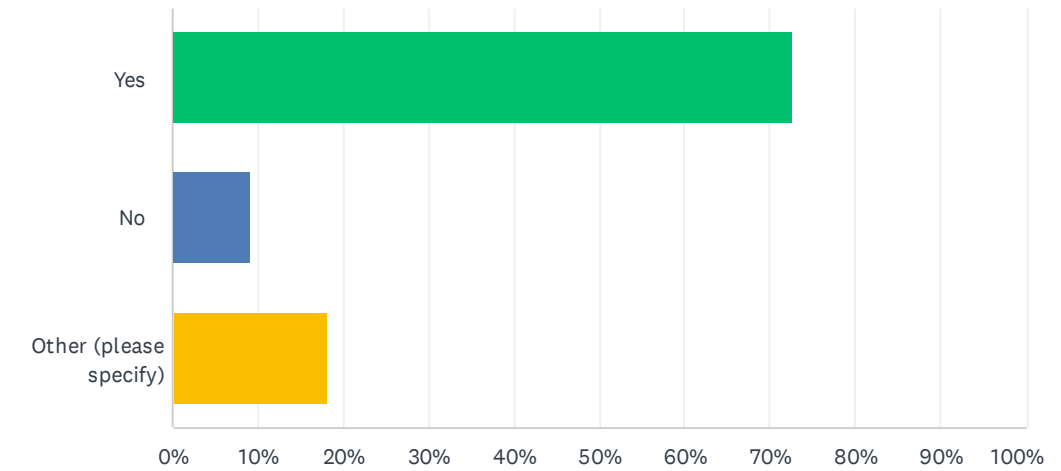


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Less than 5 minutes	81.82% 9
5-10 minutes	9.09% 1
More than 10 minutes	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	9.09% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:11 AM

### Q15 Is it easy and safe for people to bike or walk between this trail access and business services? Consider elevation changes, signage, sidewalks, bike lanes, and vehicular traffic.

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



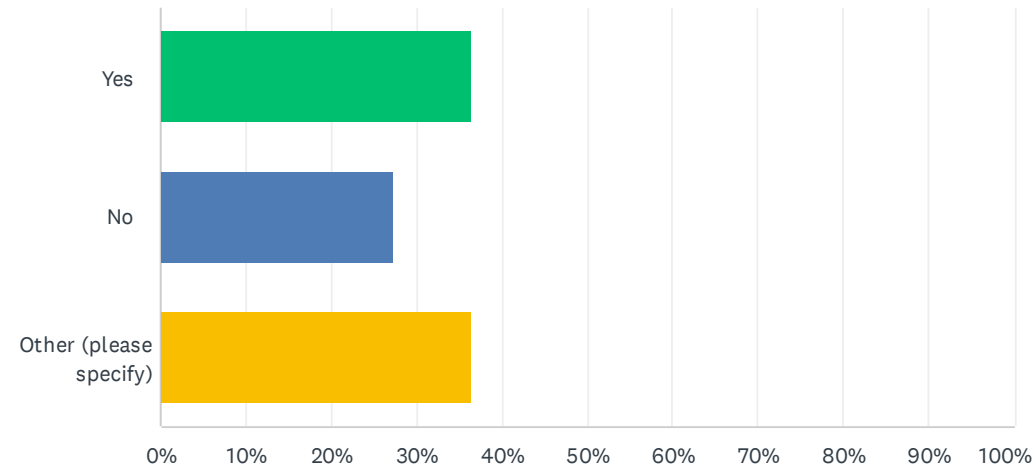
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	72.73% 8
No	9.09% 1
Other (please specify)	18.18% 2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Stairs prevent ADA access	2/24/2022 12:01 PM
2	In some locations but not all	2/24/2022 11:48 AM



### Q16 Are local people near this part of the trail knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the trail?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

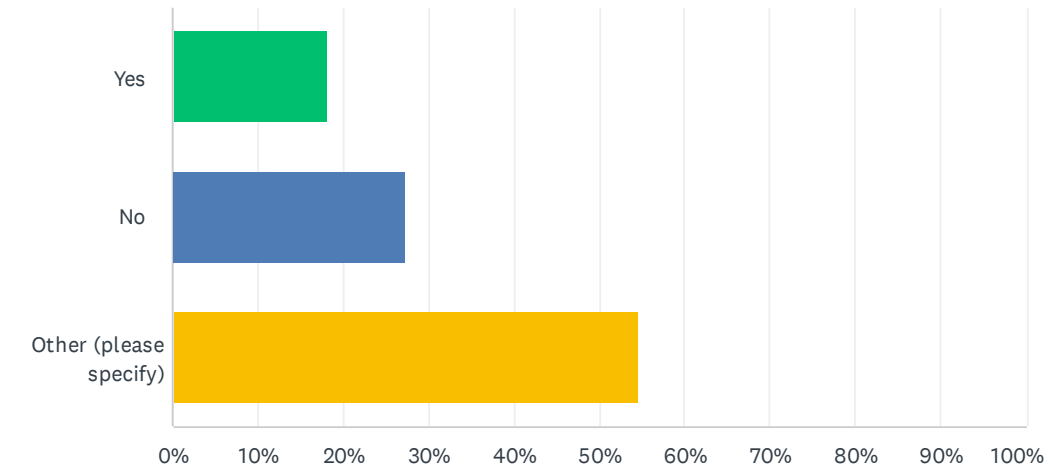


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	36.36% 4
No	27.27% 3
Other (please specify)	36.36% 4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Don't know	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
2	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:11 AM
3	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:04 AM
4	Unsure	2/24/2022 9:50 AM

### Q17 Do business owners and other locals exhibit warm hospitality toward trail users?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	18.18% 2
No	27.27% 3
Other (please specify)	54.55% 6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11</b>

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	I don't know	2/24/2022 12:01 PM
2	Most businesses have the rear of the building facing the trail	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
3	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:11 AM
4	Not sure	2/24/2022 11:04 AM
5	Not sure	2/24/2022 9:51 AM
6	Unsure	2/24/2022 9:50 AM

### Q18 What is working well about the trail at this location?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Provides a way to commute	2/24/2022 12:01 PM
2	Fairly well marked/good directional signage, access to amenities/businesses	2/24/2022 11:51 AM
3	It's so close to many destinations	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
4	It is very close to businesses	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
5	The emergency posts, signage	2/24/2022 11:47 AM
6	Nice directional sign, great bridge, rolling hills	2/24/2022 11:11 AM
7	Accessible	2/24/2022 11:04 AM
8	Connection	2/24/2022 10:41 AM
9	Plenty of parking, easy access	2/24/2022 9:51 AM
10	Many access points	2/24/2022 9:51 AM
11	Access and parking availability. Safe crossing at bridge. Connection to hotel and adjacent businesses.	2/24/2022 9:50 AM

### Q19 What inspires you about this part of the trail?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 3

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Connectivity	2/24/2022 12:01 PM
2	Functional for commuting type purposes, less so for recreation	2/24/2022 11:51 AM
3	It could be a great location for public art to enhance the trail	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
4	It is different and can be access point to many businesses	2/24/2022 11:47 AM
5	Commuting	2/24/2022 11:04 AM
6	Staying out of the parking lot	2/24/2022 10:41 AM
7	Plenty of room, quiet peaceful but not lonely	2/24/2022 9:51 AM
8	Many opportunities for various users!	2/24/2022 9:51 AM
9	Na	2/24/2022 9:50 AM



## Q20 Is there anything else you want to share?

Answered: 7 Skipped: 5

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Perhaps consider painting a mural on the backside of Home Depot or Walmart. Or planting low bushes/flowers along trail behind Walmart to make it more aesthetically pleasing. Dark blue signs are a little confusing as to which destinations are which direction.	2/24/2022 11:51 AM
2	This section of trail had the most litter	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
3	This section feels less safe due to the fencing and the back of house with no windows	2/24/2022 11:48 AM
4	Not at this point	2/24/2022 11:47 AM
5	No	2/24/2022 9:51 AM
6	Very nice looking trail that is maintained very well!	2/24/2022 9:51 AM
7	Additional landscaping/screening could help make this section more desirable. Connection to new park would be helpful.	2/24/2022 9:50 AM

## APPENDIX B: CYCLE FORWARD // STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Summary Text provided by Erik Olson

Text from sticky notes, 2/24/22, afternoon session (from left to right, top to bottom) – Huckleberry Trail

### Organizational (IMG\_6833)

1. Define communication pathways

### Branding/Identity Wayfinding

1. New branding & marketing
2. Signature trailheads, consistent/branding signage, similarity/regularity of amenities across entire system
3. Embrace the Huckleberry logo motif on new wayfinding signs → paint sidewalks
4. Development of a wayfinding system that can be used trail-wide

### Diversity/Inclusion Accessibility (IMG\_6834)

1. Access
2. Plan must include: Strategies to ensure trail feels welcome to traditionally under represented users (people of color, low income, people with disabilities)
3. Helping the community become bike friendly
4. Safety and comfort of all users
5. Accessibility
6. Shared ownership & community pride
7. Equity in use

### Storytelling – Interpretive Signage

1. I love the idea of “thru spaces” and building trail culture with business; more of this facilitation
2. Diversity, equity, inclusion in all planning, design, construction elements; coordinated planning between localities
3. How to tell the story of this area through the trail
4. Story boards near the library (each display reveals a bit of the story – displays can be changed seasonally)

### Structural Amenities & Programming (IMG\_6835)

1. Fitness stations
2. More water stations
3. Public restrooms, consistent signages, emergency location identification
4. Safer road crossing
5. Public restrooms, railroad history
6. Plan must include: A long-term vision for future connections and BIG loops (i.e., Tom’s Creek Basin, Mount Tabor/Bishop, Price Mtn area)
7. Plan must include: high-level vision, goals and preliminary strategies for on-trail amenities and associated programming

### Expansions, Connections (IMG\_6836)

1. Non-motorized commute options
2. Timeline for “connector” trails

Text from sticky notes, 2/24/22, afternoon session (from left to right, top to bottom) – Huckleberry Trail

3. Connections to nearby communities (business & residential)
4. Connecting to the New River Trail
5. Consider renaming branches, Huck Trail “System”?
6. Connectivity and wayfinding to downtown Christiansburg, downtown Blacksburg, businesses along the way
7. How to incorporate public art in the trail experience
8. How to improve connectivity to the trail
9. Connecting downtown to downtown
10. Connect aquatic center to Huck
11. The trail plan must provide a connection to downtown Christiansburg; we really only need to connect Christiansburg Rec Center with the Aquatic Center to do this
12. Connectivity (w/other systems & businesses)

#### Mixed Goals (IMG\_6837)

1. accessibility, amenities (bathrooms), connectivity, vibrancy
2. Consistent branding in signage; marketing that tells the story of the trail(s); Commuter “Club” Education on about how to commute by bike
3. 1) Safety; 2) Cohesive branding/signage/wayfinding; 3) Stronger online presence for Trail; 4) Identify volunteer opportunities; 5) funding sources
4. Be functional for commuting to work, shopping, school, etc.; An entry point for users of all abilities; An aesthetically pleasing experience
5. Promote community/neighbors; pop-up events; activation tools
6. Add specific events: Plein Air Painting; Art on Traid Day; Sculpture Trail Day
7. What must the Trail Plan address: Gateway/Trailhead signing; Outreach to adjacent business (and no-so-adjacent) to become more connected and trail-focused

