

Guide for Adding Historical Markers to the Birthplace of America Trail



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Kevin Carroll, Captain, U.S. Coast Guard

Ed Vedder, Colonel, Langley-Eustis

INVITED PARTICIPANT

John Malbon, CTB

Stephen A. Johnsen, CTB

W. Sheppard Miller, CTB

HRTPO PROJECT STAFF

Mike Kimbrel

Robert B. Case, P.E., Ph.D.

Andrew Margason

Chris Vaigneur

HRTPO Deputy Executive Director

Chief Transportation Engineer

General Services Manager

Assistant General Services Manager

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TITLE

Guide for Adding Historical Markers to
the Birthplace of America Trail

ORGANIZATION

Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Org.
723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, Virginia 23320
<http://www.hrtpo.org>

AUTHORS

Robert B. Case, PE, PhD

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this document is to guide the developers of segments of the Birthplace of America Trail (VDOT, localities, etc.) in the inclusion of historical markers in segment construction.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT & DISCLAIMERS

Prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). The contents of this report reflect the views of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO). The HRTPO is responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the FHWA, VDOT or Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation. FHWA or VDOT acceptance of this report as evidence of fulfillment of the objectives of this planning study does not constitute endorsement/approval of the need for any recommended improvements nor does it constitute approval of their location and design or a commitment to fund any such improvements. Additional project level environmental impact assessments and/or studies of alternatives may be necessary.

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Introduction

An extensive planning process conducted by VDOT consultant Michael Baker International developed a recommended route for the Birthplace of America trail (document approved by the HRTPO Board July 20, 2017).

The impetus for this historical markers effort was a 2017 meeting with Delegate David Yancey (94th District) who told HRTPO staff of his interest in the Birthplace of America Trail highlighting local history, particularly Revolutionary War history.

The **purpose of this document** is to guide the developers of segments of the Birthplace Trail (VDOT, localities, etc.) in the inclusion of historical markers in segment construction.

