

#### **4Know Before You Go.....info and tips on Friday's Route**

The Virginia Capital Trail (VCT for short) is a (almost) 52-mile multi-use paved trail from Jamestown to Richmond - the first and current capitals of the state of Virginia, which is how it got its name. I say "almost" 52-miles because depending on one's source of information it is listed as either 51.2 (the mile marker at Great Shiplock Park) or 51.7 (the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation website). The trail is used predominantly by bicyclists and walkers/runners, but one often finds skateboarders and parents with strollers along the way also.

*Please be courteous to other trail users. Alert anyone you are about to pass and be extra cautious if riding two-abreast as there are numerous areas where line-of-sight is limited.*

*Be advised that many establishments both public and private may still ask you to wear a mask inside their buildings.*

The trail starts in Jamestown, across from Jamestown Settlement and a short distance from the Colonial Parkway which leads to Historic Jamestowne Island, approximately 7 miles from Chickahominy Riverfront Park (CRP).

- Please note: *The "MM" numbers listed below for the VCT reflect the point on the trail from the trailhead in Jamestown, not the today's start location at Chickahominy Riverfront Park. Mile Markers are posted every mile on the VCT.*

You have Options:

1. Start at the beginning (MM 0).

Pedal the whole enchilada from start to finish and back (about 103 miles).

\* Park your car at Jamestown Settlement across from the MM 0 trailhead kiosk, OR

\* Ride the portion between CRP and MM 0 either before or after you go to Richmond.

2. Start at CRP (MM 7 is at the top of the bridge) –

\* Pedal to Richmond and back (90 miles),

\*\* You can always tack on the part between CRP and Jamestown if you really want the century when you get back.

3. Start at CRP and pedal along the trail as far west as you wish then turn around and come back. (*My personal recommendation: Ride at least to Charles City - 14 miles each way - and enjoy a free brownie either before or after lunch at Cul's Courthouse Grille. That's what I'd do.*)

You see, there are LOTS of options. The Friday Route is an out and back, so you can choose exactly how many miles you want to ride.

### **Mile by Mile Fact Sheet**

- The Tricky Parts of the trail (crossings)
- Where to find Water, Food & Restrooms
- Today's Gathering Place for 3 Day Bike About Riders - Cul's Courthouse Grille Pavilion
- Points of Interest along the Route.

*Note: For simplicity sake, I have started the route at MM 0).*

\*\*It's the law: While the trail is free of motorized traffic, it is necessary from time to time to cross a road, and yes, you are required by law to stop at the stop signs along the way.

**MM 0** kiosk is located across from Jamestown Settlement at the corner of Jamestown Road and the Colonial Parkway.

- Restrooms: located inside the Settlement to the left after you enter the lobby. (Probably my favorite public restroom as all their soap dispensers, water faucets, toilets and doors are hands-free. :) Jamestown Settlement is usually open from 9a - 5pm daily.
- Food & Water: There are water fountains in the lobby & a Cafe to the left, past the restrooms. <http://www.jamestownSettlement.com>

As you head away from the Settlement on the VCT, you will need to cross Jamestown Road to continue on the VCT alongside Greensprings Road.

**\*\* Cross with caution** as this is the only road from the Jamestown-Scotland Ferry dock and drivers can, at times, be in a hurry to either catch the ferry or get to where they are going on this side of the river.

**MM 2-3** - Spoke & Art Provisions Company offers light lunch fare, snacks, ice cream and beverages, including coffee drinks. Open 9am - 7pm.

[www.spokeandart.com](http://www.spokeandart.com)

- p.s. This is the Gathering Place and where you will pick up your boxed lunch on SUNDAY.

**MM 6** – The VCT crosses Route 5 a short distance east of Chickahominy Riverfront Park and the bridge over the Chickahominy River.

**\*\*Cross with caution.** There is a flashing light which should engage once you approach the crossing (but it doesn't always work) which instructs motorists to slow to 45mph – which they don't always do. Otherwise, the speed limit is 55mph.

*Point of Interest: The kiosk just east of the bridge was built by the local cycling club, Williamsburg Area Bicyclists, in honor of Larry Skalak, a member who died in 2014. Take a few moments to read the inscription on the plaque attached to the large stone near the kiosk. (personal friend of mine)*

**MM 16/17** - *Point of Interest: Sherwood Forest Plantation - was the home of John Tyler, 10th President of the United States, from 1842 until his death in 1862. It has been continuously occupied by his descendants since that time. [www.sherwoodforest.org](http://www.sherwoodforest.org).*

**MM 19/20** - *Point of Interest: Belle Air Plantation was built circa 1670 and is one of America's oldest frame dwellings. [www.virginia.org](http://www.virginia.org)*

**MM 20** – As you approach Charles City Courthouse, the trail makes a sharp left-hand turn and heads uphill at the intersection of Route 5 and Courthouse Road (blinking amber light). About halfway up the hill it is necessary to transition from the trail to the road. (*I have no idea why.*) Continue west on this road to where the

trail commences in front of the Methodist Church, but BEFORE you continue on.....

