

TROLLEY LINE TRAIL

*Public History
Project*



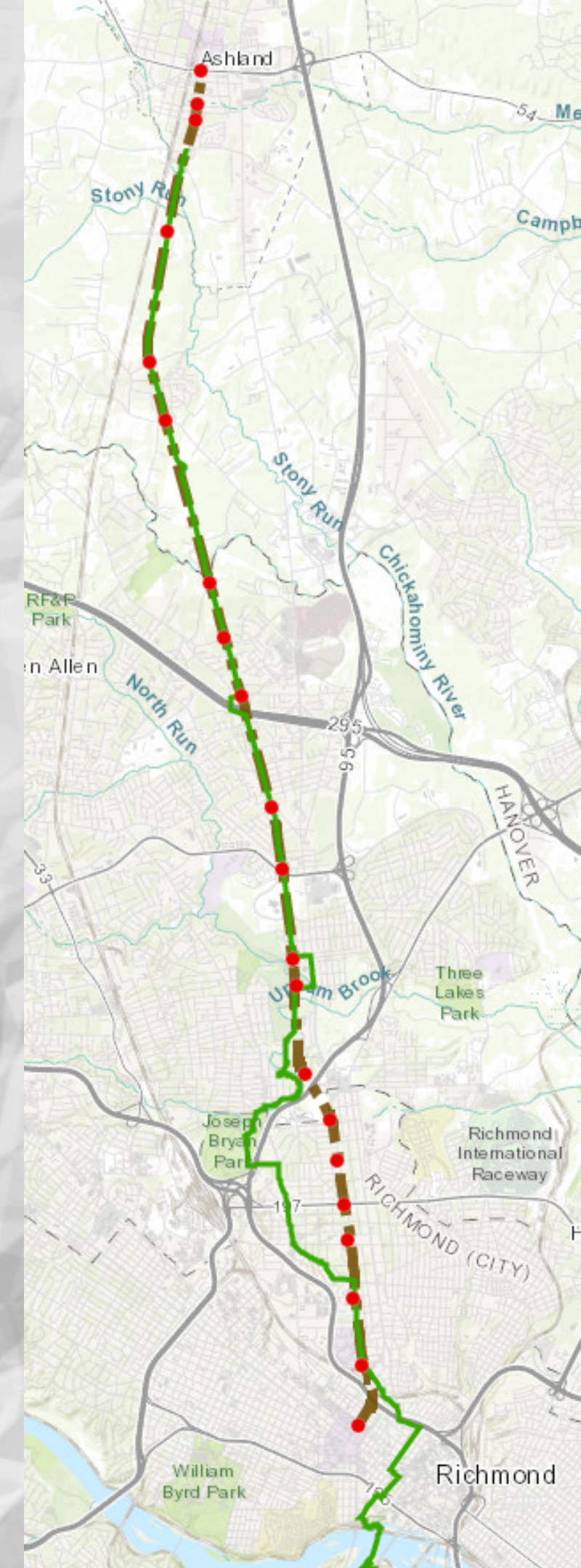
INTRODUCTION

PlanRVA with assistance from NPS - Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program is working to help the counties of Hanover and Henrico and the Town of Ashland, as they develop plans for the potential Trolley Line Trail.

The Trolley Line Trail is 14.8 miles long and runs depot-to-depot, following the original path of the electric car line from the early 1900s, starting in downtown Richmond and ending in the heart of Ashland. It will run along much of the same path as the northern section of the potential Fall Line Trail.

A history subcommittee began exploring opportunities for adding a public history component to the trail, that will expand partnerships with history, heritage, and underserved community stakeholders.

A site visit was conducted in September of 2021 with current partners of the Trolley Line Trail Committee and History Subcommittee and a phased plan was created.



BIG IDEA

Tell stories of local people who used the Trolley Line. Their stories can help tell the broader historical narratives of the early 1900s.

Engage community partners to help tell the stories and care for the trail and additional trail features.



PHASE A: AUDIO STORIES

Research and create short audio stories to listen to while out on the trail or from your own home.