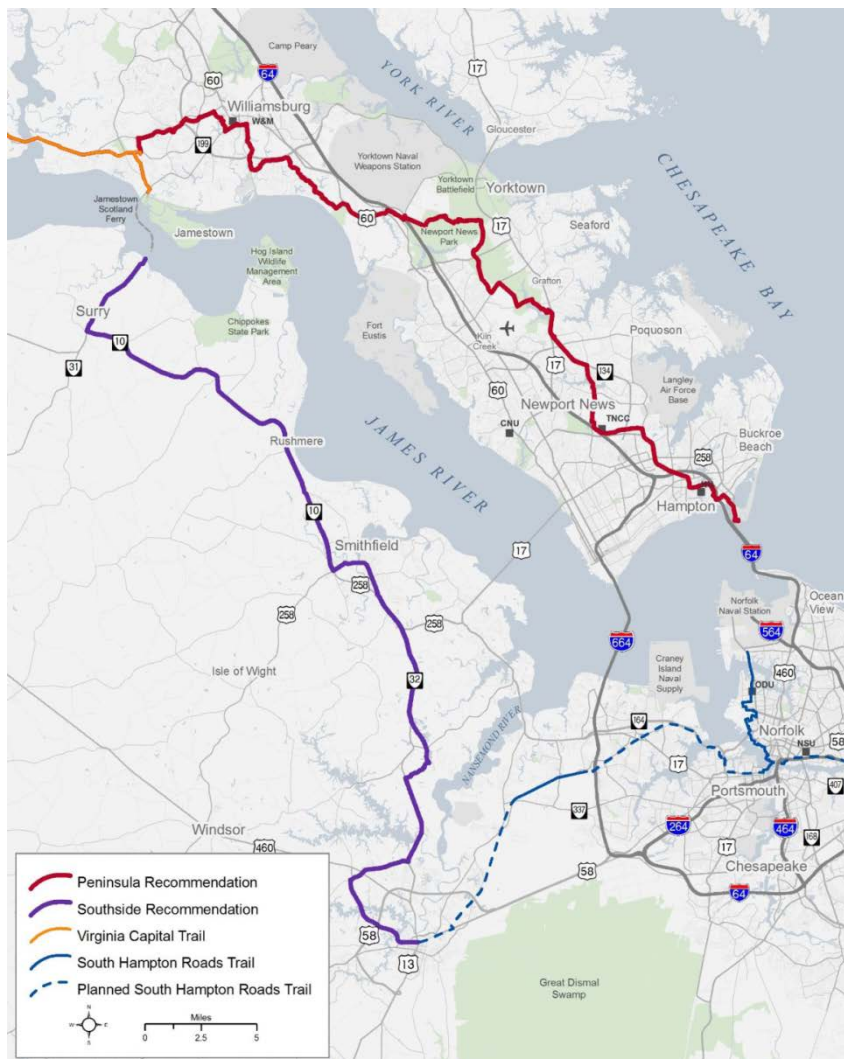


FIGURE 1 Birthplace of America Trail- Recommended Route

Guidance for Adding Historical Markers to the Birthplace Trail

Given that historical markers along the Birthplace Trail will:

- make the trail more attractive, increasing its transportation and recreation utility
- teach users about local and national history, improving their ability to live in the present,

it is recommended that developers of the trail:

- **include historical markers in the design and construction of trail segments,**
- consider the additional guidance on the following pages when adding markers.

To prepare this additional guidance, HRTPO staff:

- catalogued existing (highway) markers along the proposed route
- proposed several new markers along the proposed route
- provided draft document for review by the localities through which the trail passes
- added suggestions made by the localities
- recommended historical marker design.

Given that the majority of the existing markers along the proposed route (listed on the following page) are “Historical Highway Markers” overseen by the state’s Department of Historic Resources (DHR), and that Historical Highway Markers (current cost \$1,770) are likely less expensive than markers designed specifically for the trail, it is recommended—for consistency and economy—that historical makers added to the trail (by trail developers) **be DHR Historical Highway Markers**. Trail developers may refer to <https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/highway-markers/> for further guidance.



FIGURE 2 DHR Historical Highway Marker

Source: Dept. of Historic Resources (DHR) website

Concerning the usage of path construction funding for these historical markers, HRTPO staff investigated three path funding sources:

- CMAQ: no prohibition (or allowance) found
- RSTP: no prohibition (or allowance) found
- TA Set Aside: “signage” is an allowable expenditure

Given the name of the trail—the Birthplace of America Trail—markers along the trail should **highlight those events related to the nation’s birth**, from Jamestown in 1607 to Yorktown in 1776. Fortunately, many of the existing historical highway markers along the proposed route refer to events relevant to the development and founding of the United States. Following this theme, HRTPO staff (with input from localities) added a few proposed markers to this document.

It is recommended that developers of the trail use the following tables and maps as follows:

- use the **existing markers** data to determine where historical markers are needed
- use the **proposed markers** data to aid them in determining the topic and content of markers they choose to include in segment construction.

TABLE 1 Existing Historical Markers along Proposed Route of Birthplace Trail

Source of trail segments:
Source of existing markers:

"Birthplace of America Trail Study", updated 10 Oct. 2017, pp. 27-56
<http://dhr.virginia.gov/HistoricMarkers/>

