

Regarding the George Snyder Trail – Comments of Friends of Accotink Creek January 16, 2024

Councilmember Bates,

Thank you for your considered discussion of a path to reduced environmental impact at the George Snyder Trail work session January 9th. You have heard the concerns of citizens and forthrightly responded to them. Your thoughts are forward thinking about ties to the City's plans to make Northfax walkable and bikeable, including connecting to the University Drive "[Spine](#)".

Notwithstanding, we hope you can still reconsider the very premise of the project. Together, we can reimagine how to fulfill the objectives of the City and the funder to provide improved non-motorized travel between Chain Bridge Road and eastern portions of the City.

From the perspective of the Friends of Accotink Creek, as advocates for habitat preservation, it seems the discussion has come down to three rough alternatives:

1. Reroute the entire trail onto existing paved infrastructure, as we have advocated along Cardinal Road.
2. Build the western A1 section only, as you proposed. In that case, we would urge:
 - Merge the section nearest Fairfax Blvd with the sidewalk expansion that will eventually be done anyway.
 - Explore the option you put forth to merge the trail with the redevelopment of Willow Woods, either:
 - As an alignment hugging the rear of Willow Woods, or
 - As an alignment on the existing footprint of Willow Woods, as at Main Street Marketplace*, or
 - As the improvements to Eaton Place that will be required of the developers anyway.
3. With great regret, forsake this project altogether.

Let's ask, "Why not make all of Fairfax Blvd safe for people before we make our forests safe for pavement?" The answer, as you rightly noted in the work session, is the challenge of doing so except in conjunction with redevelopment. Still, the City has the opportunity to kickstart and accelerate these improvements by incorporating as much as possible into the "redevelopment" that is the George Snyder Trail.

We ask that existing paved infrastructure should be the preferred routing for all planned projects that propose to increase asphalt at the expense of our forests, be they the George Snyder Trail or any others on the way.

Sincerely,

Friends of Accotink Creek : : www.accotink.org : :

><(((e>~..~><(((e> "Find just one other person who cares." ><(((e>~..~><(((e>~..~><(((e>

[#SaveFairfaxTrees](#)



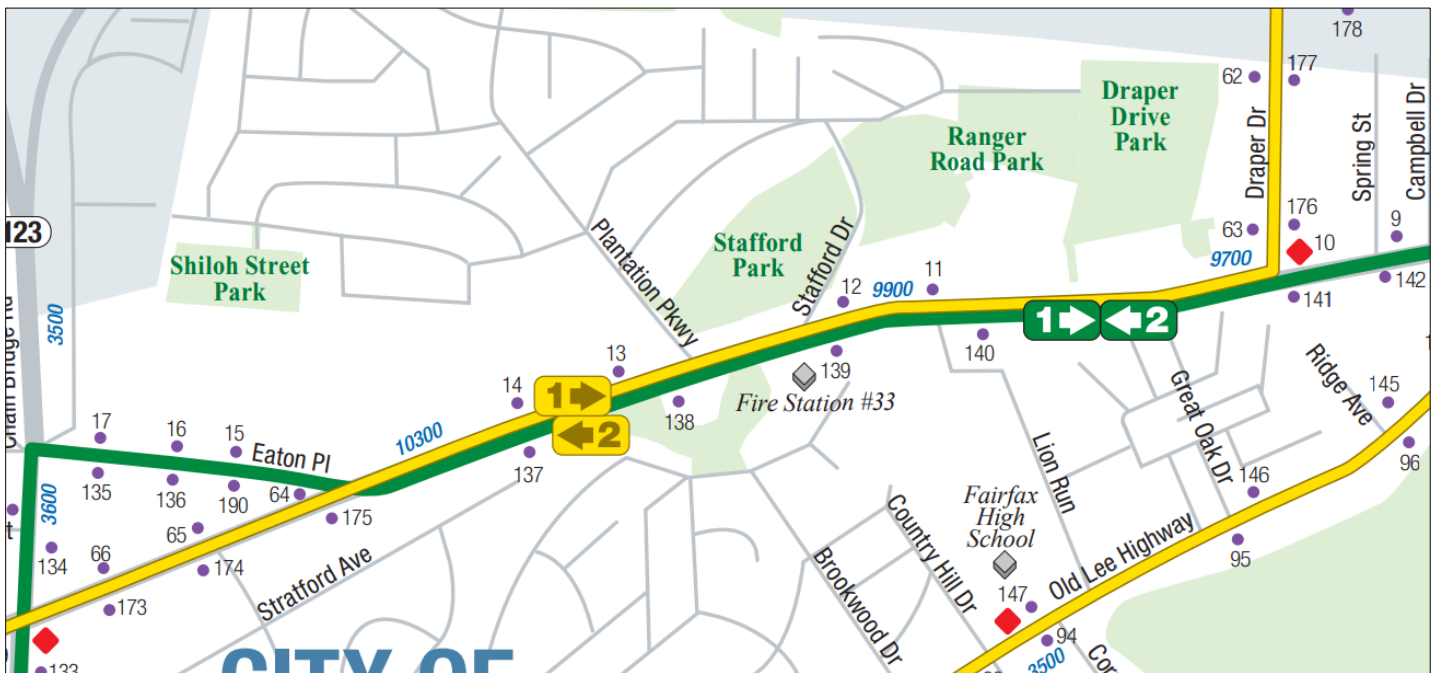
* The City's existing Main Street Marketplace trail connection



The vision of inviting pedestrian and bicycle travel at the car wash proposed on Fairfax Blvd at Lion Run



One end of a [pedestrian trail bridge](#) under construction by the County.
 Do we want this times eight to build four bridges in City woodlands for the George Snyder Trail?



Improving Fairfax Blvd/Eaton Place also supports Cue routes with at least 12 stops along this stretch of Rt. 50