#### Ecological Nature

1. Plan must include: Vision and preliminary goals and strengths to address invasive species, improve biodiversity and habitat
2. Landscape Management: (remove invasives – celebrate natives, like the Huckleberry)

#### What are you excited about? (IMG\_6838)

1. Increased communication between the area and the localities to look @ the Trail as one cohesive amenity.
2. Volunteers, organized to fulfill capacity issues
3. Quirky, delightful and surprising elements we can include along the Trail
4. Expansion & connectivity!
5. We had a big conversation today & we have lots to work with
6. Richer and broader collaboration amongst stakeholders and with the community
7. Growing community!
8. Build a great asset for the next generation
9. Connecting Blacksburg & Christiansburg & to National Forest

Text from sticky notes, 2/24/22, afternoon session (from left to right, top to bottom) – Huckleberry Trail

10. Just having a Huckleberry Master<sup>1</sup> Plan; we will have direction instead of floating along
11. Expanding and connecting the trail through the Town’s Creek Basin
12. More opportunities to play along the trail
13. Uplifting the trail to a new level
14. Connectivity ultimately resulting in our area becoming a “destination mountain town,” etc.
15. Increasing interest & usage; opportunity for growth; tourism
16. Visiting again when it’s not raining to ride the entire 60 miles of connected trail
17. Developing an ecological stewardship strategic plan for the trail
18. Huckleberry Marathon
19. Improvement opportunities & drawing in new trail users

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<sup>1</sup> Note that the official name of the plan is the “Huckleberry Trail Plan.”



## APPENDIX C: NOVA PARKS AUTHORITY

NoVa Parks O+M Advisory Meeting  
January 18, 2022

### Attendees:

Kathleen Armstrong  
Eli Sharp  
Kevin Byrd  
Christy Straight  
Beth Lohman  
Mark Whaley  
Kevin Casalenuovo

<https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/parkmetrics/>

When did your organization realize that the O+M processes for NoVa Parks needed to be formalized (i.e. MOU or MOA)?

- Internal standard
- Lay maintenance standards out- frequency of service
- Jurisdiction takes it upon themselves to mow etc.

What efforts do you make with individual local governments to create and retain a sense of ownership/buy-in; or what is your approach to creating lasting partnerships with so many communities?

- Every jurisdiction feel as though they own the trail (3 million trail users a year)
- Working groups with counties on user behavior- people not knowing trail edicate
- Meeting with sheriffs, engineers, public officials
- Board: two reps from each jurisdictions
- Encroachment issues- work with town and cities
- Friends of NoVa Parks- send goals and objectives to friends group (volunteer work/ training/ education) sponsors trail patrol
- Campaign every year- ambassadors of good behavior, safe actions on the trail. Promote safety and good trail behavior

Every jurisdiction feels like they own the trail (just happened). Goes through the heart of every small town. They have regular meetings with local governments and police departments. NoVA Board has 2 reps from each jurisdiction. Encroachment issues are recurring. 2020 vision for safe actions/behavior on the trail. Friends sponsors the trail patrol which is reviewed daily by the trail manager. They have mile markers every half mile.

Advanced warning for every intersection, connector trails, etc. Currently uses NPS standards for signage (interpretive and everything). Moving towards QR codes and metal signs at trail heads. Currently has 4 restrooms that they maintain over the full 45 miles. Trial users are encouraged to get downtown and businesses want users to stop by. Porta johns are funded by the Friends group. For lighting – do you want users at night? Herndon just installed and will maintain lights. NoVA parks will keep that standard as new lights come on to the trail.

Adopt a Trail program is encouraged by NoVA Park that gets the community involved and helps with maintenance. Bridge/culvert inspections are important and could likely require a standard.

Do you currently own or operate a recreational asset that traverses two or more communities? Is there a desire to retain a sense of place for each community or what are some mutually beneficial amenities that you've found it easier to collaborate on?

- Standard for how far amenities should be off the trail
- Trash free park- education campaign
- Where/ how frequent trash cans will be put in
- Limitations on how many memorial benches/ trees
- Set standard for how far a trash can is located from intersection

They maintain signage standards (intersections, stop signs, wayfinding, paint markings). They use Kimley Horn to determine improvements at each intersection. Standards for maintenance now include grade separation for all trail projects. Currently has 3M visitors/year. Currently no agreements or code for trail amenities between localities.

Set standards for how far off pavement you want amenities installed off of pavement. Taking trash with you would be best because maintaining trash cans is difficult. Certain number of feet beyond intersections is good, some limitations on memorial benches/trees.

Scout requests are directed to other park areas (away from the premier trail). Plant gardens and build kiosks.

Graffiti is an issue. Every Monday there is vandalism on the trail. Trail managers are always carrying spray paint to cover up within 72 hours to deter repeat offenders.

They do have properties that span several jurisdictions. Some are contributing members and others are not. Urban areas typically expect a higher standard, safe routes to school, and commuters around the City. NoVA Parks sets standards and they maintain them at that level. Dominion Power easement is on trail and the rights of use more than pay for the maintenance (\$1.2M/year) and \$600-\$700k for maintenance – the rest goes into restricted funds for bigger maintenance items. 45-miles of paved trail currently, 10' wide and new sections have separated trails for pedestrians and cyclists – another section is gravel for horseback. Easements are typically 100' wide. Budgets are about \$1.55 per linear foot for trail maintenance but that excludes new improvements.

User behavior is number 1 issue on the trail. Sport bikers vs. kids.

Does NoVa Parks use technology to enhance risk management? I.e. GIS maps to share with local law enforcement and emergency services to make them aware of trail emergency access points or for trail users to report washouts etc.?

- Email template- which mile to which mile (½ mile markers)

## APPENDIX D: VIRGINIA CAPITAL TRAIL FOUNDATION

- Friends Patrol group- upload photo!
- 6000 volunteer hours

What is your experience with maintaining safety on the trail? Is your trail patrolled by professional law enforcement officers? Do you have volunteer patrols?

- Sheriff Bike patrol- limited time
- Friend Patrol is the majority of maintaining safety
- Kevin calls police and encourages them to patrol the trail (dirt bikes etc)
- graffiti - big issues, photograph and send to police. Document and involve police. Maintenance staff have spray paint with them during routine maintenance.

Does your O+M plan have an inclement weather policy?

How do you communicate with trail users about temporary trail closures due to inclement weather and emergencies? Is this different from when there are special events on the trail?

- Go eastward first (toward the populated areas) Will use certain equipment or not
- Loose plan, utilize social media to let people know whats happening
- Do not plow the trail, instead throw snow (2in minimum)
- Pretreatment for snow- some negative environmental impacts (do not include in master plan)

Plan says to begin around more metro sections of the trail, use certain equipment that suits trail construction. They do not plow the trail because of pavement markings. They will throw snow with a blower at around 2 inch depth. Recently started pre-treating but they are not comfortable doing it.

How do people contact NoVa Parks about reserving/hosting special events on the trail? What are the limitations on this? Is there a fee associated with special events? Who is responsible for contacting law enforcement and emergency services? What is post-event clean-up and maintenance look like?

- Charge a elevator fee depending on number of guests
- Must limit # of events
- Event coordinator must reach out to police/ insurance etc. they are providing the map etc.
- You can't stop or start on the trail!
- Multiple applications- fillable pdf on website, linked to jurisdictions forms

They have criteria using a user-based fee. Currently limiting the number of events they take. They are requiring the event coordinator to do most of the work, map, permitting, coordination with law enforcement. They currently require groups to meet at a location not on the trail.

Currently working on a fillable pdf version of the event application.

VCTF O+M Advisory Meeting  
April 1, 2022

Attendees: Cat Anthony, Beth Lohman, Kathleen Armstrong, Eli Sharp, Erik Olson

### Ownership + Collaboration

How does VCTF operate in terms of collaboration with local owners?

One of their governing values. 7 miles owned by VDOT, 43 miles owned by Charles City County, 2.2 miles owned by Richmond, Trail heads are owned by jurisdictions. Local businesses are participating. VCTF is the coordinating factor – MOU with VDOT and working really hard to get a MOU with other trail owners

Is there a desire to retain a sense of place for each community and/or what are some mutually beneficial amenities that you've found it easier to collaborate on?

Not too centric of a vibe and that they are promoting all portions of the trail. Trail heads, every 10-12 miles there needs to be shade and/or a bathroom. Localities also have their own placemaking (love sign, farmer's market, ). VCTF currently receives funding from all partners but one. Communicating with marketing tools on their behalf.

MOU is in place for 50 miles of trail. How maintenance is reported, who owns amenities, free permitting for improvements, recognition includes all partners, stakeholder group.

Having a design guide along the trail, signage, wayfinding – VCTF is actually working on that consistency guide right now. Signage getting to the trailheads = City they follow standards in community + very careful about putting signage about businesses (can of worms here regarding winners and losers); Food (not actual business), bike fix-its. Don't have many trash cans on the trail.

Two full-trail clean ups each year. Adopt a trail program (4 times a year commitment), It's not my trail (regular maintenance) and not part of her MOU.

If local governments invest in VCTF parks annually, how do you communicate the return on their investment?

Branding and marketing conveys where funds are spent; they have an impact report. VTC is a great way to market trail and they have a co-op for advertising (reimburse a percentage of the cost).

Special event funding, grants, donations (single person have been best and most sustainable for both large and small gifts), all but one jurisdiction.

The Great Allegheny Passage Trail has great branding.

### Community + Operations

How do people contact VCTF about reserving/hosting special events on the trail? What are the limitations on this? Is there a fee associated with special events? Who is responsible for contacting law enforcement and emergency services? What is post-event clean-up and maintenance look like?

Issue when first started – created a 'how to' that provides links to resources. Each jurisdiction has their own permitting and so does VDOT. All partners except one have fees.



**APPENDIX E: TRAIL ROUTINE MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS GOALS**

Police and EMS are often the event organizer. Each partner has different thresholds for when coordination and fees are required. Planning an event FAQ is the guide. They have a lot of events every week on the trail.

Competing events have happened, but very few times.

Volunteer projects are limited to licensed contractors for elements that require construction. Localities have been somewhat more flexible around their trailheads.

Post-event cleanup has typically gone well; however, a few events have required some additional follow-up.

**What is your most effective form of communication/outreach?**

Newsletter has about 10,000 subscribers and about a 40% open rate. Social media, website, they also have paid advertisements. Goal is to be out on the trail April – October. Has the data collected from the trail counters ever impacted VCTF work negatively?

How often does VCTF review plan/policy effectiveness? Who is responsible for doing so?

\*Interested in VDOT Funding...