<u>Birthplace Trail</u>				<u>Marker</u>
<u>Segment</u>	<u>Road</u>	<u>Locality</u>	<u>Existing Marker (with key event date)</u>	<u>Number</u>
Seg 1	Greensprings Plantation Dr	JCC	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Monticello Ave	JCC	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Ironbound Rd	JCC	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Ironbound Rd	JCC	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Monticello Ave	Wlmbg	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Compton Dr, etc.	Wlmbg	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Jamestown Rd	Wlmbg	Indian School at the College of William and Mary (1697)	W-229
	Francis St	Wlmbg	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
Seg 2	S England St	Wlmbg	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Carters Grove Country Rd	JCC	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Ron Springs Dr	JCC	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Pocahontas Trail	JCC	Trebell's Landing (Revolutionary War, Sep 1781)	W-49
	Pocahontas Trail	JCC	Martin's Hundred (1620)	W-51
Seg 3	Yorktown Rd	NN	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Jefferson Ave	NN	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Historical Tour Rd (NPS)	York	Washington's Headquarters (1781)	n.a.
	Historical Tour Rd (NPS)	York	[google maps shows other (illegible) markers here]	n.a.
Seg 4	Richneck Rd	York	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Independence Blvd	York	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Oriana Rd	York	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
Seg 5	George Washington Hwy	York	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	George Washington Hwy	York	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Hampton Hwy	York	Charles Church (1636, 1682, 1708)	NP-1
	Big Bethel Rd	Hamp	Battle of Big Bethel (10 Jun 1861)	W-66
Seg 6	Butler Farm Rd	Hamp	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Armistead Ave	Hamp	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Settlers Landing Rd	Hamp	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Emancipation Dr	Hamp	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Martin Luther King Blvd	Hamp	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Mallory St	Hamp	Phoebus (pre-revolutionary, 1871, 1900)	WY-93
	Mellen St	Hamp	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	McNair Dr	Hamp	The Zero Mile Post (C&O Railway, 1889)	W-91
	Fenwick Rd	Hamp	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Ingalls Rd	Hamp	Fort Algernourne (1609)	W-89
Seg 7	Rolfe Hwy (Rte. 31)	Surry	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Colonial Trail (Rte. 10)	Surry	Pleasant Point (1657)	K-227
	Colonial Trail (Rte. 10)	Surry	Chippokes Plantation (1619)	K-279
	Colonial Trail (Rte. 10)	Surry	Quiyoughcohannock Indians (1607)	K-137
	Colonial Trail (Rte. 10)	Surry	Hog Island (1608)	K-237
	Colonial Trail (Rte. 10)	Surry	Bacon's Castle (1676)	K-235
	Colonial Trail (Rte. 10)	Surry	Lawnes Creek Church (1673)	K-300
Seg 8	Old Stage Hwy (Rte. 10)	IW	Fort Huger (1862)	K-327
	Old Stage Hwy (Rte. 10)	IW	Old Town (1622)	K-238
	Old Stage Hwy (Rte. 10)	IW	Wrenn's Mill (1650)	K-240-b
	Main St	IW	Old Isle of Wight Courthouse (1752)	K-316
Seg 9	Main St	IW	Ivy Hill Cemetery (1887)	K-329
	Church St	IW	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Benns Church Blvd	IW	St Luke's Church (1632)	K-245
	Benns Church Blvd	IW	Benn's Church (1804)	K-246
Seg 10	Godwin Blvd	IW/Suf	Isle of Wight County / Nansemond County (1634)	Z-113
	Godwin Blvd	Suf	Dumpling Island (1608)	K-249
	Kings Fork Rd	Suf	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Pitchkettle Rd	Suf	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.
	Prentis St	Suf	[no existing markers on this segment]	n.a.

TABLE 2 Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Route of Birthplace Trail

<u>Event (i.e. not simply a place)</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Proposed Marker Location (s.a. map)</u>	<u>Note / Proposed Text</u>
British surrendered at Yorktown	19 Oct 1781	near intersection of Tower Ln & Crawford Rd	To allow flexibility in marker design, proposed location was placed just outside of Colonial National Historical Park.
Emancipation Proclamation was read at Emancipation Oak	1863	near Emancipation Oak	Marker should direct reader to oak and existing plaque there.
Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail established	2009	near Yorktown Naval Weapons Station (e.g. near I-64's exit 247)	Proposed text: "North of this point lies Old Williamsburg Road, the likely route Continental and French forces used to reach Yorktown, forcing 19 Oct 1781 surrender of British forces there. In 2009, the National Park Service established the Washington-Rochambeau national Historic Trail from Boston to Yorktown, including this route." (source: Rob Case)
Powhatan gave land to John Rolfe and Pocahontas	1614 (marriage date)	Rt. 31 between Surry and ferry	Proposed text: "Through John and Rebecca [Pocahontas] Rolfe, Powhatan left [their son] Thomas thousands of acres on the James River, some of which is directly across the James River from Jamestown Island." (https://www.nps.gov/jame/learn/historyculture/thomas-rolfe.htm)
John Smith built a fort	1609	intersection of Rt. 31 and Smith Fort Ln	Proposed text: "Captain John Smith began Smith's Fort in 1609, two years after the first permanent English colony in the New World was established in Jamestown. The remains of the fort, a two-foot high earthwork, constitute the oldest extant structure of English origin in Virginia. The fort stands on a high bluff overlooking Gray's Creek and encloses a triangle of about two hundred feet on each side. The house is a mid 18th-century Tidewater plantation dwelling likely built for Jacob Faulcon, Surry County clerk from 1781 to 1801." (source: existing highway marker K-233 near Surry courthouse; Rolfe sentence removed due to Rolfe marker proposed nearby)
Skirmish at Lee Hall Mansion; confiscation of Endview Plantation	Skirmish: 4 May 1862; confiscation: 1864)	Yorktown Rd between I-64 and Jefferson Ave	Proposed text: "On May 4, 1862, a small skirmish between Union and Confederate forces was fought at Lee Hall Mansion (built between 1851 and 1859, half mile south on Yorktown Rd). In early 1864, the Federal government confiscated the Endview plantation (built 1769, half mile north on Yorktown Rd) and relocated seven African-American families there to farm." (source: www.leehall.org ; endview.org)

