

Transportation Routes

Primary Bicycle Routes: Routes 29 and 151 are the primary north-south routes through Nelson County, between Albemarle and Amherst counties, and with minor exceptions, there are no reasonable alternative routes available. These routes must be used to approach the two largest commercial areas of the county: Lovingsston and Nellysford. Through Lovingsston, both Business 29 and the by-pass should be treated for bicycle use.

Routes 6 and 56 are the primary east-west routes through the county connecting the Blue Ridge Parkway to Albemarle, Buckingham and Appomattox counties in the east. A section of Route 6 north of Afton is part of the BikeCentennial Route 76. Because of the large mountains in the middle of the county, Route 6 and 56 are the primary links between the north-south routes of 151 or 29. Route 60 crosses east-west across the southern tip of the county.

Not only are the primary roads necessary for any bicycle transportation between the communities of Colleen, Oak Ridge, Arrington, Lovingsston, Shipman, Wingina, Schuyler, Piney River, Massies Mill, Montebello, Wintergreen, Nellysford, Woods Mill, Avon, and Afton, they are often required for even short trips within the communities because there are no alternative routes. The majority of county public facilities are along these corridors as well.

These roadways should be improved with paved shoulders when reconstructed, according to VDOT policy, to make regular travel possible. Spot improvements should be made at the areas of most concern as soon as possible

Share the Road signs should be installed on Route 6 from 250 to 29, on Route 151 from 250 to Amherst County, on Route 56 from the Blue Ridge Parkway to Buckingham County and on route 250 between the Blue Ridge Parkway and Route 6 (part of the Bike Centennial 76 Route).

Secondary Bicycle Routes: Nelson County's secondary bicycle network roads will allow more residents to access the primary network, as well as improving conditions for recreational riders. This network includes the 750 (BikeCentennial Route 76) in the Afton area, 636 (to Albemarle) and 638 in the Avon area, 635 in the Greenfield area (to Batesville), 634 in the Nellysford area, 664 in the Wintergreen area, 655 connecting Roseland, Colleen and Arrington, 665 in the Arrington area, 739 between Route 29 and Amherst (a possible Route 29 alternate), 622 through Gladstone, 650, 710, 653, and 647 in the Shipman area, 639 between Shipman and Schuyler, and 617, 693 and 800 (to Albemarle) in the Schuyler area. These routes should be treated as transportation corridors and improved accordingly (including pull-outs and climbing lanes) for use at more than a recreational level.

Recreation Routes

The Blue Ridge Parkway runs along the western border of the county, and between 56 and 250 is part of the BikeCentennial Route 76, which descends the mountain on 250, 151 to Afton and 750 into Albemarle. These are nationally known bicycle routes. Nelson Tourism, local bed and breakfast inns and the Nelson Bicycling Alliance also promote recreational rides within Nelson County. These routes tie into and often use both the secondary and primary routes, and provide access to recreational areas. These additional routes would be added to the plan to include the best known and promoted recreational routes: 631 and 840 in the Afton area; 611 crossing Ennis Mountain; 633 (Taylor Creek Rd.); 680, 685(part), 686(on both sides of 56), 687 and 814 in and around the George Washington National Forest; 699, 724, 666, 778, 676, 673 and 672 are used in the Massies Mill, Lowesville and Piney River area; 778 and 675 to Piney River would connect with the Virginia Blue Ridge Rail Trail being built along the Piney and Tye Rivers; at the eastern end of the trail 739, 657, 654, and 655 would connect to the James River, and 657 would connect to Route 60 to access the James near Gladstone; 626 and 647 follow the James River between Gladstone and Norwood; 626 would follow the James to Howardsville and Albemarle County; 722 between Shipman and Schuyler and into Albemarle; 617 along the Rockfish River; 639 between the Rockfish River and Route 6; 651, 718, 766, 624 and 623 in the Lovingston area and 613, 619, 634, and 776 (part) in the Woods Mill area.

The Virginia Blue Ridge Rail Trail along the Piney and Tye Rivers will eventually connect cyclists from the Blue Ridge Parkway down the mountains to the James River. A proposed Rockfish River Trail will also offer some recreational opportunities for cyclists in Nelson County and would connect 617, one of the most beautiful, paved and level bike routes in the county along the Rockfish River, to Schuyler.

