

## GEORGE SNYDER TRAIL

### ALERT: Keep Pressure On Fairfax City Council

February 5, 2025

We're almost there: Thanks to you, the George Snyder Trail is a discussion item on the March 11, 2025, council meeting agenda! However, we need to keep the pressure on by emailing council members about the [George Snyder Trail](#) and the [Country Club Commons](#) and [Pickett Road Connector](#) Trails and, if possible, showing up in large numbers at the March 11, 2025. council meeting.

**Actions We Can Take Now.** It is unclear if the council will vote on a resolution on March 11 to suspend the George Snyder Trail. A resolution to cancel the two connectors is not even on the agenda. Furthermore, the City staff is working on a plan for the George Snyder Trail without direction from the council for presentation at the March 11 meeting.

However, there is still time to influence the council by emailing them about your concerns and suggestions. The last flurry of emails got council members' attention so this next volley will keep the pressure on.

In addition to letting the council know our thoughts about the George Snyder Trail, we could also suggest that the council create a separate resolution to cancel the two connector trails.

Please also consider speaking about the George Snyder Trail and connector trails during the public comment periods at the February 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> regular council meetings. Please also show up at the March 11<sup>th</sup> council meeting to show support of the George Snyder Trail and connector trails resolutions.

Here are the council members' emails:

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[Billy.Bates@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:Billy.Bates@fairfaxva.gov)

[Stacy.Hall@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:Stacy.Hall@fairfaxva.gov)

[Stacey.Hardy-Chandler@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:Stacey.Hardy-Chandler@fairfaxva.gov)

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[Tom.Peterson@fairfaxva.gov](mailto:Tom.Peterson@fairfaxva.gov)

Once again, time is of the essence so keep those emails flowing!

Below is information that might be useful in crafting individual emails to the council.

**George Snyder Trail Resolution.** In January, based on a draft resolution, four council members expressed support of a resolution to suspend the George Snyder Trail and direct city staff to explore options that would utilize the grant funds for the same purpose as the George Snyder Trail, i.e. to create a safer east-west connection between Chain Bridge Road (Route 123) and the Wilcoxon Trail for bicyclists and pedestrians, but do so using primarily, if not exclusively, existing roadways. The resolution is NOT a compromise; it is a directive from the council to the staff. One thing we learned over the past two years is that the council needs to provide direction to the staff and not the other way round.

Here is the draft resolution:

**“In order to uphold the City’s commitment to environmental and fiscal responsibility and to further the City’s multimodal transportation goals, Council resolves to suspend the George Snyder Trail Project until such time as staff is able to provide an alternative plan for the project that meets the following requirements.**

**The proposed infrastructure improvements to be known collectively as the George Snyder Trail Project should:**

- 1. Result in safer bicycle and pedestrian travel than currently exists in the corridor between Chain Bridge Road N from the terminus of the I-66 multimodal trail to the Wilcoxon Trail entrance on Fairfax Boulevard;**

2. **Prioritize the use of existing sidewalks, streets and trails, minimize additional impervious surfaces, and remove impervious surfaces where feasible.**
3. **Minimize land and habitat disturbance and avoid wetlands, the 50' seaward portion of the RPA and the 2 year floodplain;**
4. **Identify any opportunities where improvements could occur in conjunction with redevelopment in the near future that could be incorporated;**
5. **In total cost less than the amount remaining in the concessionaire grant fund.**

**Council further requests that staff prepare a proposal for community-wide engagement to be reviewed separately by City Council prior to further formal action on the George Snyder Trail Project.”**

Please note that there is another compelling reason to suspend the George Snyder Trail pending options to use existing roadways: Within the next five years the City plans to make Fairfax Boulevard safer for bicyclists and pedestrians. Why spend money to build a trail through our greenspace that parallels Fairfax Boulevard when Fairfax Boulevard will be upgraded within five years? Why not use the grant money (and our Operations and Maintenance money) to begin upgrading Fairfax Boulevard?

**Country Club Commons and Pickett Road Connectors.** Four council members support cancelling the Country Club Commons and Pickett Road Connectors. However, this week we learned that the Country Club Commons Connector is being “short tracked” by staff. Fortunately, one of the new council members is trying to stop it from going out for bid so that the council can decide what to do.

The **Country Club Commons Connector** is a \$5.1M project to build a 650 foot trail through the woods next to the firehouse on Fairfax Boulevard to Spring Lake Terrace in Country Club Hills. The \$5.1M will fund a boardwalk/elevated walkway for 625 feet, asphalt for 25 feet from Spring Lake Terrace, a 10-foot wide path, and one proposed bridge. Most of the Country Club Hills residents are against this trail and the former police chief expressed concerns about the connector becoming a crime-get-away route because it will be right across Fairfax Boulevard from the Market Place Boulevard plaza and the CVS and ABC stores.

The **Pickett Road Connector** is “a stone’s throw away” from an existing county trail, to quote a Fairfax County Trails, Sidewalks and Bikeways Committee member at a meeting last spring with the mayor and a staff member. It is a \$6M project to build a 1,260 foot trail that includes a ten-foot wide asphalt trail with two-foot shoulders, including one bridge and several boardwalk sections. The trail connects Thaiss Park to Fairfax Boulevard.

Please note that the estimated costs of the two connector trails were developed about four years ago. We do not know if the estimates have been revised since then.