FIGURE 3 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- James City

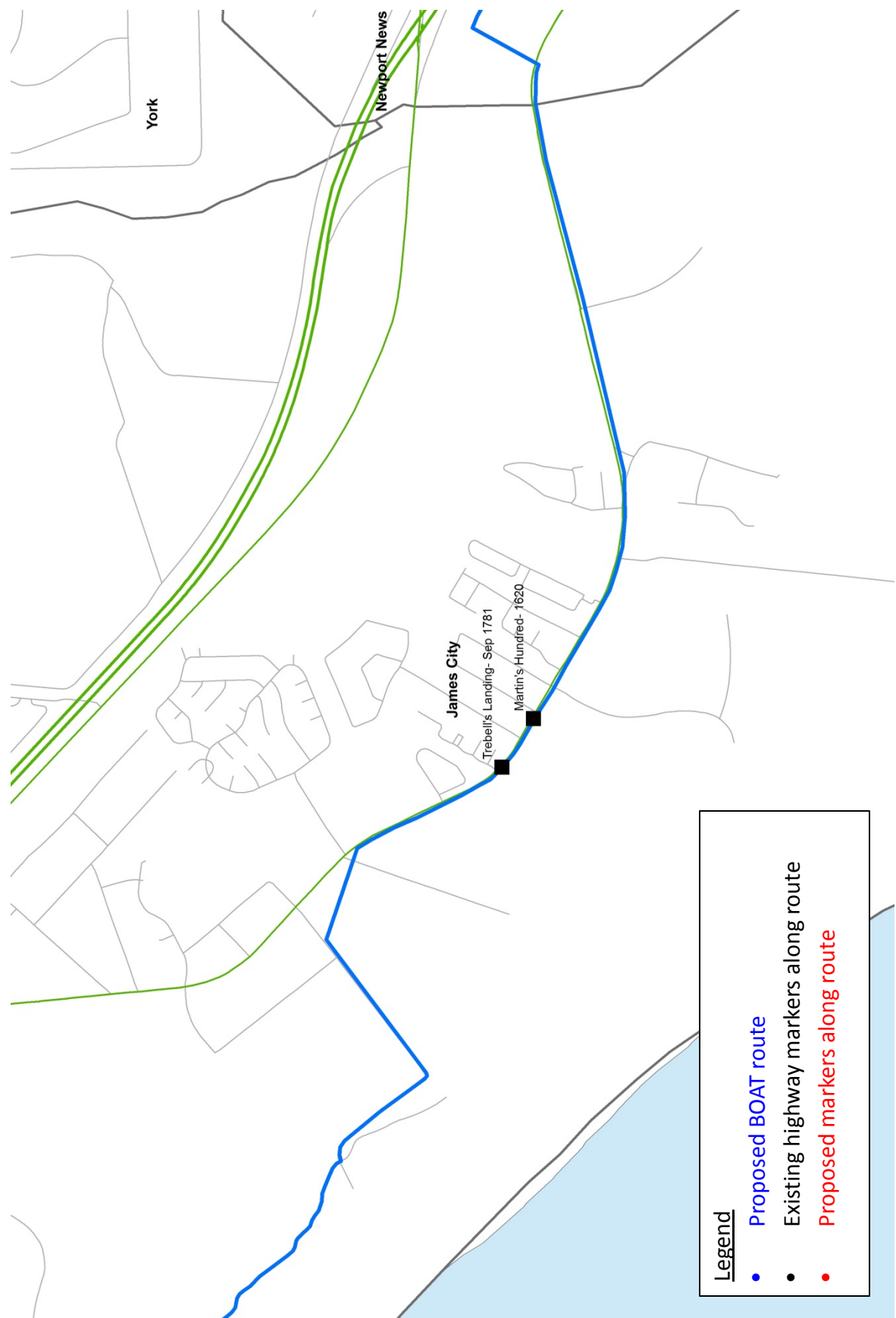