Pedestrian Plan

Intra-Community Facilities

Sidewalks and trails will provide for safe and convenient access to services for residents in existing and future community areas in Nelson County. Lovingston, Nellysford, Schuyler, Colleen, Shipman, and Arrington, are areas that may benefit from sidewalks, while trails and improved shoulders can service pedestrians in less dense communities. Signs warning about pedestrian activity may be placed at village approaches, but care must be taken to avoid creating clutter or disrupting scenic views. Commercial centers and public facilities should have internal pedestrian circulation systems that provide safe travel from the street to the entryway, especially where vehicular parking areas are large or busy.

Lovingston: A crossing of Route 29 between Lovingston's downtown and developments on the west side of highway 29 is necessary for safety, especially with a

large grocery store across the highway. The Route 29 Corridor Development Study recommends an overpass at this location. The existing sidewalk network can be completed by adding walks along Court Street, extending Main Street walks to all services, and possibly reaching down Front St. to 29. Improvements should include removing street sign obstacles and burying utilities. Trees should be planted along all streets to create a pleasant walking environment in Lovingston.

Nellysford: Sidewalks should be installed along 151, or connecting to various store walkways in the village center. Walks should be integrated into any new service roads or developments in the village area. Nellysford should have at least one well-marked crossing of 151.

Inter-Community facilities

Paved shoulders along many primary and secondary roads would offer an easier surface for pedestrians traveling between communities in the county. High-speed traffic along these roads will always exist, and pedestrians will not be completely safe as long as they travel in close proximity to automobiles.

Greenway trails should be utilized to connect communities where the opportunity exists. Trails are the most appropriate pedestrian right-of-way in rural settings. They offer safety from automobiles, pleasant views and sounds, and have far fewer environmental impacts than paving roads and laying sidewalks. Nelson County communities are often found in valleys and streambeds, which lend themselves well to trails. Schools, commercial and service districts and residential areas should be linked with trails wherever possible. Cul-de-sacs can be connected with foot trails to create a continuous pedestrian path while restricting automobile traffic.

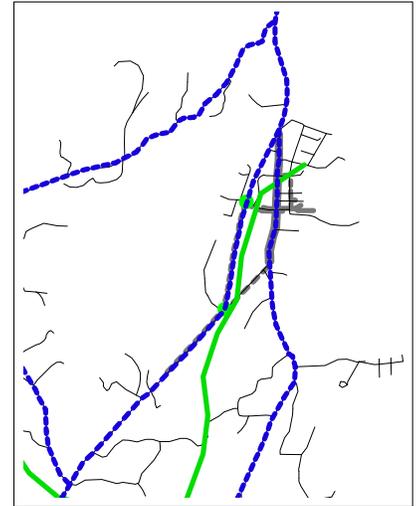
The Blue Ridge Trail, currently under planning and development, will offer a pedestrian path from Piney River to the Norfolk-Southern rail line east of Highway 29 on an abandoned railroad along scenic river corridors. A similar trail could be developed along the Rockfish River, and James River, creating a diamond of trails encircling the county (when the Appalachian Trail is considered) and connecting most major communities. For descriptions of planned off-road facilities and trails that may connect rural communities, please see the Thomas Jefferson Regional Greenways Plan.

The following map depicts proposed bicycle routes and includes as an insert a pedestrian plan for Lovingston.