Stories should be about people's experiences in the area at the time of the Electric Car Line.

Goal is to have at least one story per original Electric Car stops.



Potential to engage college students, museums, historical societies, libraries, and more!

Phase A Examples

Greenwood Stop: Story of Virginia Shelton, who lived in Ashland and commuted by the Trolley Line to Virginia Randolph.

Chickahominy Stop: Story about the 'Jolly Trolley' and an interview from Historian Alonzo Thomas Dill, who describes the fun and games on the electric car, and shares a story of a distinguished attorney, who would remove his hat at the crossing of the Chickahominy River and declare they were in Hanover County.

*Listen to a trail audio
story from Hyde Park
Explorer Podcast.*

PHASE B: STORYMAP

Research, audio stories, and written text can be added to the existing Trolley Line Trail History & Tour StoryMap.

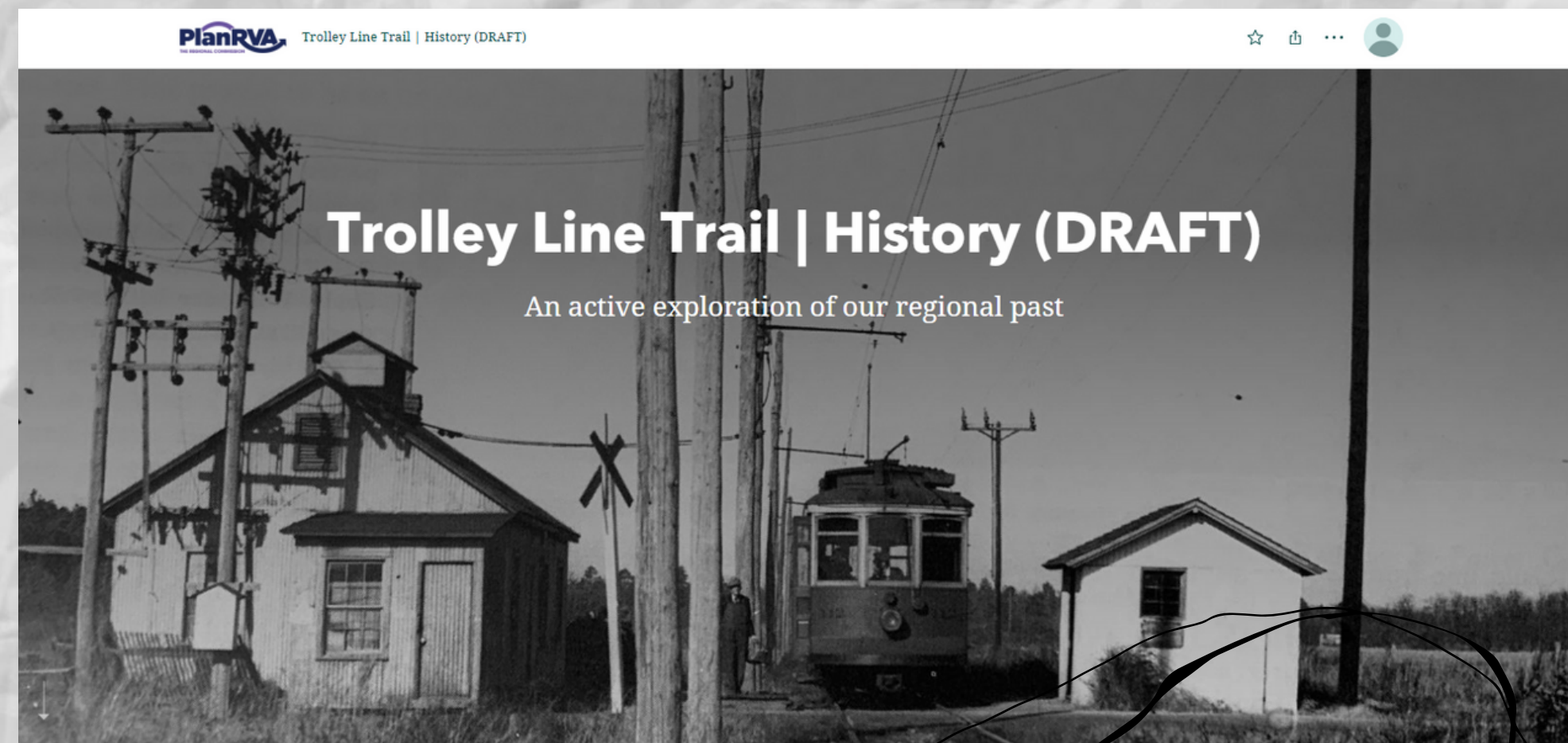
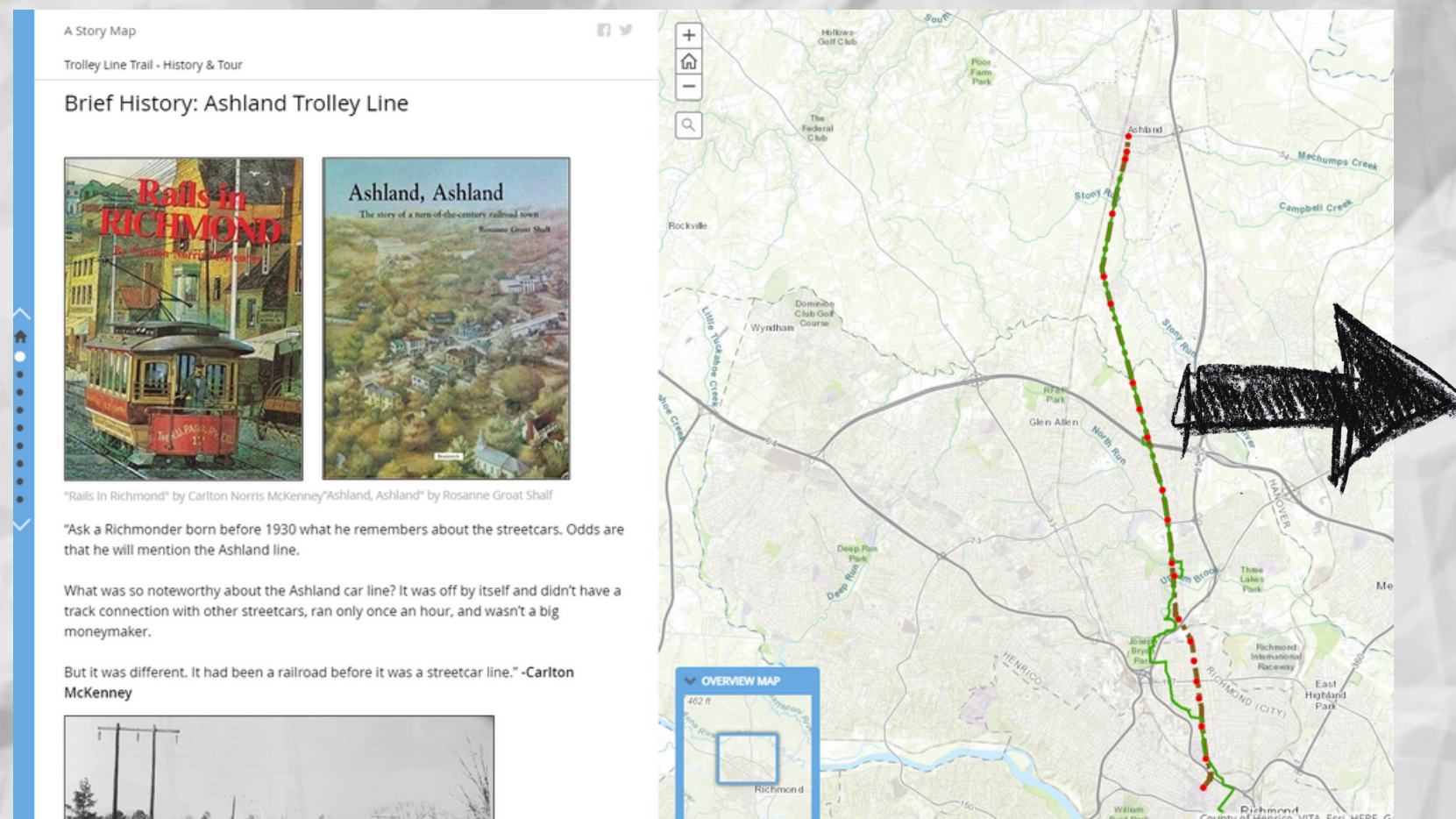
QR codes in Phase C can link to the StoryMap, allowing trail users to listen to the story, see pictures, and read any further information.

