

CHESAPEAKE TRAILS PLAN

Endorsed by City Council 3/27/01

I INTRODUCTION

The Chesapeake Trails Plan was first adopted on March 19, 1996 by City Council. A chief implementation strategy of this plan was the creation of a Bicycle/Trails Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as "Committee". Current members of this Committee were appointed on January 26, 1999 to implement the Trails Plan and serve in an advisory role to City Council, other City Boards and Commissions and City Staff. A Committee's first major task is revision of the Trails Plan in order to more accurately reflect the members goals, objectives and implementation strategies.

II OVERALL GOAL

To formulate a safe, integrated, cost effective and comprehensive system of multi-use trails, bicycle lanes, bicycle routes, and water trails throughout the City; to satisfy the transportation and recreation needs of a variety of users, to reduce traffic congestion, and enhance alternative transportation modes while minimizing negative impacts on the surrounding area.

III OBJECTIVES

Objective 1

Develop a comprehensive network of facilities throughout the City. Bicycle facilities should be modeled on the AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) standard classifications for facility type. (These classifications are described below):

Class I (path) facilities are also referred to as "multi-use trails" and are physically separated from the roadway pavement. These facilities range from 8-12 feet in width and serve two-way traffic. Class I facilities may consist of a variety of surfaces depending on the intended use.

Class II (lane) facilities are an extension of the roadway pavement and separated by signage and striping. These facilities range from 4-6 feet in width and serve one-way traffic.

Class III (route) facilities are roadways without major physical improvements related to trail users. These facilities should generally have safety features such as wider lanes, shoulders, lower volumes and an absence of obstacles for the user.

Implementation Strategies

1. Compile a listing of existing facilities.
2. Prepare a map of potential high priority facilities connecting neighborhoods with activity centers and long distance routes for commuting and touring. The type of facility chosen should reflect the needs of the expected user as follows:
 - Neighborhood routes connecting population and activity centers, such as, schools and parks.
 - Commuter/long distance routes that provide opportunities for trips to work or long distance recreation opportunities.
 - Recreational multi-use trails are generally located away from roadways through natural areas and may serve both local and long distance users.
 - Water Trails follow waterways navigable by watercraft and with appropriate launch facilities.
3. Ensure that all local roads can safely be utilized as Class III facilities through proper subdivision regulations such as interconnecting neighborhoods, dispersed traffic flows, sidewalks for pedestrians, appropriate signage and street markings.
 - Require that sidewalks be constructed along all roadways regulated by the Subdivision Ordinance with exceptions allowed in rural areas. Multi-use paths can be substituted for sidewalks in appropriate areas.
 - Continue to require stub streets to serve future adjacent subdivisions and discourage street closures, as this will increase traffic on the alternative routes. If roadways are closed to vehicular traffic, a pedestrian/bicycle connection should be retained.
4. Continue to consider lanes and pathways along all roadways indicated on the City's Master Road Plan and the Regional non-highway map and provide cost estimates for these facilities when roadway construction is considered.
 - Include typical sections for bicycle lanes, paths and wide outside lanes with any update of the City's Master Road Plan.
 - Ensure that all of the high priority routes are included in the Regional Non-Highway Plan in order for VDOT to consider routes with their programming efforts.
 - Look at the feasibility of constructing canoe and boat launches in conjunction with bridge construction projects along designated navigable waterways.

5. Pursue funding options, such as the Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21) Enhancement and CMAQ programs, the Federal Recreational Trails programs or other grant based funding options.
 - The map of high priority facilities should be referenced when proposing new projects for grant consideration. Other factors to consider include total cost, coordination with road projects, and community support.

Objective 2

Develop an organizational framework which provides for coordination between the various governments and private interests to ensure effective implementation of the Plan.

Implementation Strategies

1. The Chesapeake Bicycle/Trails Advisory Committee has been appointed by City Council to propose policy as it relates to bicycle routes and trails planning throughout the City. This Committee is to consist of four members of organized user groups, four members of organized civic leagues and a member of the Farm Bureau. In addition non-voting staff members from Parks and Recreation, Planning and Public Works serve on the commission.
2. The Committee will prepare updates to the Chesapeake Trails Plan and annually prioritize projects for grants or potential inclusion in the City's Capital Budget.
3. The Planning Department will advise the Committee on future development applications which may have a future impact on the Trails Plan, such as, potential linkages through subdivisions, major road construction within a development and street closures.
4. The Parks and Recreation and Public Works Department will periodically update the Commission on the status of their capital projects that may have implications on the City's Trail system and will work with the Committee to coordinate trail proposals with their respective projects.
5. The Planning Commission will recommend approval or denial of all updates to the Trails Plan and the Capital Improvement Budget to City Council. The Committee will provide the Planning Commission with recommendations in regard to development items of relevance to the Trails Plan.
6. City Council will ultimately approve all plan or ordinance revisions, grant applications, and City/State funded construction projects.

7. Public Hearings will be held prior to construction of all major City or State projects in a similar fashion as is now followed for road construction.

Objective 3

Develop a public information campaign to promote alternative transportation and the recreation benefits of trails. Pursue measures which will provide for enhanced safety, access and convenience for all citizens.

Implementation Strategies

1. Coordinate with the multitude of local, state and national organizations that promote the transportation and recreational benefits of trails.
2. Undertake a campaign to educate civic leagues, school groups and others as to the benefits of trails.
3. Pursue employer programs to make bicycling/walking more acceptable modes of getting to work. Examples of such programs include on-site showers and bicycle lockers. The regional transportation alternatives program "Traffix" is involved in such activities.
4. Enhance the safety of trails through close cooperation with the Police Department, Traffic Engineering and the Transportation Safety Commission.