- **Restrooms** are located in a building between the old Clerk's Office (now the Visitor's Center) and the new courthouse off Watermelon Fields Road and also inside Cul's Courthouse Grille (opens at 11 am) – and a favorite among cyclists for lunch. [www.culscourthousegrille.com](http://www.culscourthousegrille.com)
- **GATHERING PLACE:** The new pavilion behind the Grille is where 3 Day Bike About cyclists will be gathering for FREE brownies from 9am - 4pm. There are tables to sit at, heaters if it's a bit chilly, a bar to get a beer (\$) and wait staff to take your food orders after 11am. **Water** will also be available.
  - p.s. This is a crew favorite and was a hit with 2021 3DBA riders.

*Point of Interest: Right next door to Cul's, and owned/operated by his mother Bonnie Whitaker, is the Nance/Major House. The house was built in 1869 and is a two-story, three-bay, gabled-front frame building, supported by a brick pier foundation. It is now a bed and breakfast establishment.*

#### **MM 22 -**

- Indian Fields Tavern. Opens at 11:30 am. [www.indianfieldstavern.com](http://www.indianfieldstavern.com)
- Lawrence Lewis, Jr. Park is a 24 acre park is about a mile off the VCT and features a wooded picnic area, fishing & birding pier, boardwalk, fix-it station and primitive camping and restroom.

**MM 25 - Point of Interest:** Westover Church is located a short gravel ride off the VCT. It was established in the 1630's and originally located on the Westover Plantation. A new church was built in the current site in 1731.

[www.westoverepiscopalchurch.org](http://www.westoverepiscopalchurch.org)

**MM 27 - Point of Interest - Berkeley Plantation, located a short distance off the VCT, is one of Virginia's most historic plantations as it is the birthplace of Benjamin Harrison V (signer of the Declaration of Independence), and William Henry Harrison (8th President of the United States). Additionally, the first official Thanksgiving was held here in 1619 and "Taps" was composed here in 1862 while**

*the plantation served as the Civil War Headquarters of General McClellan.*  
[www.berkeleyplantation.com](http://www.berkeleyplantation.com)

**MM 28/29** - *Point of Interest - Edgewood Plantation was built around 1849 in the Gothic Revival Style. It is now a bed and breakfast establishment.*  
[www.edgewoodplantation.com](http://www.edgewoodplantation.com)

**MM 30** - Upper Shirley Plantation and Vineyards - located about 1 mile off the VCT (partially paved, partially dirt/gravel road & parking lot), is the Shirley Plantation with the vineyards & restaurant located next door. **Restrooms and water** available if either location is open. [www.uppershirley.com](http://www.uppershirley.com)

Proceeding west on the VCT

- *At the county line the name of the road running alongside the VCT changes from John Tyler Memorial Highway to New Market Road .*
- *While it is a bit of a stretch from Charles City to Four Mile Creek (20 miles), there are often **porta-potties** located along the way, usually at Herring Creek (MM 28) and Willis Church Road (MM 36) - just no guarantee.*

**MM 40** – Four Mile Creek was specifically built for the VCT and provides parking and a rest area for trail users. Pedal through the park either on the circular driveway – going counter clockwise – or on the path through the middle.

- Bonus Gathering Place: Courtesy of the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation. A Trail Ambassador will be one hand at Four Mile Creek with water and snacks from 10 am – 2 pm, and to answer questions about the VCT and the Ambassador program.
- An interactive map of the trail is available at [vctf.maps.arcgis.com](http://vctf.maps.arcgis.com)

### **Restrooms & water:**

- Porta-potties are located in the parking lot.

- Indoor restrooms are located in the Exxon/Dairy Queen across Route 5. Food & water can also be found there.
- Restrooms are also located in Dorey Park - take the spur to the right a couple of miles west of Four Mile Creek.

*Point of Interest: a short distance west of Four Mile Creek, the VCT crosses under (yes, under) Interstate 295. You might not even notice.*

Continuing west on the VCT, cross Doran Road, and continue to Kinvan Road. The trail appears to stop here but it does not. Follow the signs by turning left on Kinvan for about 100 yards, then turn right to return to the trail. (*I honestly don't know why it does this. Probably something about property ownership.*) After a short ride through the woods and fields, you will be back alongside New Market Road and in a commercial area.

As you approach the city of Richmond, the road alongside the VCT changes its name again, this time to Osborne Turnpike. Be particularly **cautious at the various crossings**. Some are a bit trickier than others.

Between MM 40 & MM 52, there are various businesses where food, water and restrooms can be found. To name just a few:

**MM 45** - The Original Ronnie's BBQ - a family owned and operated establishment which moved to its current location specifically to be on the VCT to serve cyclists. [www.theoriginalronnies.com](http://www.theoriginalronnies.com)

**MM 48** - (new) 7 - 11 convenience store has an outdoor seating area with bike racks. They also have hot/cold grab-and-go food, drinks, coffee and fresh baked cookies as well as those Slurpees some of us have come to know and love. Enjoy.

**MM 50** - Shockoe Slip

- Urban Farmhouse Market & Cafe (1217 E. Cary St) [www.theurbanfarmhouse.net](http://www.theurbanfarmhouse.net)
- The Boathouse at Rocketts Landing (4708 E. Main St) <https://www.boathouseva.com>

There is a spectacular view of the city from the top of the hill followed by a ride along the James River near the end of the trail. As you enjoy a long downhill, please be aware of on-coming cyclists and walkers especially around corners; and try to keep in mind how much fun that long downhill was on your way back up it on the return. 😊

Porta-potties in Great Shiplock Park where the VCT ends.