An online space allows room for many different stories, that can expand past our 'Trolley Line' time period.

Potential to engage college students, museums, historical societies, libraries, and more!



Phase B Example



Work has already started on updating the current StoryMap by PlanRVA!

*See some
StoryMap
examples
with sound.*

PHASE C: TROLLEY LINE MARKERS

Design and mark all official original stops with small markers.

These will identify the trail, have a QR code linking to the audio stories and StoryMap.

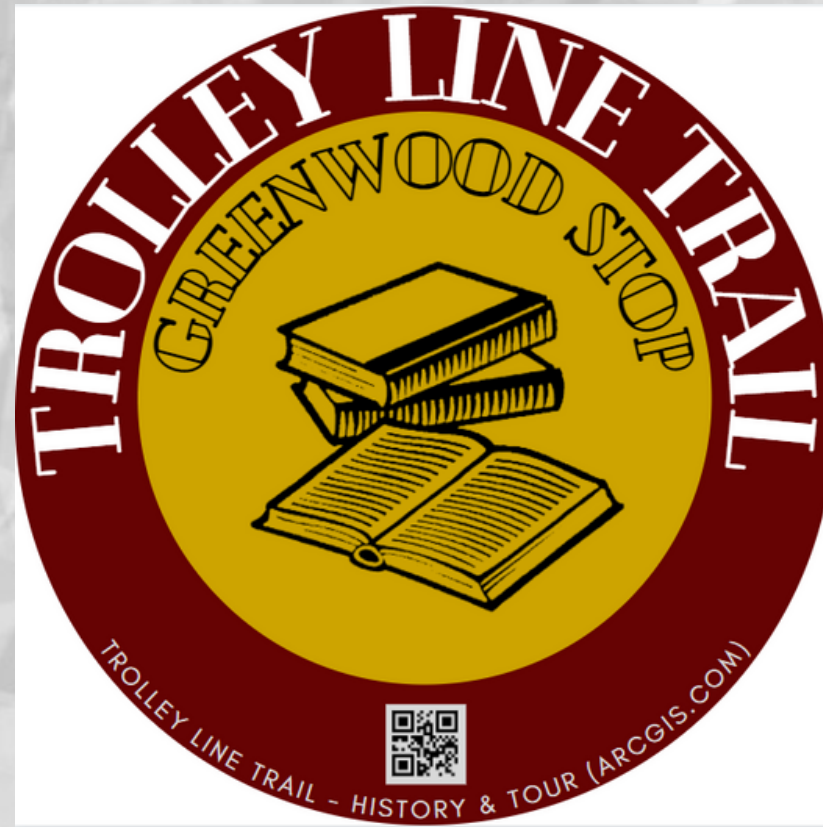
Ideally they are visible on a sign post but could also be displayed in other ways.

Potential to engage original working groups, new community groups, partners of the potential pocket parks and more!



Phase C Examples

Markers can be designed in whatever fashion: by counties, by community contest, students, project partners, etc.



QR Code Walking
Tour Example

PHASE D: POCKET PARKS & INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE

Design and implement coordinating pocket parks at the original Trolley Line stops.

Potential and interested organizations who align with the audio stories, can help create and care for the pocket parks along the trail.

Pocket parks can have other relevant features: interpretive signs based on Phase A, pollinator gardens, information about the supporting organizations, bike racks, etc.