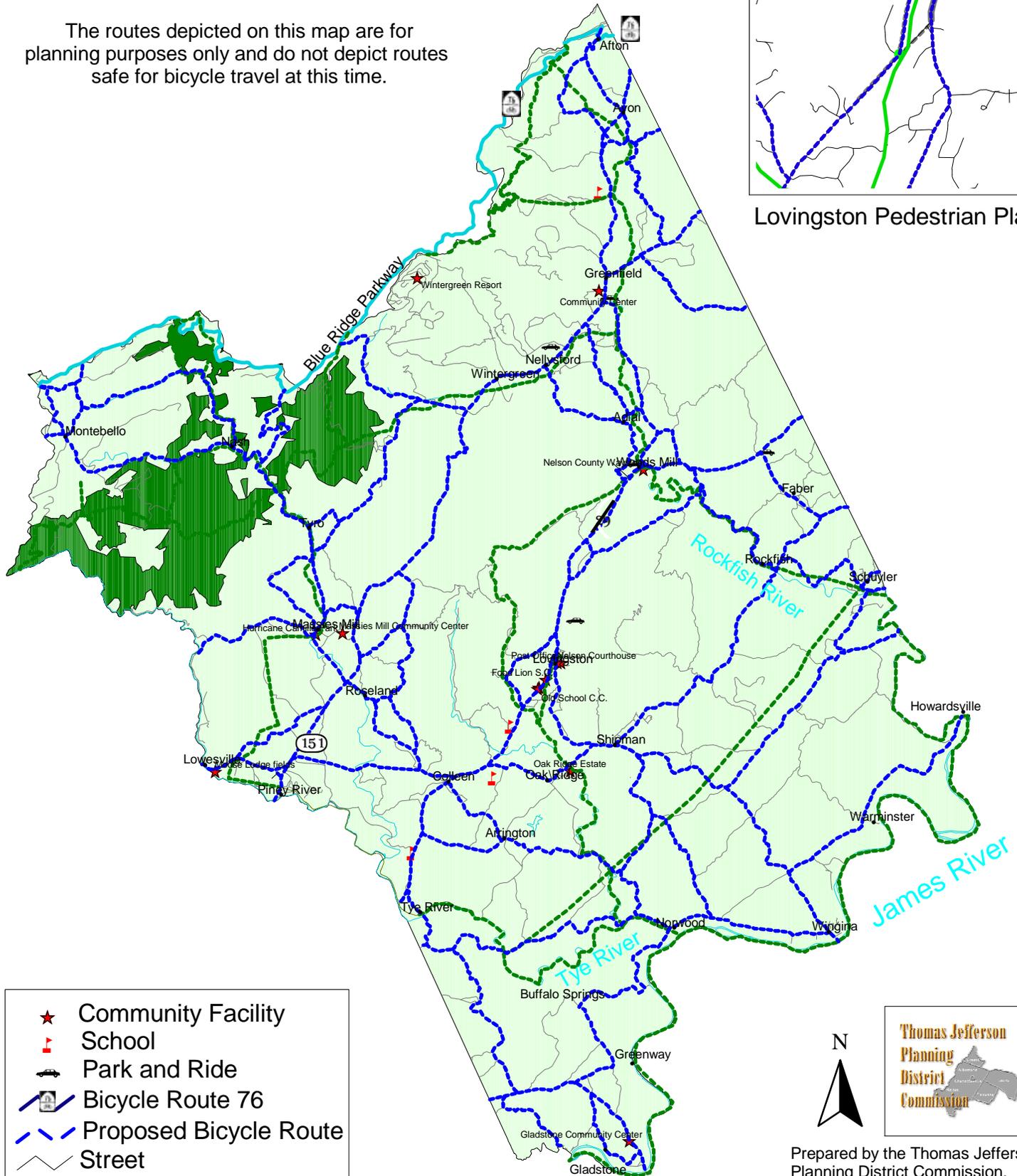
NOTE: This chapter adapted from the Jefferson Area Bicycle and Pedestrian prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission.

Nelson County 2001 Comprehensive Plan Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

The routes depicted on this map are for planning purposes only and do not depict routes safe for bicycle travel at this time.



Lovingson Pedestrian Plan



- ★ Community Facility
- 🚦 School
- 🚗 Park and Ride
- 🚲 Bicycle Route 76
- 🚲 Proposed Bicycle Route
- 🛣 Street
- 🌊 Stream



Prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission.
Source: US Census TIGER data, USGS, TJPDC
November 14, 2001

Nelson County Comprehensive Plan

Chapter Six - Greenway Plan

Introduction

The word greenway is perhaps most often used to describe a linear corridor or band of open space. They are often located along or within existing corridors such as stream valleys and riverfronts, utility corridors, abandoned or active rail lines, roadway corridors, ridge lines, and canals. This proposed greenway plan is included in the Comprehensive Plan to enable the county to consider support for the plan. Any greenway facilities would rely on agreement with landowners before such facilities would cross private property.