FIGURE 4 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- Williamsburg

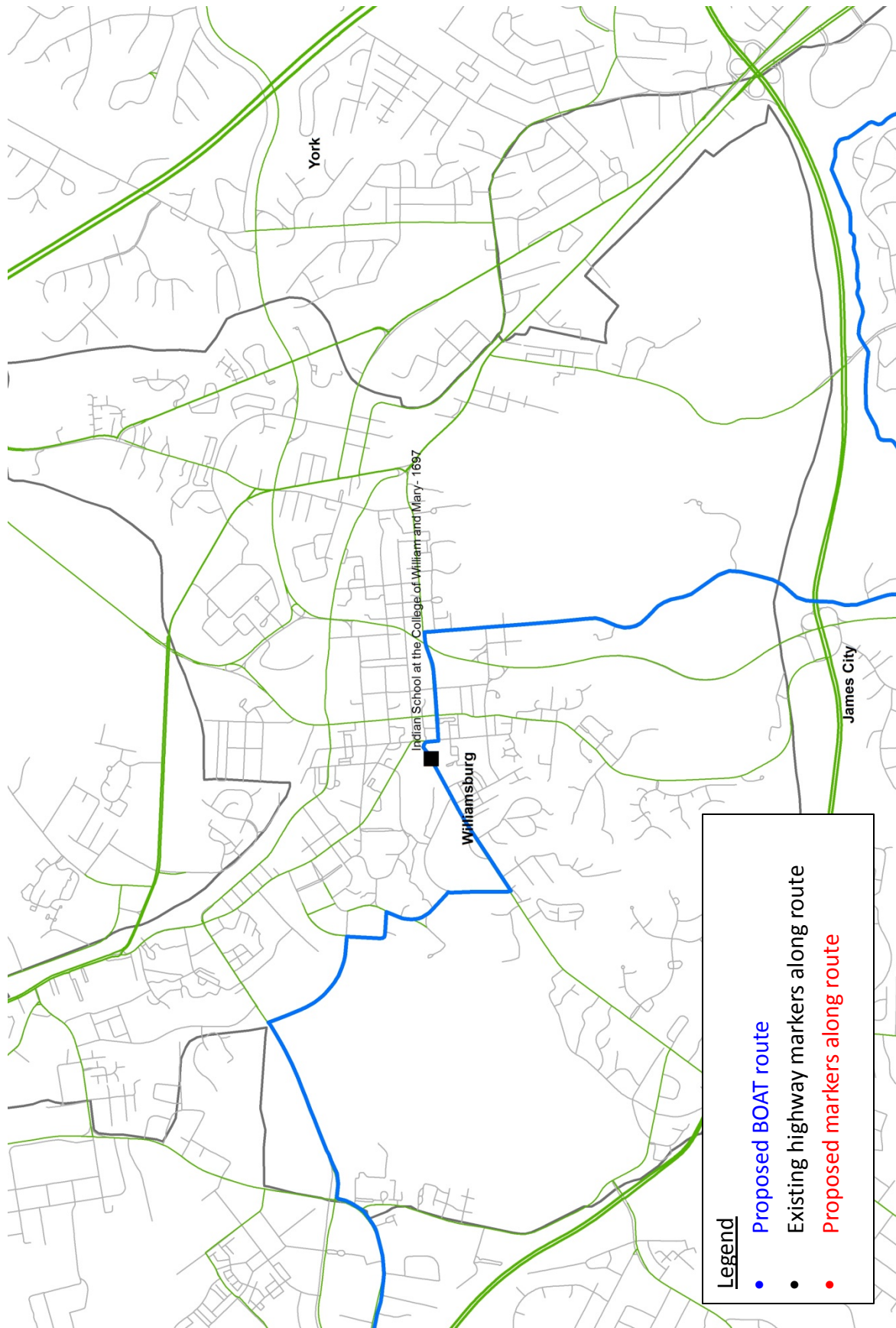


