

Charlottesville to Monticello & Beyond

A Planning Study of Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections

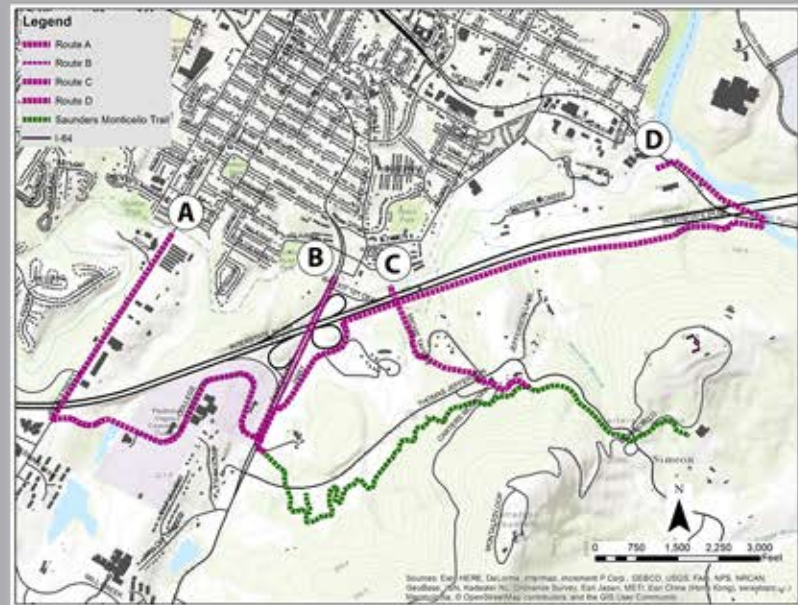
How would you walk or ride your bike from Charlottesville to Monticello?

The Saunders-Monticello Trail is a half-mile from Charlottesville, yet there are limited ways to get there. This study focuses on a pedestrian and bicycle trail that would close the gap.

Monticello was once connected to Charlottesville by multiple routes that were mostly severed when I-64 was constructed. The Thomas Jefferson Foundation, which owns and operates Monticello, opened the Saunders-Monticello Trail in 2000, providing an ADA-accessible path to the David M. Rubenstein Visitor Center and rustic trails in a public park. It is a popular recreational destination in its own right, yet disconnected from the region's network.

Our study area is the zone between the city and the Saunders-Monticello trail system. The space is small but complicated, divided by jurisdictions, topography, an interstate, and a high-speed roadway. The various stakeholders are interested in finding a solution.

Our project is to investigate what that connection could be.



Together, Routes A, B, C, and D enhance bicycle and pedestrian connections.

A quick look at the Saunders-Monticello Trail



An Overview of Our Planning Process



Key Findings

Tremendous support exists for the Saunders-Monticello Trail and a potential connector linking it into the City of Charlottesville.

Each route analyzed has a unique set of strengths and challenges. A phased approach to constructing all routes over time allows the whole network to be built with the lowest cost, highest impact links receiving priority.

| | A | B | C | D |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Major Cost Contributors: | Pedestrian bridge to cross I-64, upgraded PVC rail system | Path along VA-20, projection includes I-64 reconfiguration | Tunnel under I-64, Moore's Creek bridge | Bridges to cross creeks, steep slopes |
| Cost Estimate: | \$3.7 Million | \$367,000 | \$3.1 Million | \$2.8 Million |

Abundant opportunities exist for incorporating education into the project, like with programmatic connections to the Jefferson School and the University of Virginia, or informative way-finding signs.

Numerous case studies exist that provide precedent, like the Virginia Creeper Trail, the Virginia Capital Trail, the American Tobacco Trail, and Atlanta's BeltLine, for example.

- A Avon and Piedmont Virginia Community College Corridor**
Route A follows the Avon Street corridor, crosses Interstate 64 on a proposed pedestrian bridge, passes through the woods and campus of Piedmont Virginia Community College, and crosses VA-20 at a redesigned intersection at College Drive.
Pro: Access to PVCC, County neighborhoods, parking | **Con:** I-64 and VA-20 crossings, hills, distance
- B VA-20/Scottsville Road Corridor**
Route B begins on Monticello Avenue at the Charlottesville border and follows Monticello Avenue/VA-20 south past the Interstate 64 cloverleaf to the entrance to the Saunders-Monticello Trail. The most ideal expression of this route includes facilities on both sides of the road.
Pro: Bike Route 76, gentlest topography, link to PVCC | **Con:** Adjacent to VA-20, I-64 reconfiguration
- C Tunnel and Old Monticello Road Corridor**
Route C begins just north of Moore's Creek, to the east of Monticello Avenue. It crosses Moore's Creek, and passes under I-64 through a tunnel. The route then crosses VA-53 (Thomas Jefferson Parkway) on a proposed bridge, connecting with the Saunders-Monticello Trail at Michie Tavern.
Pro: Most direct, historic, scenic | **Con:** cost of tunnel, floodplain, pedestrian bridge
- D Woolen Mills and Rivanna Trail Corridor**
Route D starts at Woolen Mills neighborhood, crosses Moore's Creek and follows the Rivanna River and the railroad corridor, passes under the existing Interstate viaduct and follows south side of highway to join the other routes at the VA-20 parking lot.
Pro: Historic, Connection to park and river | **Con:** Required easements, steep slopes, distance