The proposed greenway network for Nelson County (See following Greenway Corridors map) is designed to capitalize on the county's abundant natural resources, scenic viewsheds, and eco-tourism potential. The conceptual greenway corridors developed for Nelson County uses primarily river corridors, ridgelines, and an overhead transmission line corridor. Unlike the other counties in the region, Nelson County has no gas pipeline corridors. Based on citizen and county input, greenways were developed to meet the following local goals:

For increased recreational and tourism opportunities, provide connections to key destination points and attractions including:

George Washington National Forest, Shenandoah National Park, Blue Ridge Parkway, the Blue Ridge Rail Trail, Lesesne State Forest, and the Appalachian Trail;

Local wineries and orchards;

Historic sites such as Oak Ridge, Walton Mountain's Museum, churches, and historic markers;

Scenic views of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Rockfish River, Tye River, and James River;

Local business such as Bed and Breakfast's, antique stores, etc.

Develop greenways for open space preservation and stream protection.

Provide connections to communities and community facilities in the population centers of Nelson: Routes 6 and 151, Route 29 corridor, Lovingston, and Wintergreen.

Conceptual Greenway Network

The conceptual greenway network developed for Nelson County is summarized below.

James River Corridor

Forming the southern border of the county, the James flows from southwest to northeast, meandering considerably throughout its length. Multiple boat landings make the river accessible at various locations, and in many ways the river is an active blueway. The James is a valuable recreational, scenic, and tourism resource. Canoeing and fishing are especially popular on the River.

To enhance this resource, a greenway is proposed for the entire length of the River in Nelson County. The James River Greenway would connect Nelson to Albemarle County, and would link to the James River Wildlife Management Area located in the southeast section of the county. Significantly, the River would tie Nelson directly to the developing regional Greenway framework.

Rockfish River Corridor

The North and South Forks of the Rockfish River converge near the intersection of Routes 6 and 151; from there, the River continues south to the James River, traversing Route 29 at the Hurricane Camille/Nelson County Wayside at Woods Mill. In addition to its scenic beauty, a portion of the South Fork is a stocked trout stream.

As shown on the Greenway Plan, the River's location adjacent to primary roads offers linkage to key attractions such as wineries, bed and breakfast operations, and schools. The section running east-west along Route 151 is situated within a broad floodplain that holds strong potential for development of a linear greenway with trails. The conceptual greenway would enhance recreational opportunities, connecting to many destinations. In the northeast corner of the county, an abandoned roadbed could potentially be used to connect to the Appalachian Trail.

Tye River/Piney River/Blue Ridge Rail Trail Corridor

The Tye River flows south from the County's northern border to the James River, and is joined in its course by Piney River, which forms a portion of Nelson's western border. Sections of the Tye are home to native trout populations, while another section is stocked. Linking the two rivers, the Blue Ridge Rail Trail is currently being developed on an abandoned rail line as previously described.

As the Rockfish River does in the eastern portion of the County, the greenway system formed by the Tye, the Piney, and the Blue Ridge Rail Trail spans the western edge of Nelson from north to south. Also like the Rockfish, this system provides key connections in addition to recreational opportunities. Crabtree falls, the George Washington National Forest, the Appalachian Trail, orchards, and the James River are key destinations along the greenway.



Montebello Spur

A small greenway spur connecting the Montebello Fish Hatchery to the Appalachian Trail would provide a critical link, and offer an alternate means of accessing the hatchery.

Central County Connector

A series of streams in the center of the county would provide connection from the Nelson County Wayside at Woods Mill to the Tye River near its confluence with the James. Relying primarily on Davis Creek, Dillard Creek, and Rucker Run, this conceptual greenway would link to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation Conservation Easement at Woods Mountain and to Lovingston. The corridor also passes close to Oak Ridge, a historic site in the south-central portion of Nelson.

Hawkins/Findlay Mountain and Utility Corridors

Hawkins Mountain and Findlay Mountain form a narrow linear ridgeline in the southern section of the County, offering potential scenic viewshed opportunities on either side of the ridge. Running parallel to the ridgeline, and extending the corridor to the northeast is a utility easement with overhead transmission lines. By utilizing these features in combination (or as alternates), connection could be made from the Tye River to Walton's Mountain Museum and Schuyler Elementary School on the County's eastern border.

NOTE: This chapter adapted from the Regional Greenway Plan prepared for the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.

Nelson County Comprehensive Plan Proposed Greenway Corridors



 Proposed Greenway Corridor
 River



Prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission.
 Source: Vanasse, Hangen & Brustlin
 January 2002