See next slide for a list of some potential Trail storytellers, lovers, caretakers, and advocates!



POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

✓ Museums

Individual styles

- 📍 The Cultural Arts Center
- 📍 Ashland Museum
- 📍 Virginia Randolph Museum
- 📍 Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
- 📍 Institute for Contemporary A...
- 📍 Black History Museum and C...
- 📍 Science Museum of Virginia
- 📍 Children's Museum of Richm...
- 📍 The Valentine
- 📍 Beth Ahabah Museum & Arc...
- 📍 Virginia Museum of History ...
- 📍 Hanover Historical Society
- 📍 Henrico County Historical So...

✓ Boy Scouts & YMCA

Individual styles

- 📍 Guiding Line
- 📍 Patrick Henry Family YMCA
- 📍 Boy Scout Troop 700
- 📍 Boy Scouts of America
- 📍 Northside Family YMCA

✓ Churches

Individual styles

- 📍 First Baptist Church of Elmont
- 📍 Gwathmey Baptist Church
- 📍 Kenwood United Methodist ...
- 📍 Hanover Baptist Church

✓ Colleges

Individual styles

- 📍 Va Commonwealth University
- 📍 Virginia Union University
- 📍 Randolph-Macon College
- 📍 Fortis College
- 📍 Reynolds Community College

✓ Businesses

Individual styles

- 📍 Ashland Meat Company @ C...
- 📍 Homemades By Suzanne
- 📍 The Henry Clay Inn®
- 📍 Carytown Bicycle Company
- 📍 Clock Maker at Gwathmey
- 📍 James River Cellars Winery
- 📍 Woodside Farms of VA, LLC
- 📍 Lavender Fields Herb Farm
- 📍 Pello Bikes
- 📍 Coqui Cyclery
- 📍 RVA on Wheels

✓ Libraries

Individual styles

- 📍 Ginter Park Branch - Richmo...
- 📍 North Park - Henrico County ...
- 📍 Ashland Branch Library

✓ Animals & Wildlife

Individual styles

- 📍 Richmond Animal Care & Co...
- 📍 Richmond SPCA
- 📍 Virginia Department of Wildli...

