

Proposed Scenic Byway Information for Waterfall Road, Antioch Road and John Marshall Highway (Route 55)

The Prince William Conservation Alliance (Conserve Prince William) along with residents of the Haymarket community would like to request scenic byway designation for connecting portions of Waterfall Road, Antioch Road, and John Marshall Highway (Route 55) in Haymarket, VA. These roads pass through areas that highlight the unique qualities of Prince William County, and showcase the environmental, cultural, and historical treasures that the local community has to offer.

The proposed scenic byway begins at the intersection of Hopewell Road and Waterfall Road at the county line between Prince William and Fauquier Counties. From this point, the proposed byway would continue east down Waterfall Road (601), until it intersects with Antioch Road. The byway would then continue South down Antioch Road, until it meets with John Marshall Highway (Route 55). From here, the proposed byway will continue West down John Marshall Highway, and come to an end right before Beverleys Mill Road at the border between Prince William and Fauquier counties.

US Interstate 66 and James Madison Highway (US 15) are both in close proximity to the proposed scenic byway. Highlighting Route 55 and Antioch Road as a scenic byway will give tourists and locals the option of driving on “the road less traveled,” and provide an escape from the busy highways through an area thriving with natural and historical beauty. With its idyllic view of the Bull Run Mountains, working farms, and historic homes and churches, this scenic byway truly shows some of the unique qualities that Prince William County has to offer.

While these roads are important from a cultural and historical standpoint, they also provide the opportunity to extend already existing scenic byways. Route 55 is designated as a scenic byway in neighboring Fauquier County, and adding this new segment could provide a longer stretch of continuous and uninterrupted byway.

Unlike the surrounding counties, Prince William County currently has no roads in the scenic byways program, despite the many special places that this county has to offer. Creating this byway as an extension of already designated roads in the neighboring county would be a good way to introduce scenic byways to Prince William County.

The proposal for this scenic byway also adheres to the aims and goals laid out in Prince William County's Comprehensive Plan. According to the Environment Plan, the County wants to ensure that "the natural beauty [of the county] is preserved, water quality is protected, property values and quality of life are enhanced, and ecological diversity is preserved."¹

In addition, the Cultural Resources chapter states that the county wants to "facilitate and encourage the identification and protection of the County's significant cultural resources" and "to enhance awareness of the history of the County and the importance of preserving properties that are significantly linked with that history".¹ The proposed scenic byway will help ensure that both the Environmental and Cultural goals of the county are met.

More about the roads:

Waterfall Road – Waterfall Road is very unique in its street design and has both rolling hills and winding turns. Hideaway Lane has a very unique older home situated in a deep valley.

Antioch Road – Antioch Road winds through open countryside in an area with virtually no residential homes. While traveling along this road you can see many large, mature trees as well as open fields. Farming and agriculture are represented by two small working farms: the 300 acre Wright farm and the Heflin farm, which is primarily used for raising cattle.

John Marshall Highway (Route 55) – Like Antioch Road, there are very few homes located along Route 55. Cloverdale Farm, a small working farm, is located along this road. This road also connects to Thoroughfare Gap, which is a historical community for Free People of Color, and the site of numerous Civil War encounters.

Highlighted Natural Areas

- **Bull Run Natural Area Preserve**² – The Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve is an area of land on the border of Prince William and Fauquier Counties that encompasses 2486 acres. It was dedicated as a Virginia Natural Area Preserve in 2002, and is owned by the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. This preserve contains "a series of rocky ridges and steep valleys on Virginia's northern piedmont" and "outstanding examples of several forest and woodland community types, including some that are rare in Virginia."¹ It protects many native plant and animal species, and adds great aesthetic and intrinsic value to the surrounding area.

Highlighted Historic Properties and Sites of Interest

In addition to the beautiful natural landscapes that can be seen while driving on these roads, there are also a variety of historical and cultural sites that truly add to the character of Prince William County, and tell us a story of days past. Some of these sites are highlighted below.

- **Antioch Church**³ – The original stone church was erected on this site in 1842. The building that stands there now was constructed in 1901, and has been the location of Annual Homecoming Meetings since 1922 and church services since 1996 (when it was reopened).
- **Thoroughfare Gap**⁴ – An important geographic feature during the Civil War where Union and Confederate armies came head to head. Many important generals and historical icons passed through this area including General Thomas J. Jackson (Stonewall Jackson), General Robert E. Lee and James Longstreet. Thoroughfare Gap was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999.
- **Free People of Color at Thoroughfare**⁵ – Families of African-American, Native-American and mixed ancestry gathered here after the Civil War and built homes, acquired parts of former plantations, and established a prospering farming community. North Fork School as well as Oakrum Baptist Church were built by the people of this community.
- **LaGrange**⁶ – The manor at LaGrange is an impressive brick house built around 1790 by George Green. In 1827, it was owned by Benoni Harrison, who was a merchant and member of the General Assembly. By the 1930's, the house was falling apart and in terrible condition. It was restored in 1937 by Joseph and Irma Gibbons.
- **St. Paul's Church**⁷ – The building that is now known as St. Paul's Church was originally used as a district courthouse for Fairfax, Fauquier, Loudon and Prince William Counties. It was built between 1799 and 1801 and has been attributed to the designer James Wren. The first court session was held here in the spring of 1803, but when the court system was abolished in 1807, the building was soon sold to the Hygeia Academy. It was purchased by William Skinker, Jr. in 1822, and was given to Leeds Parish in 1830 to be used as an Episcopal church. In 1834, it was named St. Paul's Episcopal Church by Bishop William Meade. During the Civil War, both the North and South sides used the building as a hospital and a burying ground. It was burned down by Union troops in 1862 but was rebuilt in 1867 by the congregation, and the first service was held in the renovated church on September 1, 1867.
- **Evergreen Manor House**⁸ – The National Park Service (NPS) listed this structure on the National Register of Historic Places in 2008. The NPS then added Evergreen Manor to the

