

Bull Run Civil War Round Table (BRCWRT) Preservation Corner

April 29, 2023



Greetings BRCWRT Members and Friends - This edition of *Preservation Corner* includes updates on the *Route 28 ByPass Project*, Prince William Digital Gateway Data Centers, and Cedar Mountain Battlefield.

Route 28 ByPass Project (Bull Run Occoquan Regional Park and Blackburn's Ford Battlefield)

www.Route28Bypass.com

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA)'s Route 28 Transportation Study and Project (2015-2016) focused on infrastructure projects to improve travel times and road network reliability on Route 28 through Prince William County, the City of Manassas and the City of Manassas Park. Fairfax County approved plans to widen Route 28 north of Bull Run to its intersection with Route 29 to three lanes in each direction with associated improvements at existing intersections, including the Route 28 and Compton Road intersection.

Fairfax County's Route 28 widening project is underway and scheduled for completion this summer. Prince William County's Route 28 ByPass project will extend Godwin Drive at Sudley Road along the Flat Branch corridor and tie into the existing Route 28 in Fairfax County north of Bull Run and south of Compton Road (see location map, below).



Route 28 ByPass

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As part of the project’s public outreach and communications, the PWC Department of Transportation (DoT) recently conducted Public Information Meetings on April 19, 2023, at Centreville Elementary School (Fairfax County) and on April 20, 2023, at Manassas Park Community Center (Prince William County) from 6:30 pm to 9:00 pm. The meetings included displays, manned by knowledgeable individuals, depicting the preliminary design concept, and information on the studies that continue to inform the roadway design. Key members of the PWC DoT Route 28 Bypass Project and design team provided a presentation (available at the Rt 28 Bypass website noted above) outlining the parameters of the project, the work done to date, and the way forward as the project continues. This presentation was followed by a question-and-answer session, where attendees were provided the opportunity to ask questions of the design team and to voice any concerns regarding the preliminary design concept. See charts, below for a project overview and the project timeline with key milestones.

