



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(1) Where does the name Emerald Ribbons come from?

In many communities these systems of trails are called “Greenways” but that name has already been appropriated here in Loudoun. So we are calling them Emerald Ribbons as a sort of remembrance of the well known system of parks in Boston called The Emerald Necklace. We may decide to keep it—or all agree to a new name later that we like better, perhaps via a naming contest.

(2) Will the proposed trails be accessible to bicycles and horses?

The basic trail we are suggesting for the entire system would be a good quality unpaved hiking and walking trail. Individual neighborhoods or the entire County may want to add bicycle trails and equestrian trails as well.

(3) Will there be other facilities besides just trails?

Communities can design the amenities along the park system as they see fit. Picnic areas, benches, kiosks, signage and other amenities could be added as neighborhoods desire them.

(4) Will property owners or HOAs be forced to provide access for trails?

No! All sections of the system will come via voluntary proffers, donations and easements from willing HOAs and landowners when and as they see fit to join.

(5) How firm is the current map of Loudoun’s Emerald Ribbons?

The map follows existing trail segments and stream corridors, but the specific location and character of the system and the extent of it is entirely up to individual communities (so long as it all fits together).

(6) Will residents and property owners have a say in how the trails are designed?

Absolutely! The current proposal is a concept and the idea is for the first few years to include significant local community discussions about the details of trail and park design.

(7) Who will maintain the trails?

The County will oversee care of the system with the assistance of volunteers and organizations.

(8) Will these proposed trails endanger the habitat and wildlife in these natural areas?

Trails and other features will be specifically designed to protect and enhance the natural features and wildlife in those areas. In fact, certain sections of the trails may be closed for certain periods to protect habitat and wildlife.

(9) How will Emerald Ribbons connect to regular Loudoun parkland?

The map we have proposed interconnects most existing Loudoun parks into the overall Emerald Ribbons system to create one large and fully accessible park and trail resource for the County.

(10) How will this system be paid for?

We envision a combination of proffers, grants, donations and bond issues to cover the cost of building and maintaining the system.

(11) How long will it take to complete this system?

We expect major elements to be completed within five years, but the entire system may take as long as twenty years to be realized.

(12) Will my security be endangered by these trails near my home?

Some worry about strangers on the trails near their homes, but actual experience from other communities indicates that opening natural areas to the public via designated trails improves security and reduces danger. Of course, where desired and appropriate, fencing will be provided to separate trail and parkland from private property.

For additional information, go to <https://loudouncoalition.org/events/categories/emerald-ribbons/>.