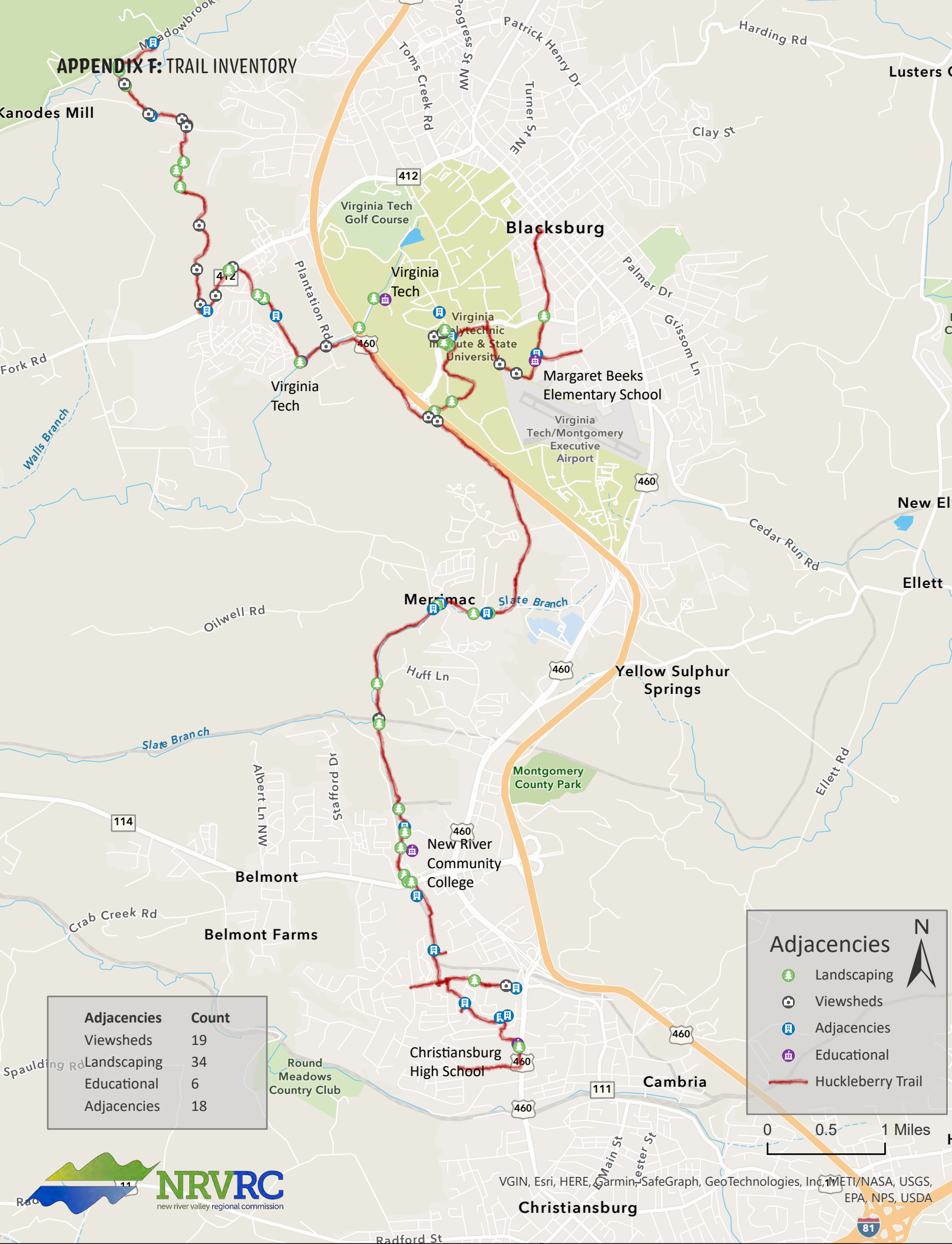
\*\* How many full-time employees

Small team, started with two and now up to four. Trying to hire more part-time staff currently, 800 volunteers annually.

		Trail Partner Goals & Best Management Practices									
Huckleberry Trail Partner		Mowing	Trimming Vegetation	Sweeping	Trash	Snow Removal	Vandalism	Coordinating Volunteers	Coordinating Events		
Town of Blacksburg	Frequency/Goal	10 days or less	seasonally or as needed	as needed	10 days or less	following streets but less than 72 hours	as needed	trail clean-up and special events	special events committee		
	Responsible Party	General Services	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Parks and Rec	special events committee		
Town of Christiansburg	Frequency/Goal	weekly	seasonally or as needed	as needed	daily	following streets	bi-weekly or as needed	fundraising and one-time events	bi-weekly committee meeting		
	Responsible Party	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Parks and Rec	bi-weekly committee meeting		
Montgomery County	Frequency/Goal	10 days or less	seasonally or as needed	as needed and following heavy wind events	weekly	following day unless weekend*	as needed	trail clean-up and one-time events	formal event process/form		
	Responsible Party	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	special events committee		
Virginia Tech	Frequency/Goal	weekly	seasonally or as needed	as needed	weekly	24 hours	as needed	trail clean-up	individual student organizations		
	Responsible Party	Facilities Operations	Town of Blacksburg Public Works	Facilities Operations	Facilities Operations	Facilities Operations	Facilities Operations	Facilities Operations & Alternative Transportation	not a reservable space on campus		
Friends of Huckleberry	Frequency/Goal	NA	NA	NA	annual cleanup events	NA	NA	direct to Parks and Rec Directors	direct to Parks and Rec Directors		
	Responsible Party	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Friends Director	Friends Director		
Huckleberry Trail Plan Strategies	Frequency/Goal	10 days or less	monthly inspection, best management practices checklist, as needed	monthly inspection, best management practices checklist, as needed	weekly	48 hours or less unless weekend*	weekly inspection, best management practices checklist, as needed	locally and/or individually partner managed for trail clean-up + routine maintenance	locally managed, single form + shared calendar bi-annual meetings + monthly updates		
	Responsible Party	Trail Owners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners + Partners		

\* trail is used by cross country skiers during welcomed snow events

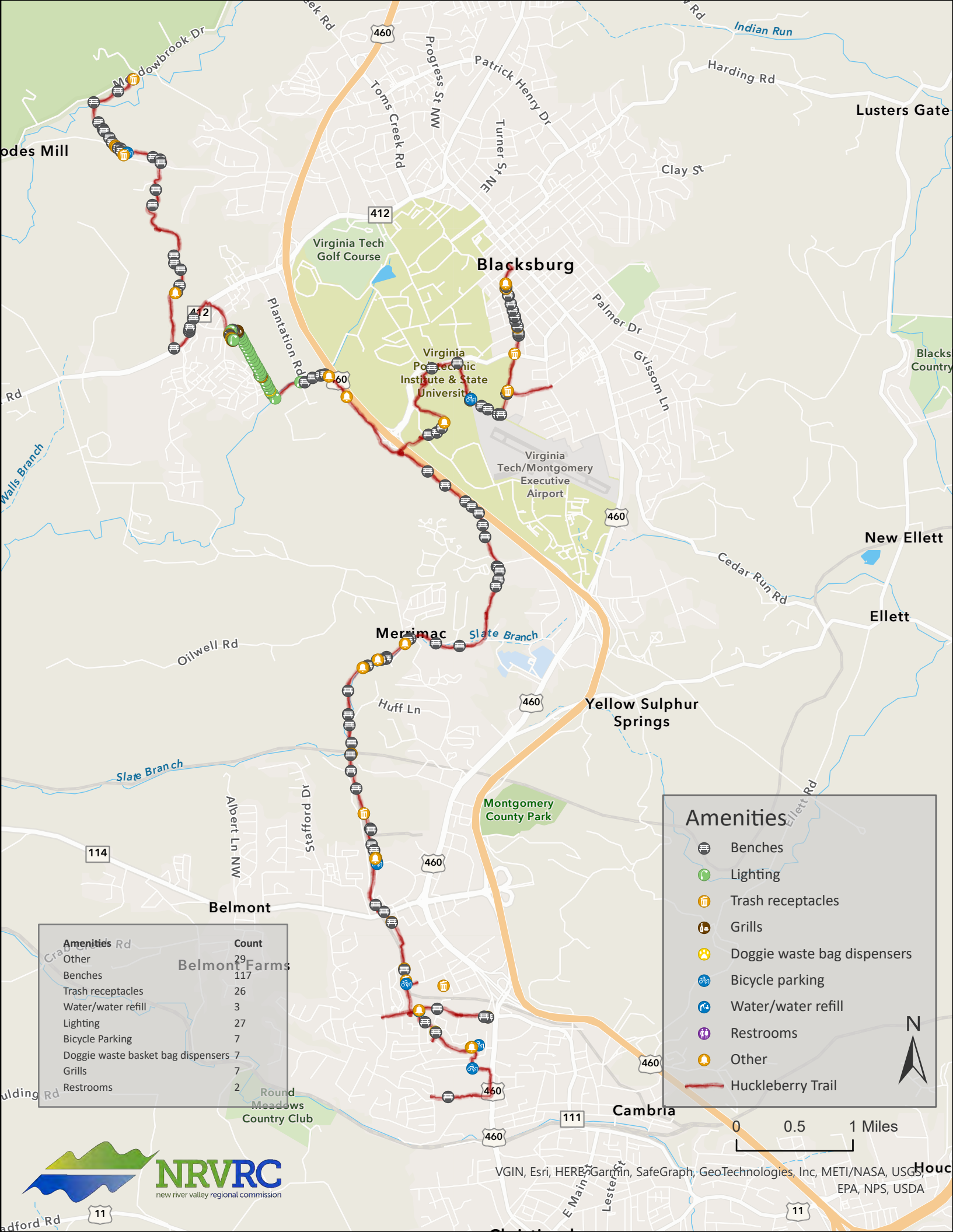
**APPENDIX F: TRAIL INVENTORY**



Adjacencies	Count
Viewsheds	19
Landscaping	34
Educational	6
Adjacencies	18

**Adjacencies**

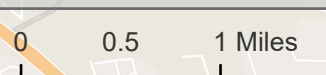
- Landscaping
- Viewsheds
- Adjacencies
- Educational
- Huckleberry Trail