Project Overview: Four Phases



Project Timeline

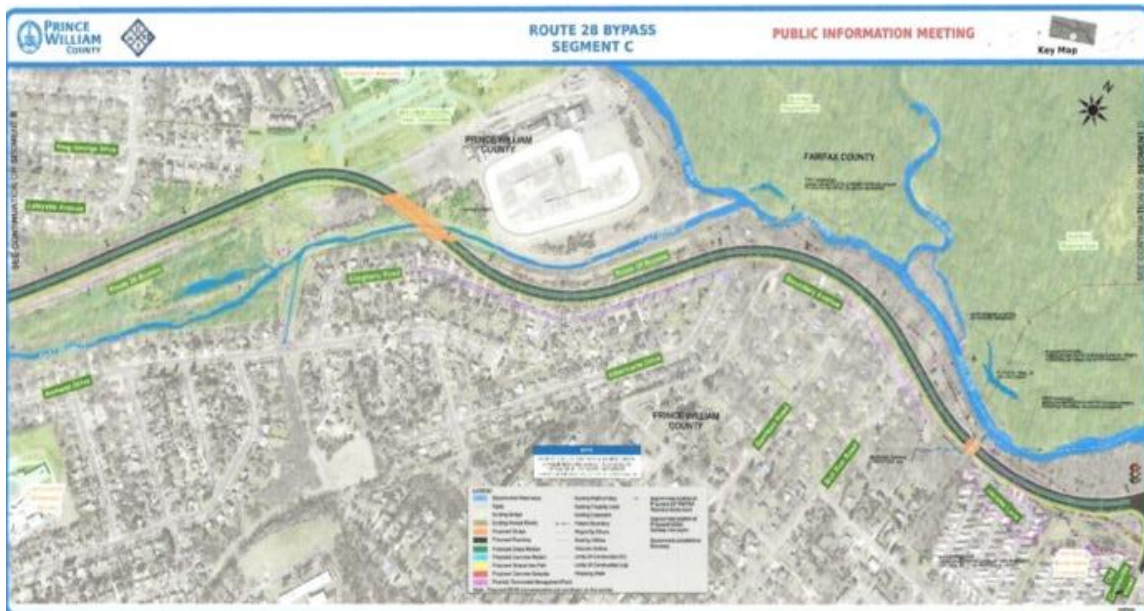


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Based on the work and consistent engagement with PWC DoT by BRCWRT, the preliminary design concept includes a pedestrian history trail highlighting the 'to be preserved' Mitchell's Ford earthwork remnants adjacent to Boundary Drive and the site of the Centreville Military Railroad trestle crossing at Bull Run - - a significant 'win' for our preservation efforts. See the chart and photo below that show the potential locations of the history trail, the historic sites, additional parking for history trail access, and a history trail pedestrian overpass/tunnel across Rt 28 Bypass.



Route 28 Bypass - Road Segment C



Road Segment C - Potential Locations of History Trail, etc.

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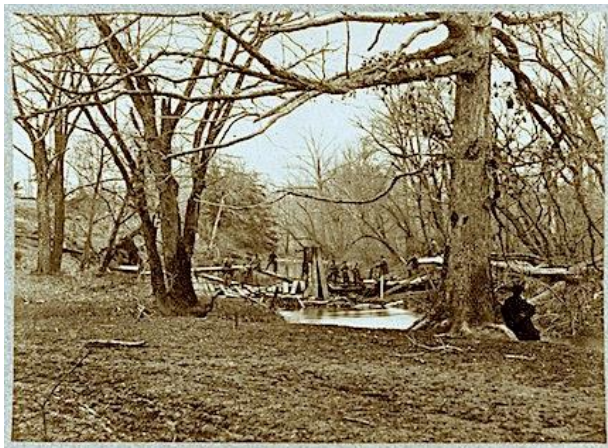


In discussions with PWC DoT personnel and the Route 28 ByPass design team at the April 19th meeting, BRCWRT was identified as a 'planning partner' to provide knowledgeable assistance in planning the history trail and in developing the historical and interpretive markers, etc. for the trail. This, too, is a significant 'win' for our preservation program; however, now the real work begins - ensuring the history trail survives the preliminary and final design project phases, as the planning and design team continues its work to account for and resolve multiple aspects and impacts of the ByPass design (environmental impacts, trafficability concerns, Right Of Way negotiations, private property/residential purchases, and resident concerns, etc.), and becomes a reality. This will require continued coordination with PWC DoT and the Route 28 ByPass Project planning and design team, and the organizational and personal relationships exist to do so.

The historic sites to be included on the planned history trail are the remnants of Mitchell Ford earthworks along Boundary Avenue and the site of the Centreville Military Railroad trestle crossing at Bull Run (see photographs, below).



Mitchell Ford Earthwork Remnants



1862



2020

Site of the Centreville Military Railroad Trestle Crossing of Bull Run

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The preliminary design concept includes a new bridge crossing at Bull Run, just upstream from the current Ordway Road bridge (see schematic, below). The 'new' bridge is envisioned to be longer and wider than the current bridge and given its size and location will require significant research, study and analysis to avoid adverse effects on Bull Run Occoquan Regional Park and potentially affected cultural and historical resources. Discussions between PWC DoT and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks) addressing these issues are underway.



Route 28 ByPass - Road Segment D

Prince William Digital Gateway (PWDG) Data Centers (Manassas National Battlefield Park)

As readers will recall, after more than a year of often contentious Board of Supervisor and Planning Commission meetings, conferences and public remarks sessions, and an all-night Public Hearing conducted November 1-2, 2022, on November 2, 2022 the Prince William Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) voted 5-2 to approve the Prince William Digital Gateway Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA).