✓ Schools

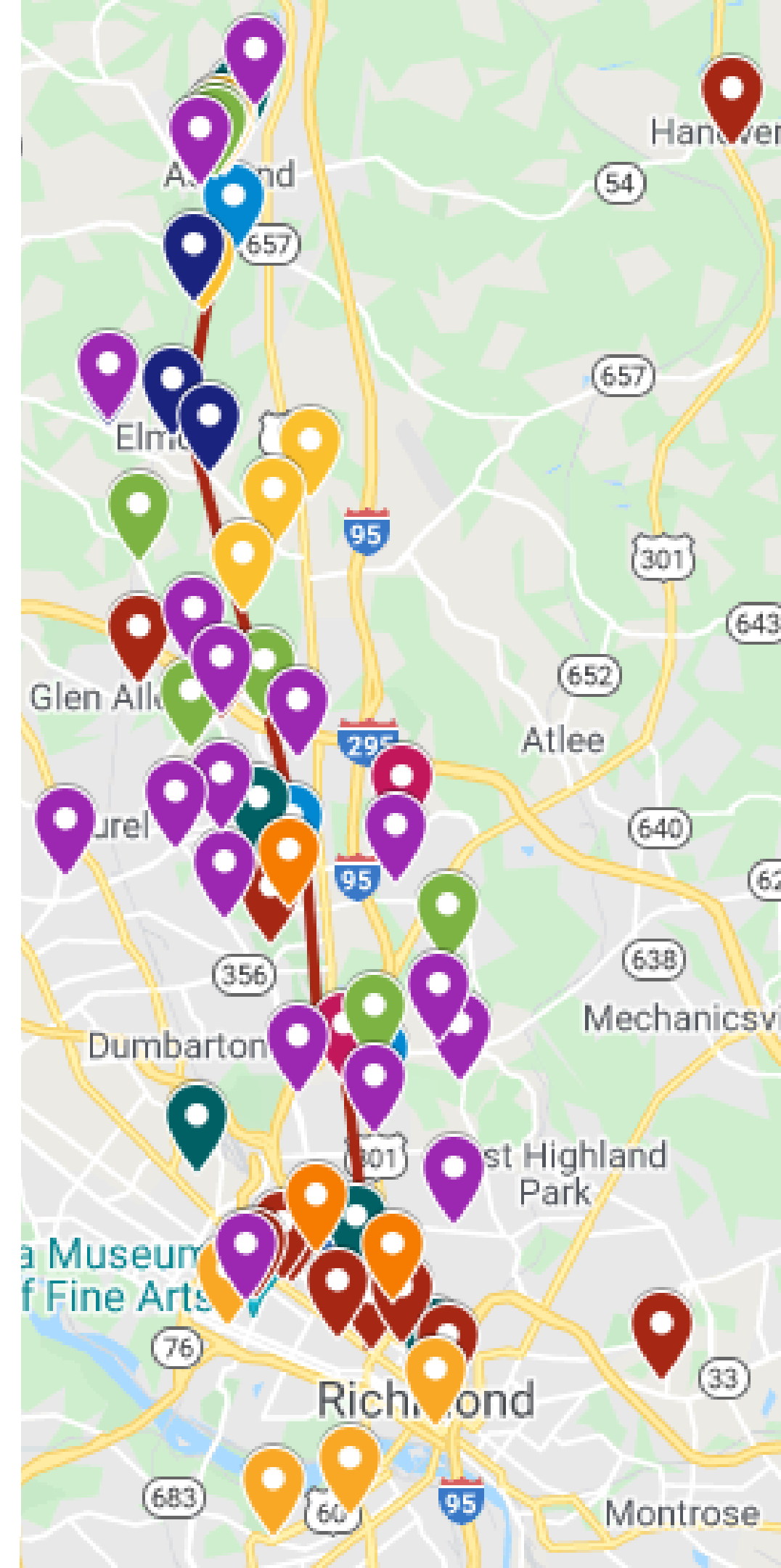
Individual styles

- 📍 Laburnum Elementary School
- 📍 Moody Middle School
- 📍 Elmont Elementary School
- 📍 Cristo Rey Richmond High S...
- 📍 Chamberlayne Elementary S...
- 📍 Greenwood Elementary School
- 📍 THE NEW COMMUNITY SCH...
- 📍 John M. Gandy Elementary S...
- 📍 The Academy at Virginia Ran...
- 📍 Henrico High School
- 📍 Brookland Middle School
- 📍 Henry Clay Elementary School
- 📍 Longdale Elementary School
- 📍 Hermitage High School
- 📍 Richmond Community High ...
- 📍 Ginter Park Elementary School
- 📍 Maude Trevvett Elementary ...

✓ City & Town Organizations

Individual styles

- 📍 Hunton Community Center
- 📍 County of Henrico
- 📍 Town of Ashland
- 📍 Downtown Ashland Associat...
- 📍 Pine Camp Arts and Commu...
- 📍 Three Lakes Park & Nature C...
- 📍 Longdale Recreation Center



Phase D Examples

Greenwood Stop:

*Pocket park near Longdale Soccer Complex.
Interpretive story continues about Virginia
Shelton.*

*The interpretive sign could be written by
**Virginia Randolph Museum & Henrico
County.***

*The park could have features from the
Academy at Virginia Randolph, perhaps a
*Mini-Library in the shape of Virginia Shelton's
Sears House!**



Virginia Shelton in front of her home in Ashland.
Photo from Richmond Magazine. Read an
interview with her [here](#).

NEXT STEPS

Working on an action strategy with the history committee: Town of Ashland, Hanover County, Henrico County, Ashland Museum, PlanRVA, and NPS-RTCA

Continuing research

Exploring Funding Opportunities

If you are interested in more information or would like to be a part of the project, contact us at priggan@planrva.org or bjacocks@planrva.org