FIGURE 5 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- Newport News

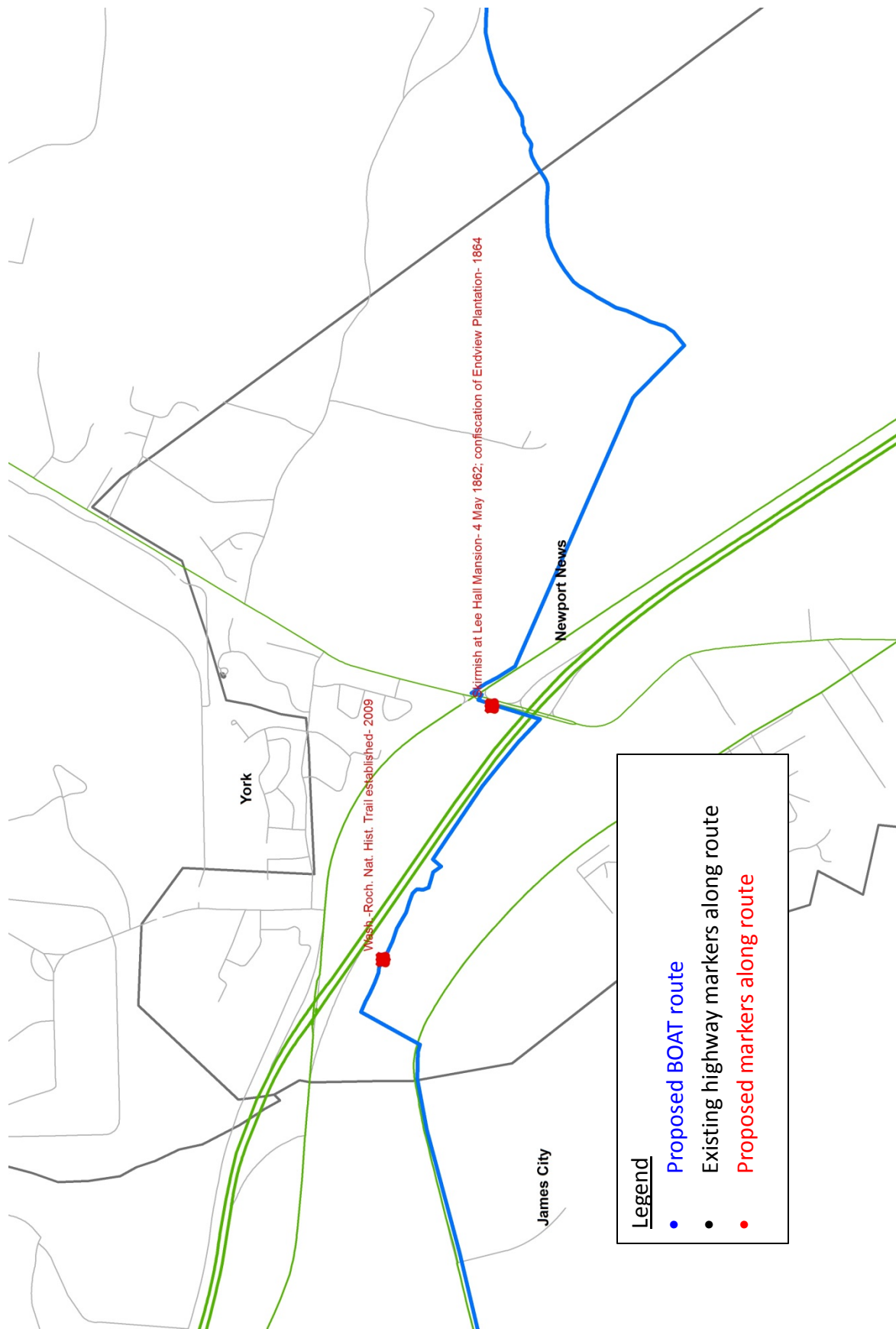