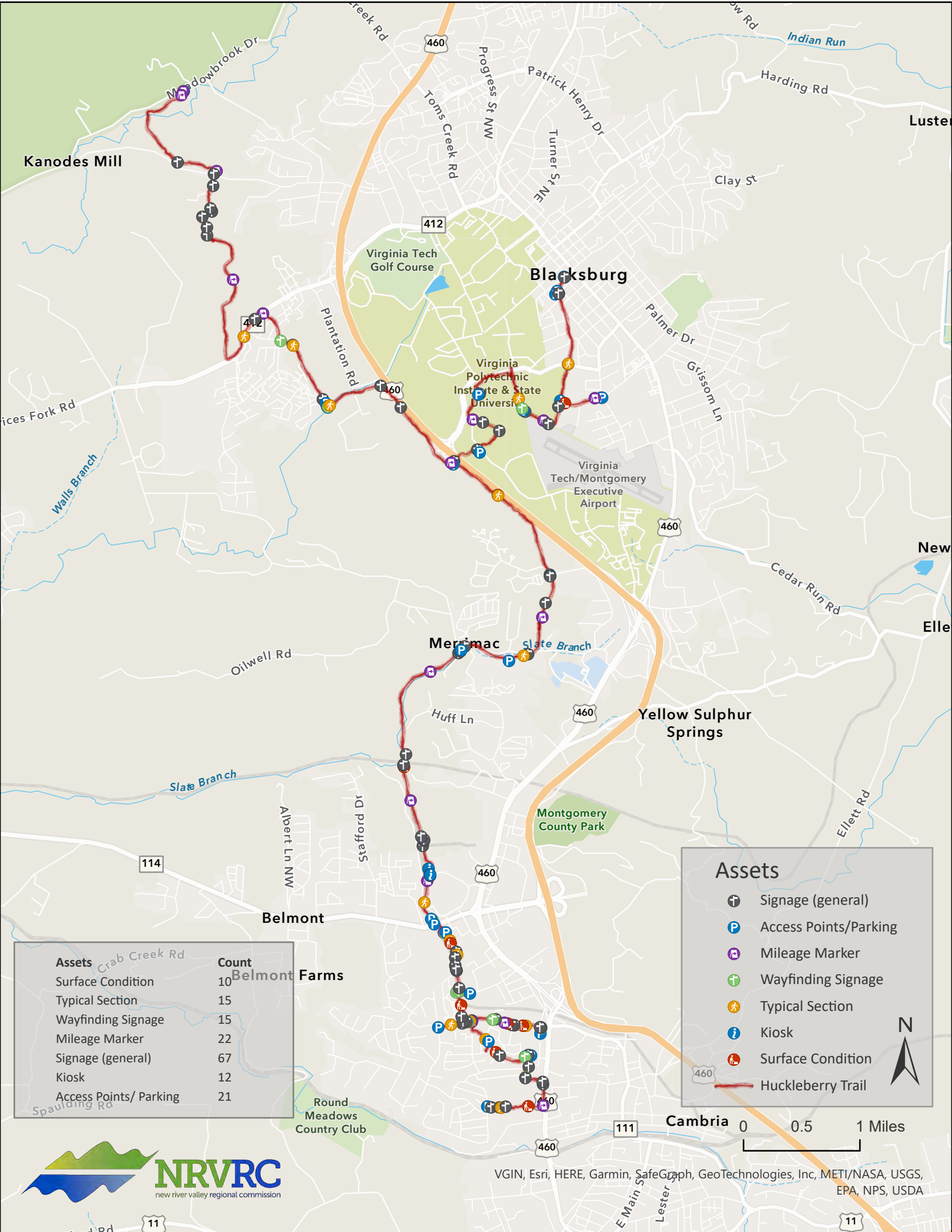
Amenities	Count
Other	29
Benches	117
Trash receptacles	26
Water/water refill	3
Lighting	27
Bicycle Parking	7
Doggie waste basket bag dispensers	7
Grills	7
Restrooms	2

**Amenities**

- Benches
- Lighting
- Trash receptacles
- Grills
- Doggie waste bag dispensers
- Bicycle parking
- Water/water refill
- Restrooms
- Other
- Huckleberry Trail







Connecting the  
Region

# HUCKLEBERRY TRAIL PLAN









# HISTORY

1902



**1902** Virginia Anthracite Coal Rail Company

**1904** Railroad linked Merrimac Mine to Cambria Depot

**1904** Rail extended to Blacksburg + VT

**1920** Passenger Rail to Blacksburg- Huckleberry namesake  
Mid-1900s Rail use dwindles

**1966** Depot closed + rail line abandoned

**1989** J.C. Garrett (VT) helps build nature trail (present day 1st mile)  
Montgomery County requests a bike plan to be developed +  
a group of citizens formed to review plans

1904



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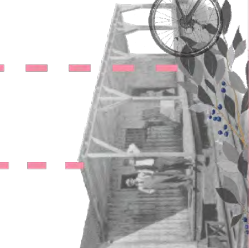
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1991



**1991** Friends of the Huckleberry established

**1994** Construction begins on first three miles of trail

**1997** First 5.75 miles complete, connecting Blacksburg to  
Christiansburg

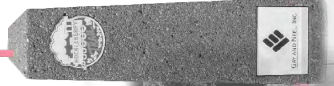
**2014** Trail extended South to Christiansburg Recreation Center  
Renva Knowles Bridge is built across 114

**2019** Huckleberry North connection complete

Huckleberry South extended to Independence Blvd.

**2021** Trail mile markers installed the entirety of the trail

2021



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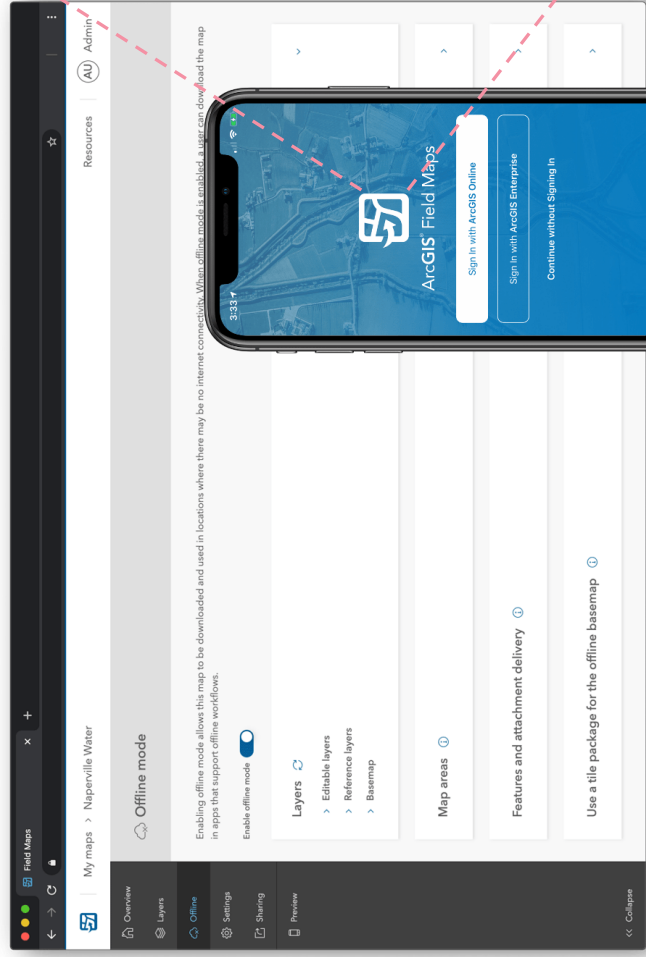
Huckleberry South extended to Independence Blvd.

**2021** Trail mile markers installed the entirety of the trail

# MAPPING



# MAPPING TOOLS



Enabling offline mode allows this map to be downloaded and used in locations where there may be no internet connectivity. When offline mode is enabled, a user can download the map in apps that support offline workflows.