National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom in 2012, determining that it "makes a significant contribution to the understanding of the Underground Railroad in American history and that it meets the requirements for inclusion as a site."

- **Beverley's Mill**⁹ – Beverley's Mill, also known as Chapman's Mill, dates back to 1742. The grounds contain the remains of an earlier mill, a family farmhouse, the family graveyard, and several outbuildings. It is a five and a half story building constructed with stone from local quarries. Only the first three stories are original, as the top two stories were added after a fire in 1858. The mill housed food products for five wars including the French and the Indian Wars. It served a strategic purpose during the Civil War Battle of Thoroughfare Gap, and was still a functioning mill until the 1940's. This site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and is classified as a County Registered Historic Site in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Total Length of Proposed Scenic Byway:

Approximately 7.0 miles

Total Time to Drive:

Approximately 15 minutes

Jurisdiction:

Prince William County

Endnotes

¹ Prince William County Comprehensive Plan (Cultural Resources Plan and Environment Plan)- <https://www.pwcgov.org/government/dept/planning/Pages/Comprehensive-Planning.aspx>

² Bull Run Natural Area Preserve- <http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/natural-area-preserves/bullrun>

³ Antioch Church- <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=40091>

⁴ Thoroughfare Gap- <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=608>

⁵ The Free People of Color at Thoroughfare- <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=974>

⁶ Cultural Resources, La Grange –

http://eservice.pwcgov.org/planning/documents/6_cultural_resources.pdf

⁷ St. Paul's Church-

http://www.haymarketmuseum.org/main/page_buildings_st_pauls_church.html

⁸ Evergreen Manor House- http://www.evergreenmanorhouse.org/EMH_Homepage.html

⁹ Beverley Mill- <https://www.pwcgov.org/government/dept/planning/Pages/Beverley-Mill-aka-Chapmans-Mill.aspx>

¹⁰ National Register of Historic Places- <http://www.nps.gov/state/va/index.htm?program=all>

¹¹ Prince William County Historical Commission Markers-

<http://www.hmdb.org/results.asp?SeriesID=24>

APPENDIX A- List of Historic Sites near proposed scenic byway

National Register of Historic Places¹⁰

1. Evergreen Manor House- listed in 2008
2. Locust Bottom- listed in 1991
3. Mt. Atlas- listed in 1989
4. St. Paul's Episcopal Church- listed in 1975
5. Chapman's Mill (Beverley's Mill)- listed in 1972
6. Thoroughfare Gap- listed in 1999
7. Heflin's Store- listed in 2004

Places of Local Significance¹¹

1. Hopewell Gap (Lamberts Gap)
2. Bull Run Church
3. Antioch Church
4. Pickett's (Sinclair's) Store
5. Foley's mill
6. Olive Branch Church and Graveyard
7. D. Murray's Store
8. Murray's Shop
9. Antioch School
10. La Grange
11. Punkin Center
12. Howell's Sawmill
13. Keyser's Church and School
14. Oakrum Church
15. Free People of Color at Thoroughfare
16. 2nd Thoroughfare Gap School
17. Moore's Store
18. Mount's (Payne's) Store
19. Payne's Corner
20. Thoroughfare (Carter's Switch)
21. Thoroughfare Gap School
22. Payne's store
23. Old Post Office (Haymarket Drug Store)
24. Norfolk and Manassas Railroad Station
25. Prima's store
26. Antioch-McCrae School
27. Southern Gap
28. North Fork School
29. Johnson's Church, School, & Graveyard
30. Herrell's Store and Post Office
31. McCormick House
32. George Hulfish House
33. Haymarket Museum
34. Beale House
35. Haymarket Masonic Lodge

APPENDIX B- List of Natural Sites and Waterways near proposed scenic byway

Waterways

1. Broad Run
2. Catletts Branch
3. Little Bull Run
4. Sawmill Branch
5. North Fork Branch

Mountains

1. High Point Mountain
2. Chinguapin hill

Preserves

1. Bull Run Natural Area Preserve