While the final CPA addressed many concerns raised by residents and historic preservation organizations, it was approved without an assessment of the environmental impacts on the Occoquan and Bull Run watershed and on the Occoquan Reservoir, of the traffic and transportation impacts, or of the impacts of the significant increase in electrical power demand of data centers within the corridor.

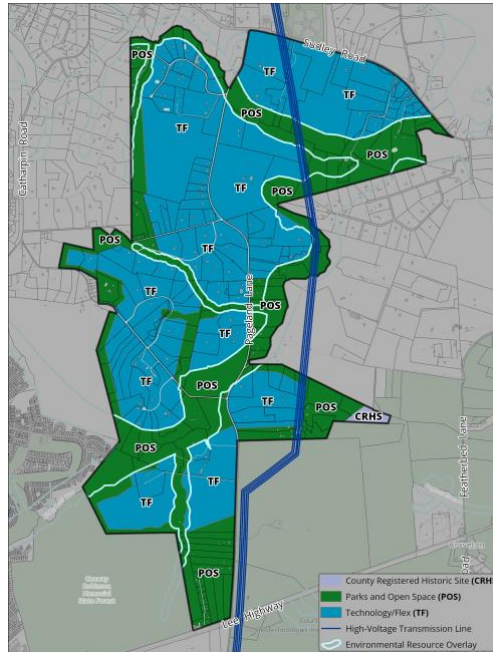
Based on concerns raised by historic preservation organizations including the American Battlefield Trust, the Bull Run Civil War Round Table and the PWC Historical Commission, the CPA does include some measures intended to mitigate the adverse impacts of potential data centers on Manassas National Battlefield Park (MNBFP). These measures include land use designation as Parks and Open Space for land

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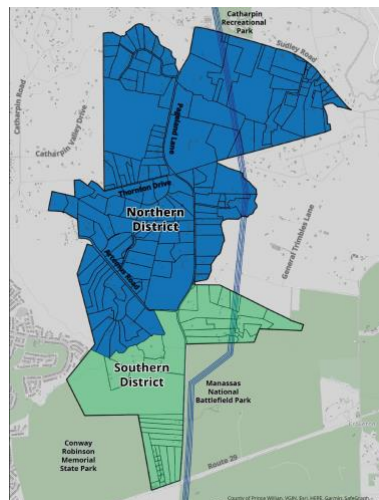


where data centers would present the most direct threat to MNBP (see Land Use Map, below).



PW Digital Gateway Land Use Map

The CPA does not, however, eliminate the threat of adverse effects of Pageland Lane corridor data centers on historic land in the study area or to MNBP. Historic land parcels in the Southern District, including land designated by the American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) as Manassas Battlefield Core and Study Areas retain the Tech Flex land use designation with the potential for data center development. This is land where American soldiers camped, fought, were treated for battle wounds and disease, died, and were buried before, during and after the 1st and 2nd Battles of Manassas/Bull Run.



PW Digital Gateway Study Area and Subdistrict Map

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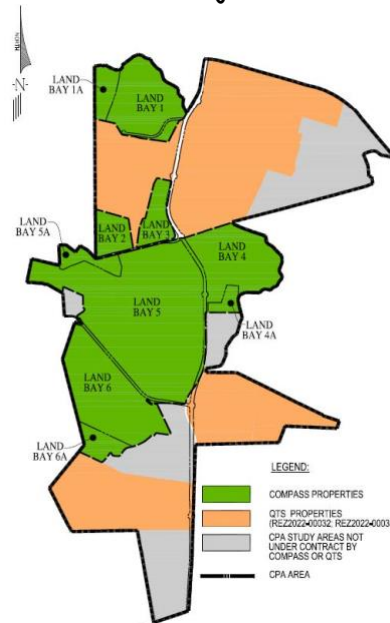
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The effectiveness of specific measures in the CPA intended to mitigate data center adverse effects on historic land, sites and viewsheds is questionable. These measures, including setbacks, buffer areas, berms, tree screens and afforestation, and building and lighting restrictions typically fail to effectively mitigate adverse effects as intended. What may 'look and sound' good on paper has not typically achieved the desired mitigation result.