Enable offline mode

Layers

> Editable layers

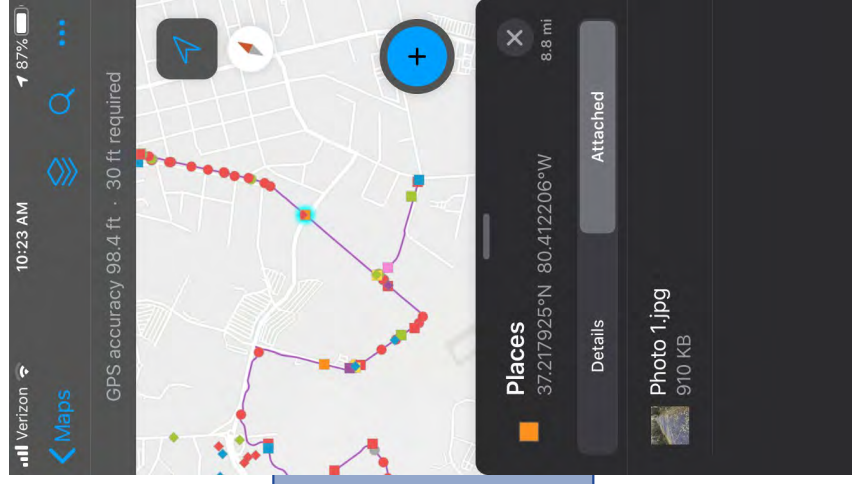
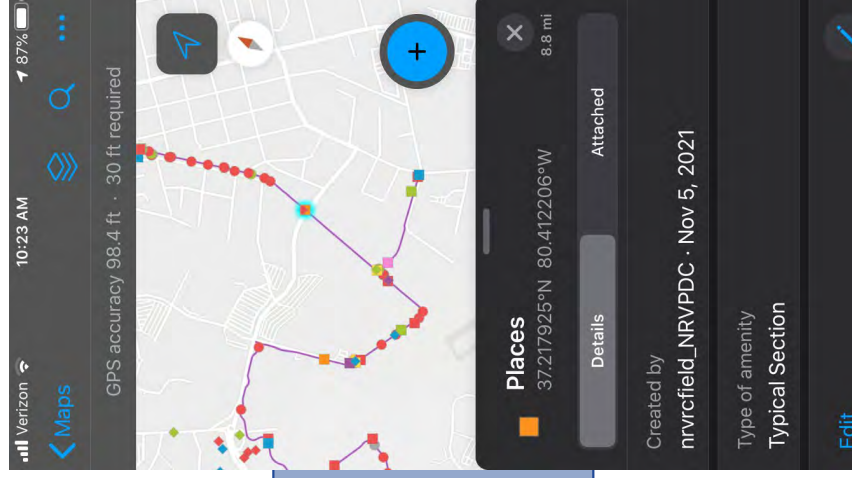
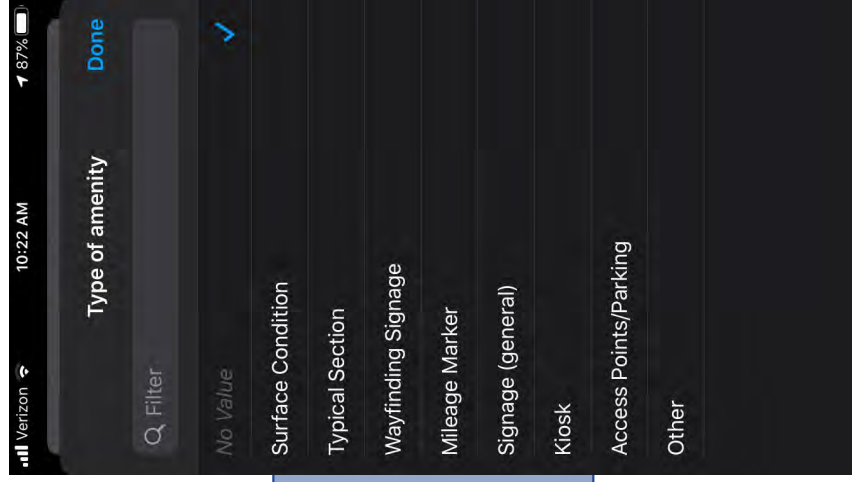
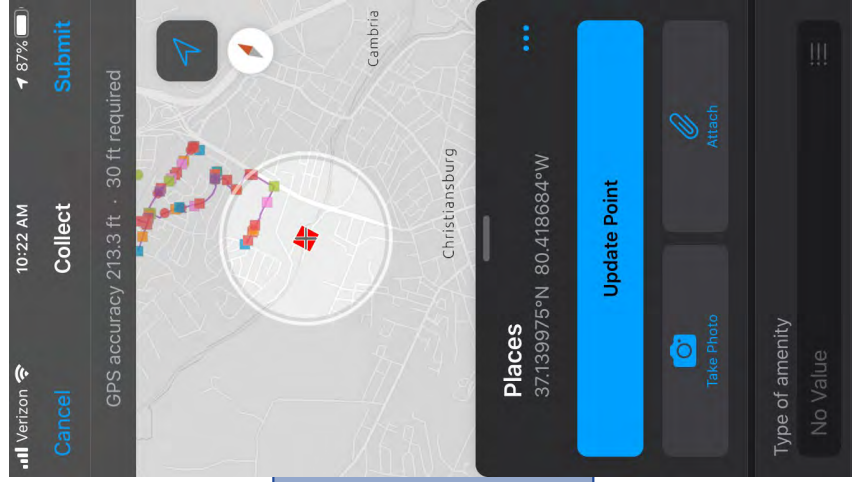
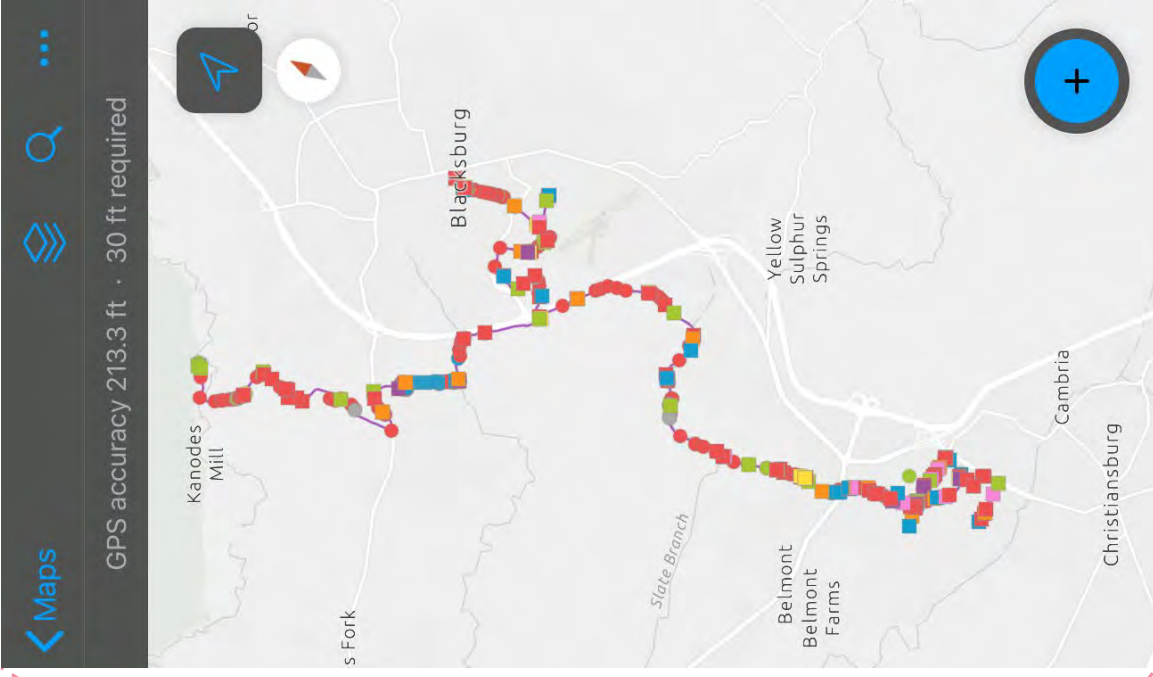
> Reference layers

> Basemap

Map areas

Features and attachment delivery

Use a tile package for the offline basemap





# EXISTING ASSETS

Assets can vary slightly from trail partner to trail partner, but lucky for the users of the Huckleberry Trail- our trail owners have made attempts to evenly distribute assets across the almost 15 miles of trail!

Trail assets can include (but not limited to):

- Parking
- Water
- Restrooms
- Bike Fix-it Stations
- Parks + Park Amenities



# EXISTING ASSETS





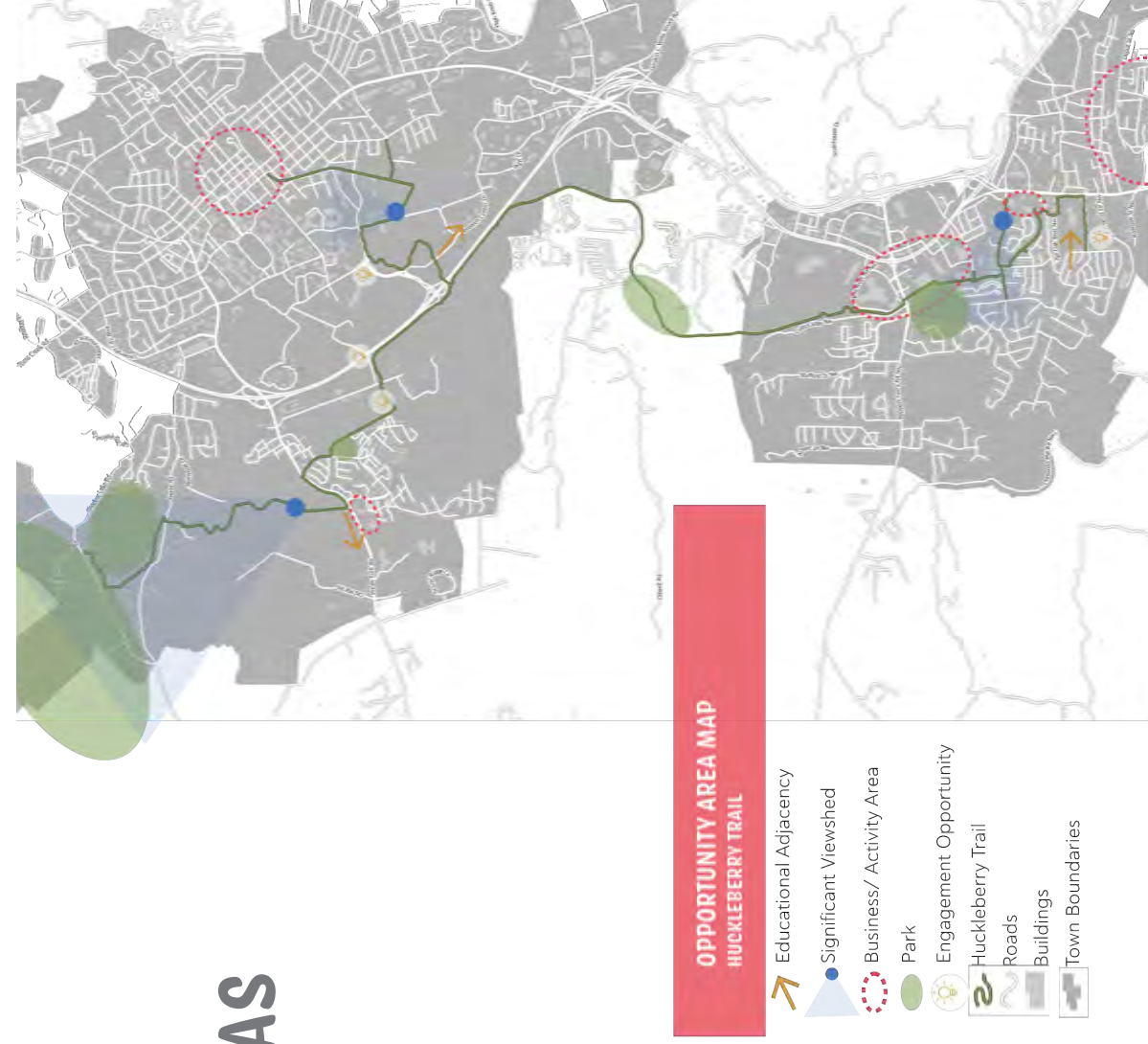
# OPPORTUNITY AREAS

Opportunity areas are important to consider when trail planning. Opportunities can include nearby parks, businesses, public services and historic/cultural sites. Adjacencies help to create significant connections for users and the localities the trail serves.

The variety of adjacencies helps support the local economy, alleviates automobile congestion on secondary and tertiary roads, and can provide “destination” trail appeal.