FIGURE 6 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- York #1

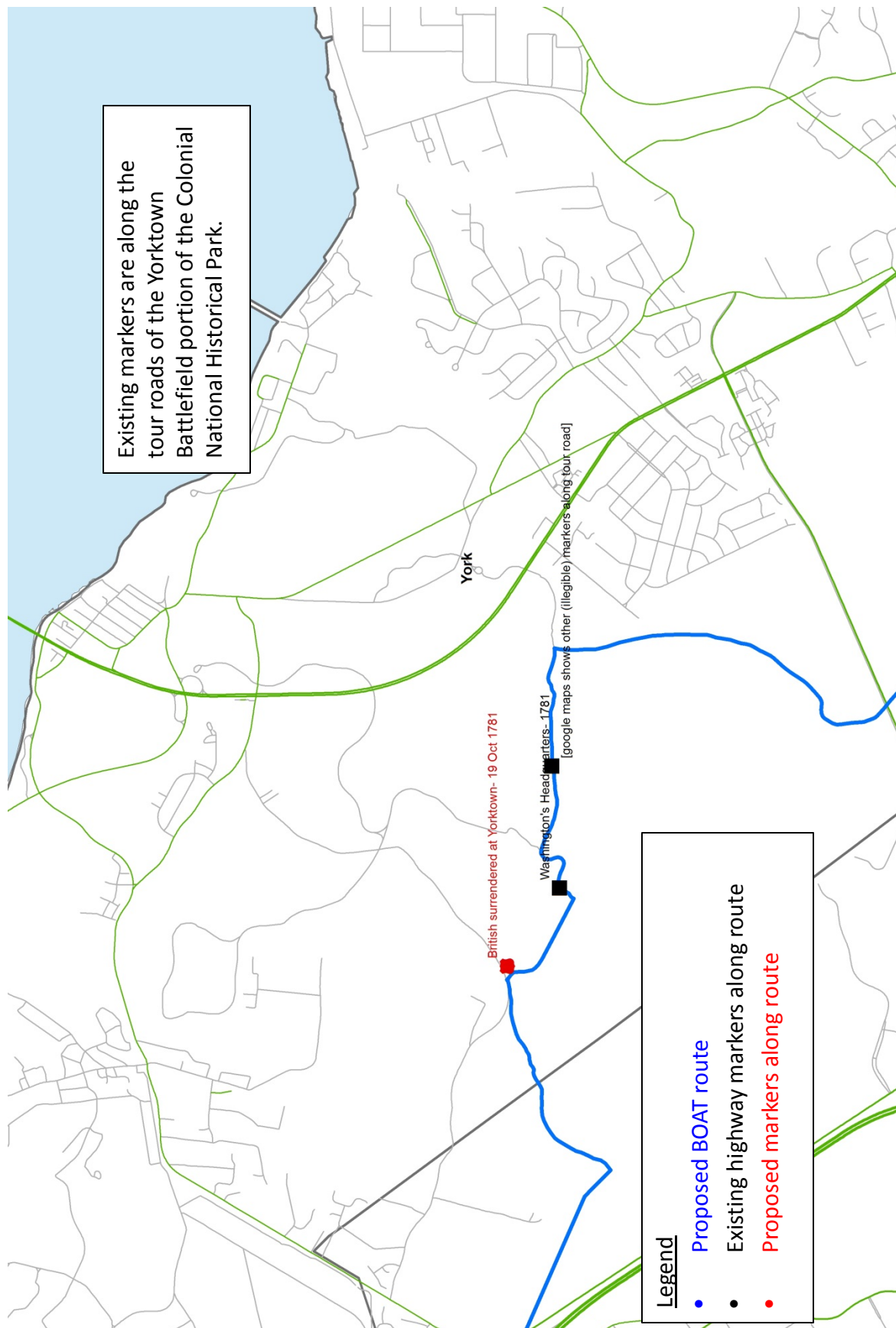