The existing Dominion Energy transmission line paralleling Pageland Lane is rated "near or at capacity", and it was eventually acknowledged that any data centers built in the Pageland Lane corridor north of U.S. Route 29 will require new power substations and transmission lines. This would significantly increase the electrical power infrastructure in the corridor, with attendant adverse impacts on MNBP and its historic sites and viewsheds, and on other historic land in the corridor. Likewise, the proposed widening of Pageland Lane would significantly impact MNBP and other historic lands in the corridor.

Based on the approved CPA, Compass Datacenters and QTS Data Centers submitted requests to rezone specific acreage within the PWDG area from A-1, Agricultural to PBD, Planned Business District, Office/Flex District, and M-2, Light Industrial District, to allow for data centers, accessory uses and supporting facilities including substations. Compass Datacenters' Rezoning Application REZ-00036 - Compass Datacenters Prince William County Campus 1, and QTS Data Centers' Rezoning Applications REZ2022-00032 - Digital Gateway North and REZ2022-00033 - Digital Gateway South (see diagram, below) were submitted in the Fall of 2022. The three rezoning requests remain under consideration and review by the PWC Staff, including ongoing discussions between PWC staff and Compass and QTS representatives, with appropriate revisions and/or adjustments to the respective requests.



Land Parcels within the Prince William Digital Gateway covered by the Rezoning Requests submitted by Compass Datacenters and QRS Data Centers.

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Specific issues that remain under discussion between the PWC staff and Compass and QTS representatives, and between QTS, Compass and MNBP include:

- Compass's request for a Special Use Permit (SUP) waiver - a waiver required because the proposed data center and electrical substation is outside of the Data Center Opportunity Zone Overlay District
- Structure locations and heights (including rooftop equipment) and associated visibility from MNBP historic viewsheds
 - Ongoing viewshed analysis and discussions involving QTS and Compass representatives, PWC Staff and MNBP continue
- Noise levels and limits for data centers and associated structures and equipment
- Adverse effects (visibility, noise, etc.) of structures and associated equipment on historical land and sites throughout the Pageland Lane corridor
 - Family cemeteries, cultural resources and historical sites
 - Manassas National Battlefield Historic District
 - Land within the designated Manassas Battlefield Core Area
 - Historic battlefield land along General Trimble's Lane that is owned by the American Battlefield Trust and intended for eventual incorporation into MNBP

Cedar Mountain Battlefield

On April 24, 2023, the Board of Directors of the Friends of Cedar Mountain Battlefield announced it will reorganize the Friends Group as a Foundation. The resultant Cedar Mountain Battlefield Foundation's focus will be expanding the preservation and interpretation of the Battle of Cedar Mountain.

Reorganizing as a Foundation will enhance the organization's capabilities for preservation and interpretation of the battlefield and the surrounding historic landscape through expanded public programming, including guided battlefield tours and school-age children tours and camps, and for fundraising activities and pursuing grant opportunities. The Foundation also plans to expand its membership base and increase opportunities for volunteers to help with interpretation and preservation projects on the battlefield. Cedar Mountain Battlefield is part of the recently established Culpeper Battlefields State Park, scheduled to open July 1, 2024.

Cedar Mountain Battlefield Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to collaborating with landowners and local citizens to protect and interpret, and promote public awareness of, the Cedar Mountain Civil War Battlefield. Cedar Mountain Battlefield Foundation offers monthly guided walking tours of the battlefield, children's Civil War summer camps, and reenactment and educational events focused on the Battle of Cedar Mountain, fought August 9, 1862.

Visit www.friendsofcedarmountain.org for more information on Cedar Mountain Battlefield and the Cedar Mountain Battlefield Foundation.

Thank you for your continued interest in, and support of, BRCWRT's preservation projects, actions and activities.

Blake Myers, BRCWRT Preservation Chair