



## PRESS RELEASE



Washington & Old Dominion Dual Trails, City of Falls Church

Image credit: Erica Hawksworth, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

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### **Regional Leaders Celebrate Dual Trails on Washington & Old Dominion Trail in City of Falls Church**

**City of Falls Church (October 7, 2021)** – Today officials from NOVA Parks, the City of Falls Church, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) celebrated an enhanced new section of Washington & Old Dominion (W&OD) Trail. The new Dual Trail improvements are designed to reduce crowding and increase safety for cyclists and walkers.

Several local and regional leaders attended the event, including Paul Baldino, Board Member, NOVA Parks, City of Falls Church; Cate Magennis Wyatt, Chair, NOVA Parks; David F. Snyder, Council Member, City of Falls Church, and Vice Chair, NVTA; P. David Tarter, Mayor, City of Falls Church; Monica Backmon, CEO, NVTA; Kristin Frontiera, Interim Executive Director, WABA; and Paul Gilbert, Executive Director, NOVA Parks.

The W&OD Trail, which is managed by regional parks agency NOVA Parks, was one of the first rail-to-trail projects in the nation and spans 45 miles from Shirlington (Arlington County) to Purcellville (Loudoun County). The new enhancements span nearly 1.5 miles of trail from Little Falls Street to North West Street in the City of Falls Church. The Trail now features an 11-foot-wide path for cycling, an 8-foot-wide path for



walkers and runners, and a 2-foot-wide colored and textured median between the two paths to separate trail users traveling at different speeds.

“Today we celebrate what will soon be heralded as a national state-of-the-art model for the design and use of a critical, urban, public transit, and recreational trail.” said Cate Magennis Wyatt, Chair of NOVA Parks Board. “This Dual Trail separates cyclist from pedestrian, ensures our neighbors’ safe transit, and provides recreation within a beautifully designed, environmentally-friendly setting.”

The Dual Trails will not only reduce congestion on the roadways, but also provides cyclists, runners and pedestrians with an excellent alternative way to commute and access to two Metrorail stations.

“We are thrilled to celebrate the opening of this dual-trail segment on the W&OD trail,” said Kristin Frontiera, Acting Executive Director of WABA. The W&OD is one of the most-used trails in our region for transportation and recreation, and this project will vastly improve safety for all trail users—especially those who walk, run, and roll. Dual trails are going to be the standard for urban trails, as trails across the country see a sharp and sustained increase in popularity use. NOVA Parks, NVTA, and the City of Falls Church are on the forefront of leading this change.”

The Dual Trails project is funded by NVTA, which awarded NOVA Parks more than \$3.24 million in regional revenues for the W&OD Trail Enhancements in the City of Falls Church. In 2020, NOVA Parks also received \$650,000 in NVTA regional revenues for Trail Enhancements in Arlington County, through the NVTA FY2020-2025 Six Year Program.

“Active transportation is rapidly growing and much needed as we continue to navigate through the pandemic,” said David F. Snyder, Council Member, City of Falls Church, and Vice Chair, NVTA. “Utilization of the regional trail offers a great alternative to driving to work in a single occupancy vehicle, helping reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We welcome travelers through the region to check out the new trail enhancements and enjoy a safer journey while helping relieve congestion on the roadways.”

Furthermore, the Dual Trail design contributes to environmental sustainability. The project incorporates numerous low impact techniques, like swales (shallow, broad and vegetated channels designed to store and/or convey runoff while removing pollutants), French drains, pervious pavement areas, and modular wetlands to filter rainwater. Bird and pollinators like bees and butterflies will benefit from the meadow grasses growing in the drainage areas.

## **About NOVA Parks**

Founded in 1959, [NOVA Parks](#) (Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority) represents three counties and three cities -- Arlington County, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, the City of Alexandria, the City of Falls Church, and the City of Fairfax. The regional agency manages over 12,000 acres of parks and recreational facilities, including water parks, golf courses, swimming pools, and a climbing center. For more information on the W&OD Trail project in the City of Falls Church, visit the [project page](#).



## About the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

The [Northern Virginia Transportation Authority](#) was created by the General Assembly on July 1, 2002, to offer a common voice for Northern Virginia on transportation issues confronting the region. The Authority is made up of nine jurisdictions including: the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William; the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park. The Authority is responsible for updating Northern Virginia’s long-range transportation plan, TransAction, and since 2014 manages approximately \$365 million annually in public funds for transportation projects designed to provide congestion relief throughout Northern Virginia.

## About the City of Falls Church

The [City of Falls Church](#) is an independent city in Northern Virginia with over 14,000 residents. The City was named the first “America’s Healthiest Community” by U.S. News & World Report in 2018 and has placed in the top five every year since. “The Little City” has the atmosphere of a small town with the conveniences and culture of a city. It is known for its high-ranking schools, weekly year-round farmers market, and environmentally-friendly initiatives like bike share and walkability.



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