# OPPORTUNITY AREAS



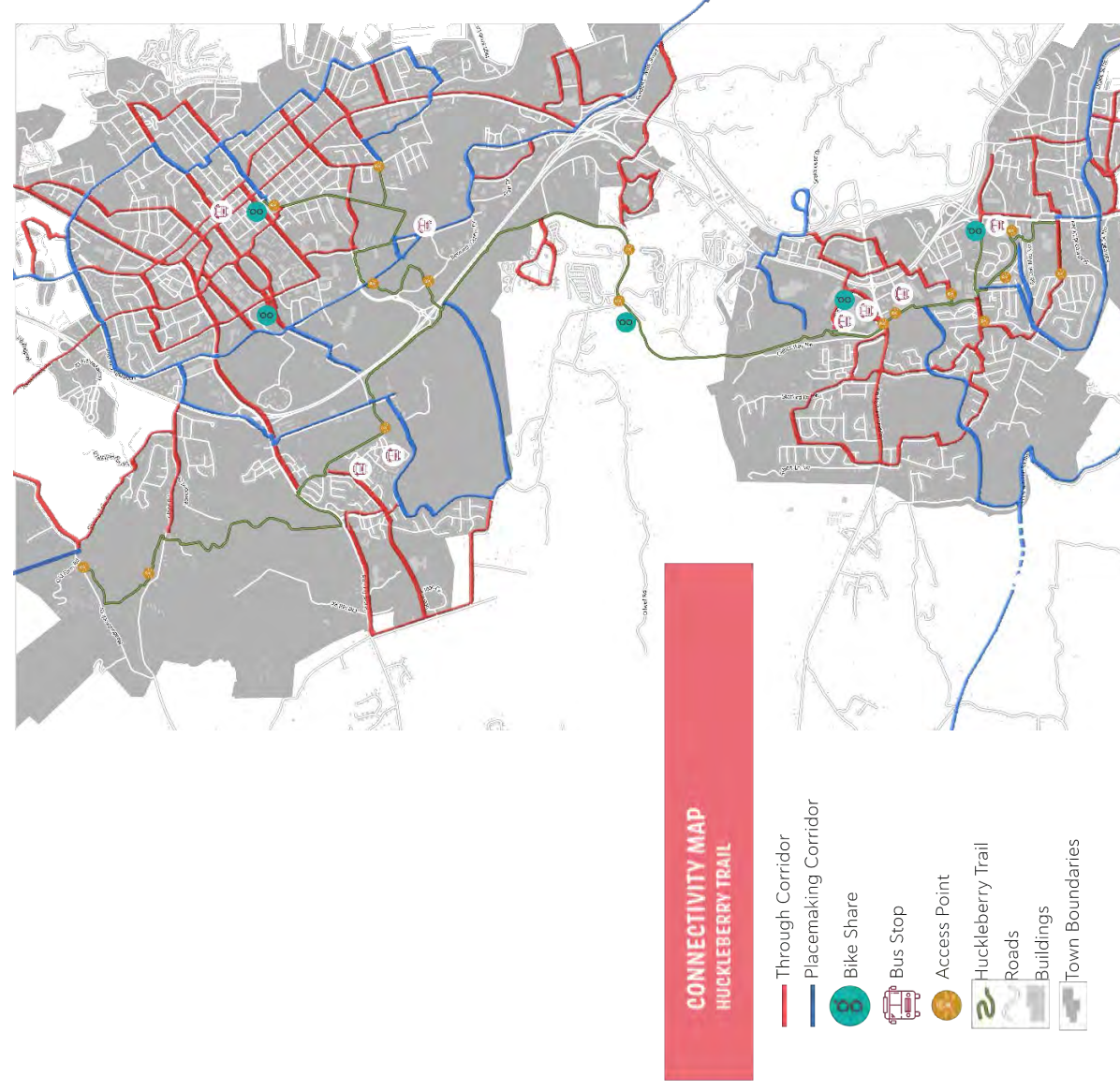


# CONNECTIVITY

Creating transportation options for underserved populations, ensuring linkages and reliability, increasing access to activity centers, and supporting active lifestyles are all goals that the NRVMPPO strives to achieve. The Huckleberry Trail is a terrific example of public infrastructure that aims to achieve those goals. The trail also creates connections to bus stops, bike share stations, and local bike/ped infrastructure.



# CONNECTIVITY



# OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVE



## TRAIL EXPERTS

Subject experts participated in field visits and virtual meetings to share their own maintenance goals, experience working with multiple trail partners, and lessons learned.

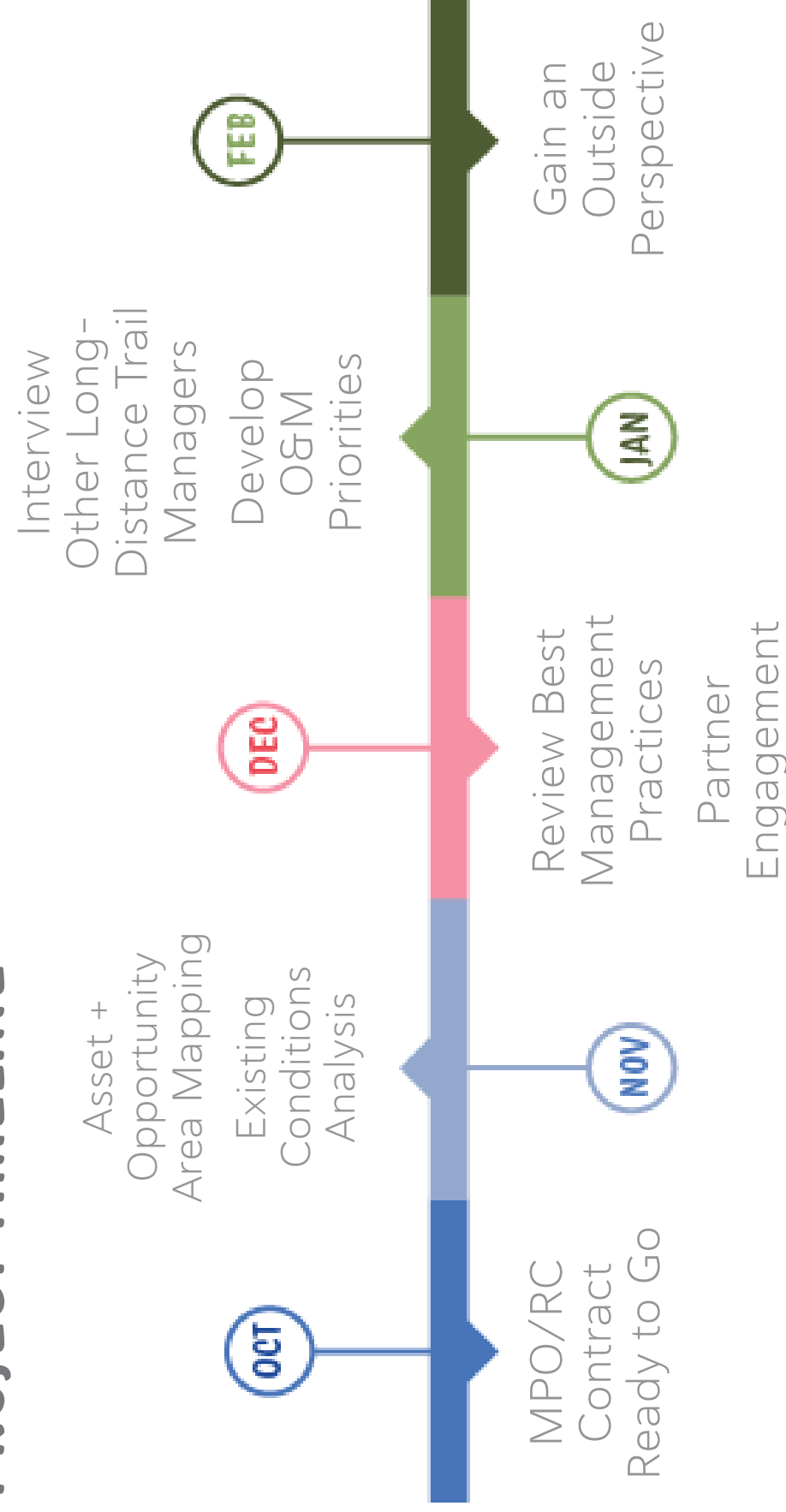




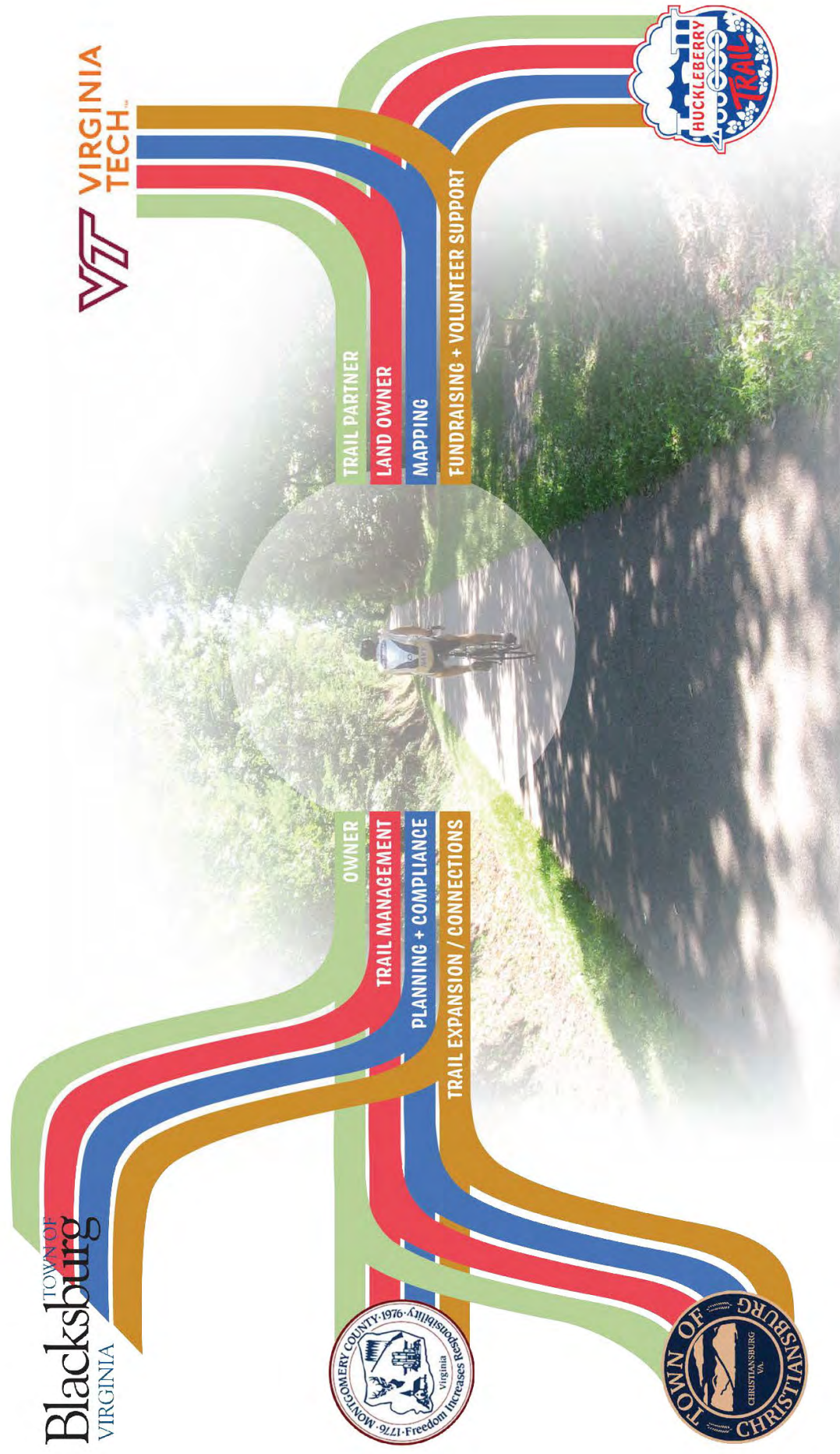
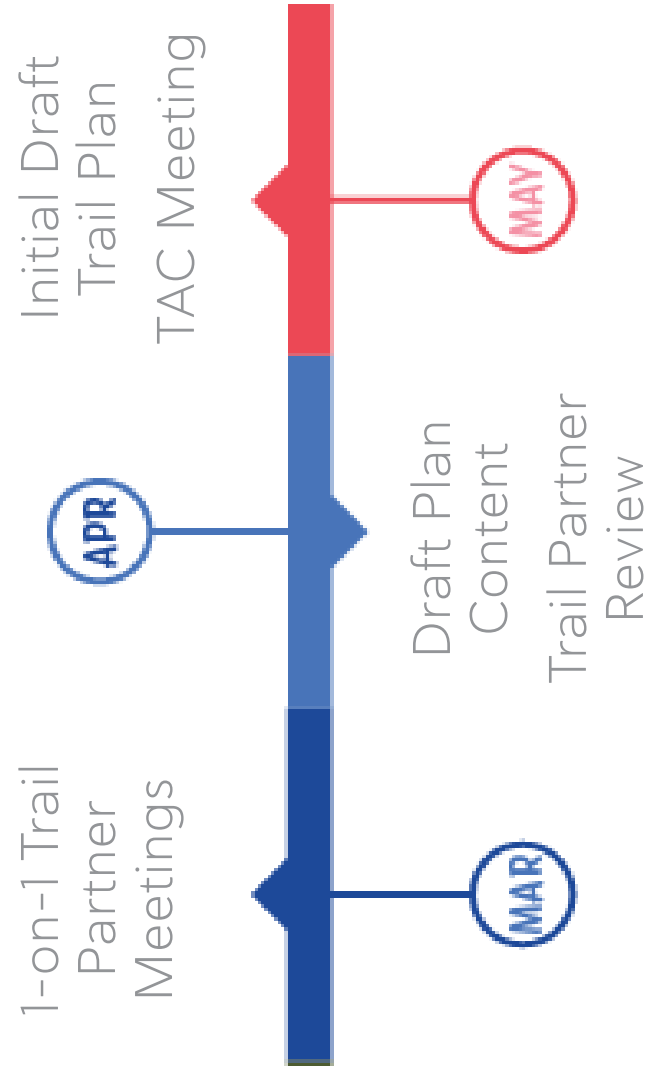
# STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK



# PROJECT TIMELINE



# PROJECT TIMELINE





## Trail Partner Goals & Best Management Practices

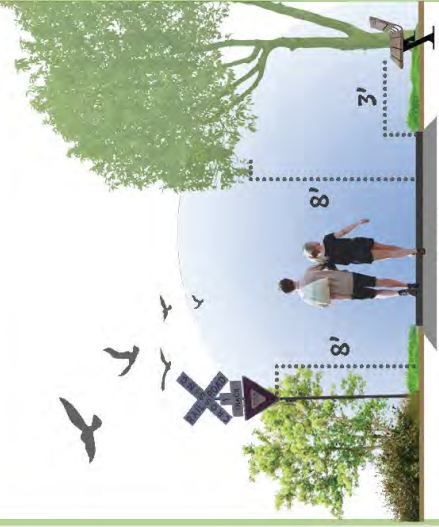
Huckleberry Trail Partner		Mowing	Trimming Vegetation	Sweeping	Trash	Snow Removal	Vandalism	Coordinating Volunteers	Coordinating Events
Town of Blacksburg	<i>Frequency/Goal</i>	10 days or less	seasonally or as needed	as needed	10 days or less	following streets but less than 72 hours	as needed	trail clean-up and special events	special events committee
	<i>Responsible Party</i>	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Public Works	Parks and Rec	special events committee
Town of Christiansburg	<i>Frequency/Goal</i>	weekly	seasonally or as needed	as needed	daily	following streets	bi-weekly or as needed	trail clean-up and special events	bi-weekly committee meeting
	<i>Responsible Party</i>	Public Works	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	bi-weekly committee meeting
Montgomery County	<i>Frequency/Goal</i>	10 days or less	seasonally or as needed	as needed and following heavy wind events	weekly	following day unless weekend*	as needed	trail clean-up and one-time events	formal event process/form
	<i>Responsible Party</i>	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	Parks and Rec	special events committee

## MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS GOALS

Trail Routine Maintenance + Operations Goals									
Frequency/ Goal	Mowing	Trimming Vegetation	Sweeping	Trash	Snow Removal	Vandalism	Coordinate Volunteers	Coordinate Events	Trail Owners + Partners
	about every 10 days	monthly inspection, best management practices checklist, as needed	monthly inspection, best management practices checklist, as needed	weekly, encourage users to take with them	48 hours or less, unless weekend*	weekly inspection, best management practices checklist, graffiti within 48 hours or less as needed	owner and/or partner managed for trail clean-up + routine maintenance	owner managed, single form + shared calendar, bi-annual meetings + monthly updates	
Responsible Party	Trail Owners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners + Partners	Trail Owners + Partners

# DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

1. North Country Trail Handbook: Planning, Design, Construction, Maintenance. 2019. National Park Foundation.
2. Paved Trails Study, National Parks Service, National Capital Region. 2016. National Park Service.
3. Evaluation of Safety, Design, and Operation of Shared-Use Paths Final Report. 2006. US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

TRAIL SETTING (0)	RURAL
DESIGN FEATURE	Paved surface, semi-rural and/or semi-primitive, higher chances of solitude
trail width(2)	8-10 feet, perceived 2-lane operation, up to 300 one-way users per hour
gateway trail head(2) (min one per trail owner)	ADA parking, well-maintained and Huckleberry Trail branded kiosk information area, bike fix-it station
local trail head spacing(3)	Local owner standards, spacing every 10-miles or less
vegetation	Plantings should be consistent with the surrounding natural environment, combat invasive species, and help define the trail edge.
rest stops/ rest areas (2)	Spacing typically more than 3-miles- location awareness signage, seating, bike racks
typical section trail width lateral/overhead clearance on-trail amenity setback signage standard	

# DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

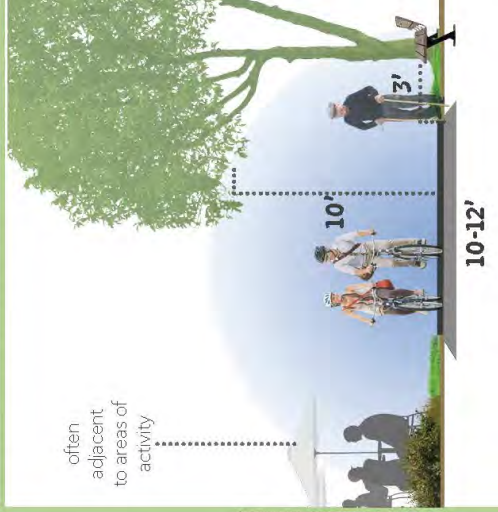
1. North Country Trail Handbook: Planning, Design, Construction, Maintenance. 2019. National Park Foundation.
2. Paved Trails Study, National Parks Service, National Capital Region. 2016. National Park Service.
3. Evaluation of Safety, Design, and Operation of Shared-Use Paths Final Report. 2006. US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

TRAIL SETTING (0)	SUBURBAN
DESIGN FEATURE	Paved surface, urban and/or semi-rural, limited ROW, equal chances of contact with others and solitude
trail width(2)	9-11 feet, perceived 2-3 lane operation, up to 300 one-way users per hour
gateway trail head(2) (min one per trail owner)	Rural + water, vehicular wayfinding to parking areas, QR codes to access trail resources (no cost, and for purchase)
local trail head spacing(3)	Local owner standards, spacing every 5-miles or less
vegetation	Plantings should respond to adjacent properties, regularly maintained, and follow CPTED standards.
rest stops/ rest areas (2)	Spacing typically every 2-3 miles- rural + bike fix-its, picnic table, trash/recycling bins
typical section trail width lateral/overhead clearance on-trail amenity setback signage standard	



# DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

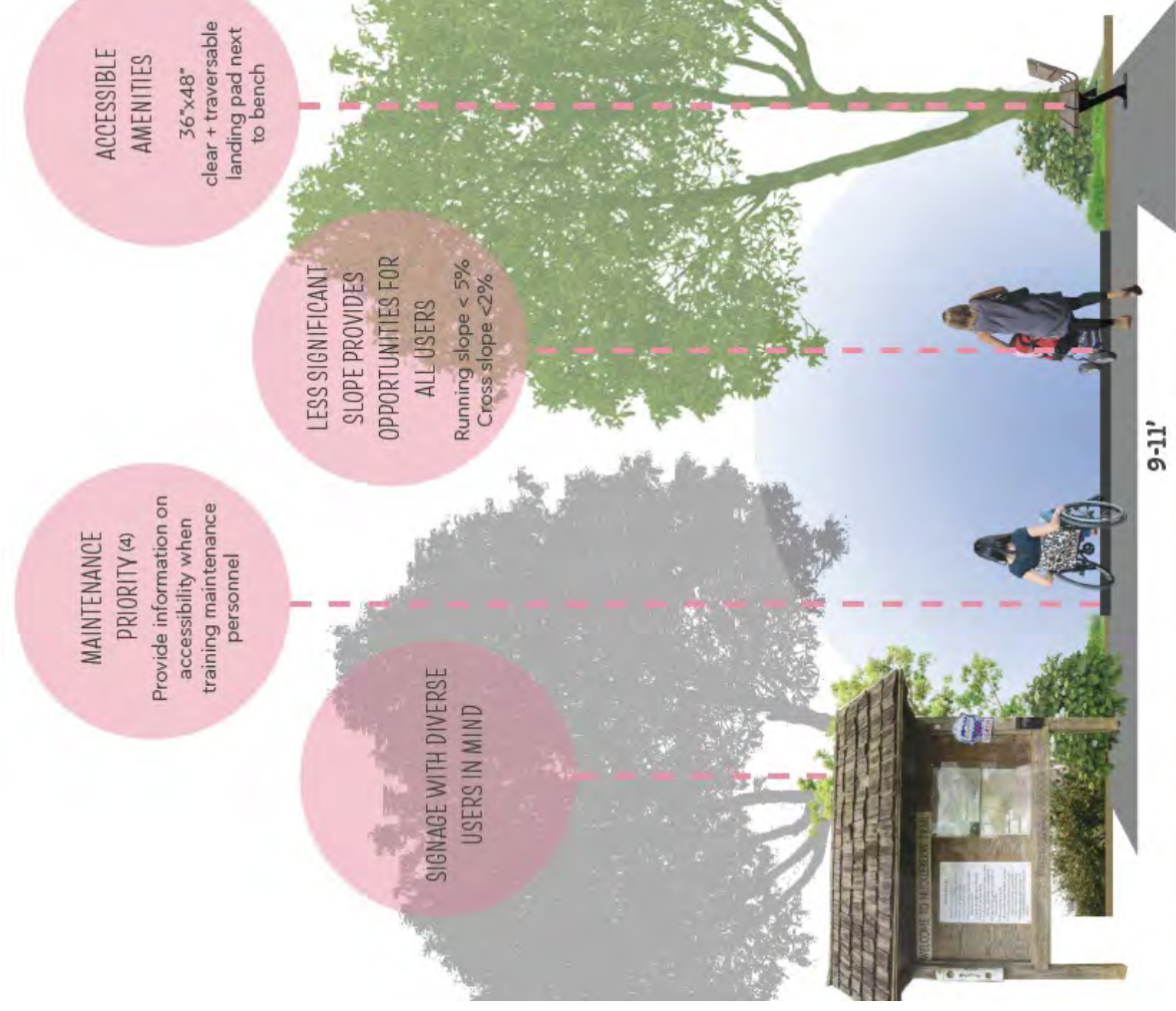
1. North Country Trail Handbook: Planning, Design, Construction, Maintenance. 2019. National Park Foundation.
2. Paved Trails Study, National Parks Service, National Capital Region. 2016. National Park Service.
3. Evaluation of Safety, Design, and Operation of Shared-Use Paths Final Report. 2006. US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.

TRAIL SETTING (1)	DESIGN FEATURE	URBAN
	trail width(2)	Paved surface, urban, limited ROW, higher chance of contact with others
	gateway trail head(2) (min one per trail owner)	10-12 feet, perceived 3-lane operation (beginning at 11 feet width), up to 500 one-way users per hour
	local trail head spacing(3)	Suburban + restroom, emergency stations, connections to transit
	vegetation	Local owner standards, spacing as needed/available
	rest stops/ rest areas (2)	Plantings should be used to further define entrances, naturally guide users to points of interest, and could be more robust, considering proximity to resources. Spacing typically every 2-3 miles or less-suburban + emergency stations, restroom access
	typical section trail width lateral/overhead clearance on-trail amenity setback signage standard	 <p>often adjacent to areas of activity</p>

# DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Two, approximately one-mile sections of trail in Blacksburg and Montgomery County, were identified as areas for priority maintenance and to feature for their ease of access. The two “blue ribbon” sections were selected due to the adjacency to handicapped parking, trail gateway accessibility, gentle running and cross slope, and trail amenities with further accommodations.

4. Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails. 2012. The Forest Service and United States Department of Agriculture. Retrieved from: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Accessibility-Guide-Book.pdf>









## ACTION PLAN

ID	GOAL	PARTNERS	COMPLETE	COST
1	Maintain existing Huckleberry Trail segments	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	ongoing	Utilize existing resources
2	Continue expanding the Huckleberry Trail South and increase connections to other alternative transportation assets (trails, transit, rail, etc.)	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	ongoing	\$125K avg per year
3	Collaborate to develop consistently branded Gateway Trailheads	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Friends of the Huckleberry	Spring 2023	\$200K each gateway
4	Improve and/or create new access to the most user-friendly sections of trail	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Friends of the Huckleberry	Spring 2027	\$50K per location

## ACTION PLAN

ID	GOAL	PARTNERS	COMPLETE	COST
5	Collaborate to update and/or create new trail mapping, free and for purchase versions	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Spring 2023	Utilize existing resources
6	Incorporate local history and art along the trail	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of Huckleberry, Blacksburg Regional Art Association, Christiansburg Institute, Christiansburg Arts Advisory Board, Montgomery Museum	Spring 2024	\$5K per location
7	Develop and maintain a streamlined approach to event planning	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Spring 2024	Utilize existing resources
8	Huckleberry Trail Partners & Managers Meeting, bi-annually, Spring & Fall	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Fall 2022	Utilize existing resources

## VISION PLAN

ID	GOAL	PARTNERS	COST
1	Create additional ranges of opportunities for fundraising initiatives (tree groves, restroom areas, gateways, bike repair, etc.)	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Utilize existing resources
2	Create more opportunities and options for volunteers to contribute year-round	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Utilize existing resources
3	Install wayfinding signage for intersecting trails, points of interest, and amenities	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Friends of the Huckleberry	Unknown
4	Collaborate to develop a best management practices plan for healthy trail vegetation	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	\$5K per partner
5	Collaborate to develop a trail capital improvement plan to guide fundraising investments	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Utilize existing resources

## VISION PLAN

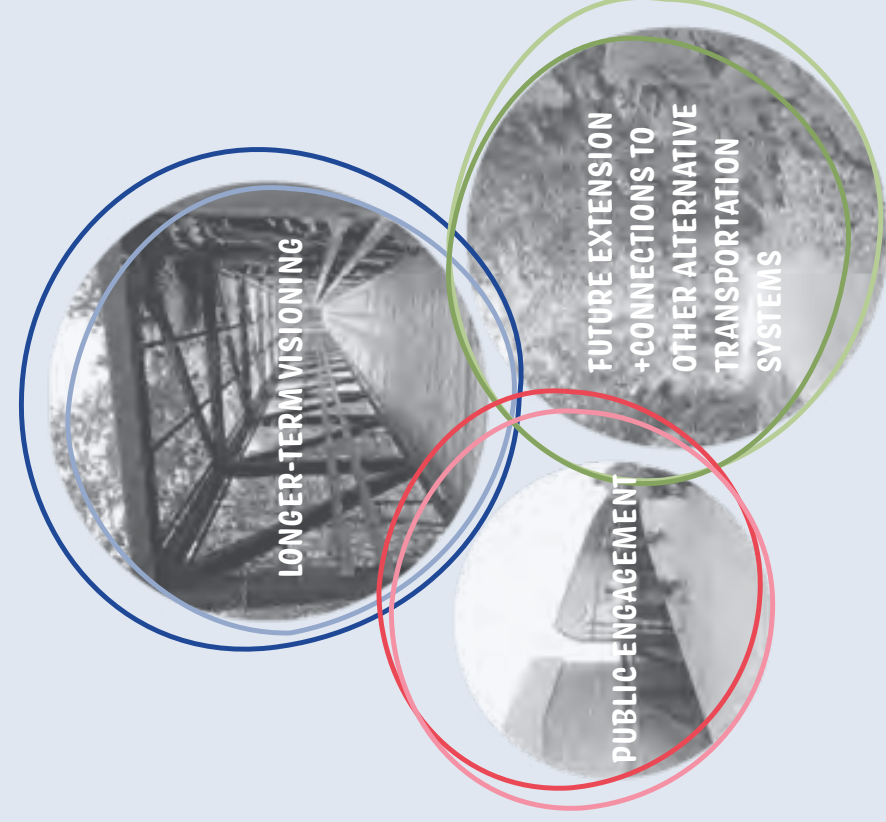
ID	GOAL	PARTNERS	COST
6	Establish a formal MOU to create a Trail Ambassadors Program	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of Huckleberry	Unknown
7	Promote the Huckleberry as a destination trail in tourism campaigns	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Unknown
8	Develop and maintain consistent standards for trail amenities and technology	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	Unknown
9	Install blue-light emergency stations every half-mile mark and in low traffic and/or areas that remain dark	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	\$8K per station
10	Install bollards where trail intersects with parking areas and other roadways	Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Montgomery, Virginia Tech, Friends of the Huckleberry	\$2.5K per location



# PART 1: GOALS



# FUTURE GOALS



---

# NEXT STEPS



THANKS!





**NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program**  
Montgomery Co-Radford City-Floyd Co Branch

## The Huckleberry Trail...More than Recreation

featuring the David Rotenizer, Director of Montgomery County Tourism, Beth Lohman, President of the Friends of the Huckleberry Trail, Inc and Kathleen Armstrong, New River Regional Commission.

Wednesday February 9, 2022 at 6 pm  
to register, visit [https://mrfnaacp.com/ECJ\\_HuckleberryTrail](https://mrfnaacp.com/ECJ_HuckleberryTrail)

### APPENDIX I: VIRGINIA TECH SURVEY AND SUMMARY



## Huckleberry Trail Survey- November 2021 (<https://survey.virginiatech.edu/survey/4562617>&utm\_content=4562617&utm\_campaign=QPsurveys)

What is your zip code (e.g., Blacksburg = 24060; Christiansburg = 24073 or 24068; VT campus = 24061)

Are you a Virginia Tech student?

- Yes
- No

How old are you?

- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- Above 64

How frequently do you use the Huckleberry Trail?

- Never
- Rarely
- Monthly
- A couple of times a month
- Weekly
- Most days

If you do use the Huckleberry Trail, what do you typically use it for? Choose all that apply

- Recreation or exercise
- Commuting
- Socializing with friends
- Time with family/children
- Part of a mental health plan

If you use the Huckleberry Trail, what activities do you typically engage in? Choose all that apply.

- Walking
- Running
- Bicycling
- Skateboarding
- Using an electronic scooter, bike, or other self-propelled device
- Other

If you use the trail, how long do you typically (on average) spend on the trail in minutes?

How satisfied are you with the Huckleberry Trail in general?



How satisfied are you with the amenities along the Huckleberry Trail?



How satisfied are you with the maintenance of the Huckleberry Trail?



How safe do you feel on the trail?



How important is each of the following amenities along the trail, in your opinion?

	Unimportant					Very important				
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Historical markers and signage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bike racks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bike repair stations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nature information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Additional information

Unimportant 1 2 3 4 5 Very important

Traffic signs (e.g., noting bumps or crossings, directional)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bathrooms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water refill stations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Benches	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Picnic tables/areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public art	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Unimportant 1 2 3 4 5 Very important

Emergency call boxes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lighting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Trail patrols	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Is there anything you would like to see added to the trail?

//

Where would you like to see the trail extended or new connections to the trail made?

//

Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

//

OPTIONAL: Contact information if you would like to receive updates on the Huckleberry Trail.

First Name

Last Name

Phone

Email Address



Done

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287

ONLINE SURVEYS

203

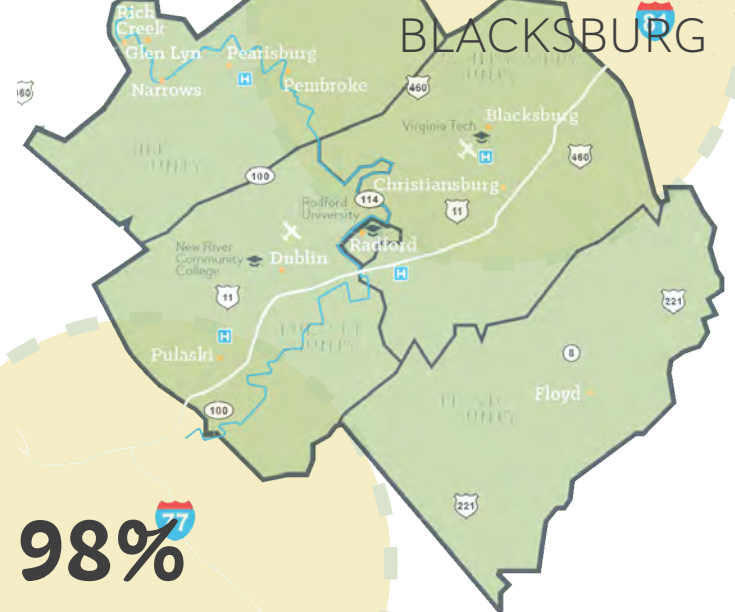
INTERCEPT SURVEYS

9

INTERVIEWS



MAJORITY OF USERS ARE RESIDENTS OF CHRISTIANSBURG OR BLACKSBURG



98%

OF INTERCEPT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS ARE FROM THE NRV



50

% OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS DROVE TO USE THE HUCKLEBERRY TRAIL

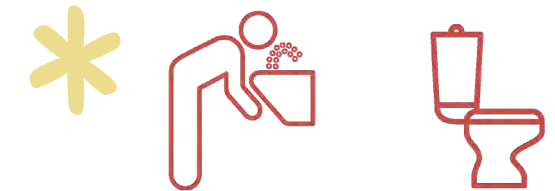
90% of intercept survey respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with their trail experience.

Hearing, vision, and mobility impaired users were most concerned with weather related maintenance (i.e. snow removal + downed limb clean-up).



RECREATION & WELLNESS

30-60 MINUTES OF TRAIL USE



Access to water fountains and restrooms is a top priority for trail users

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING IS THE TOP CONCERN FOR TRAIL USERS