FIGURE 7 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- York #2

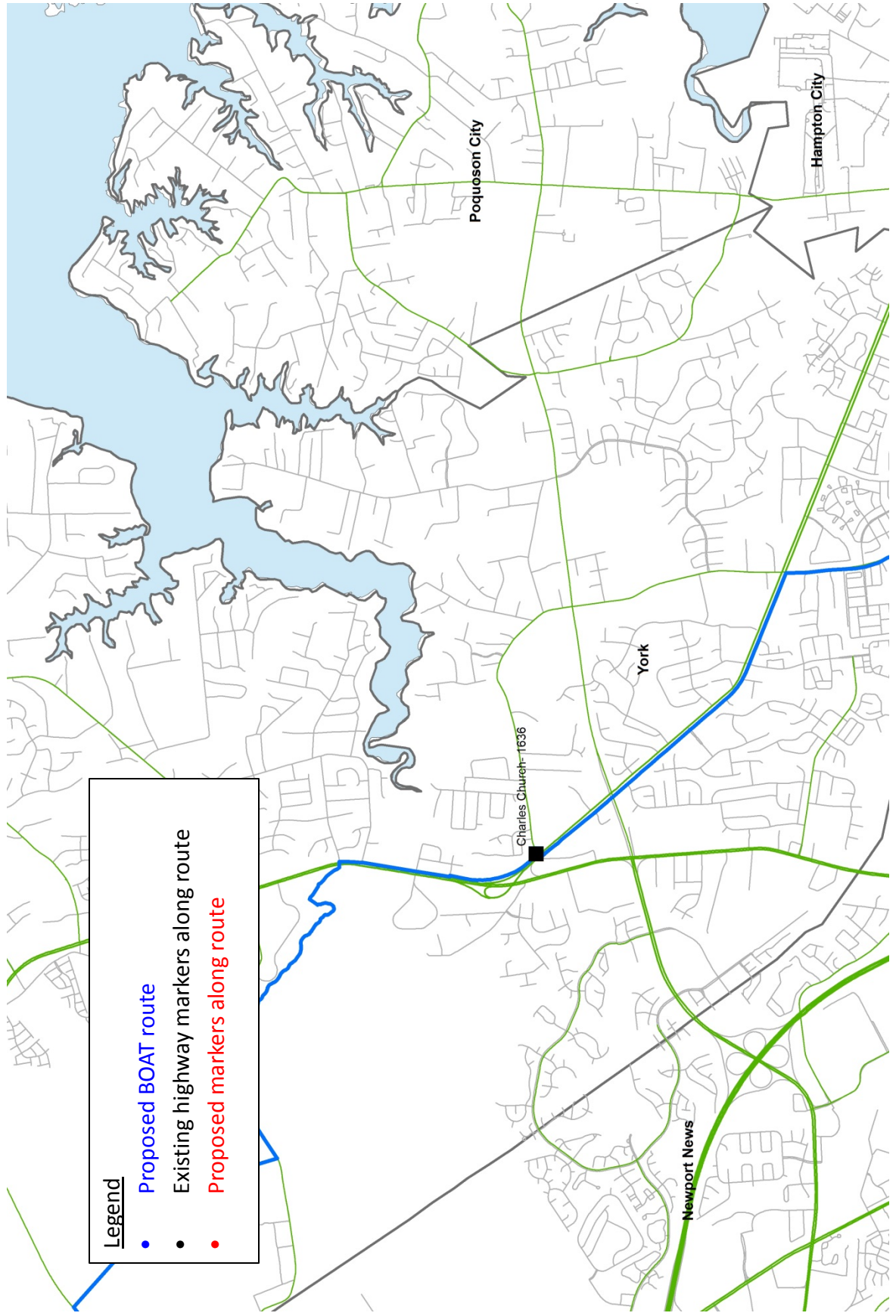
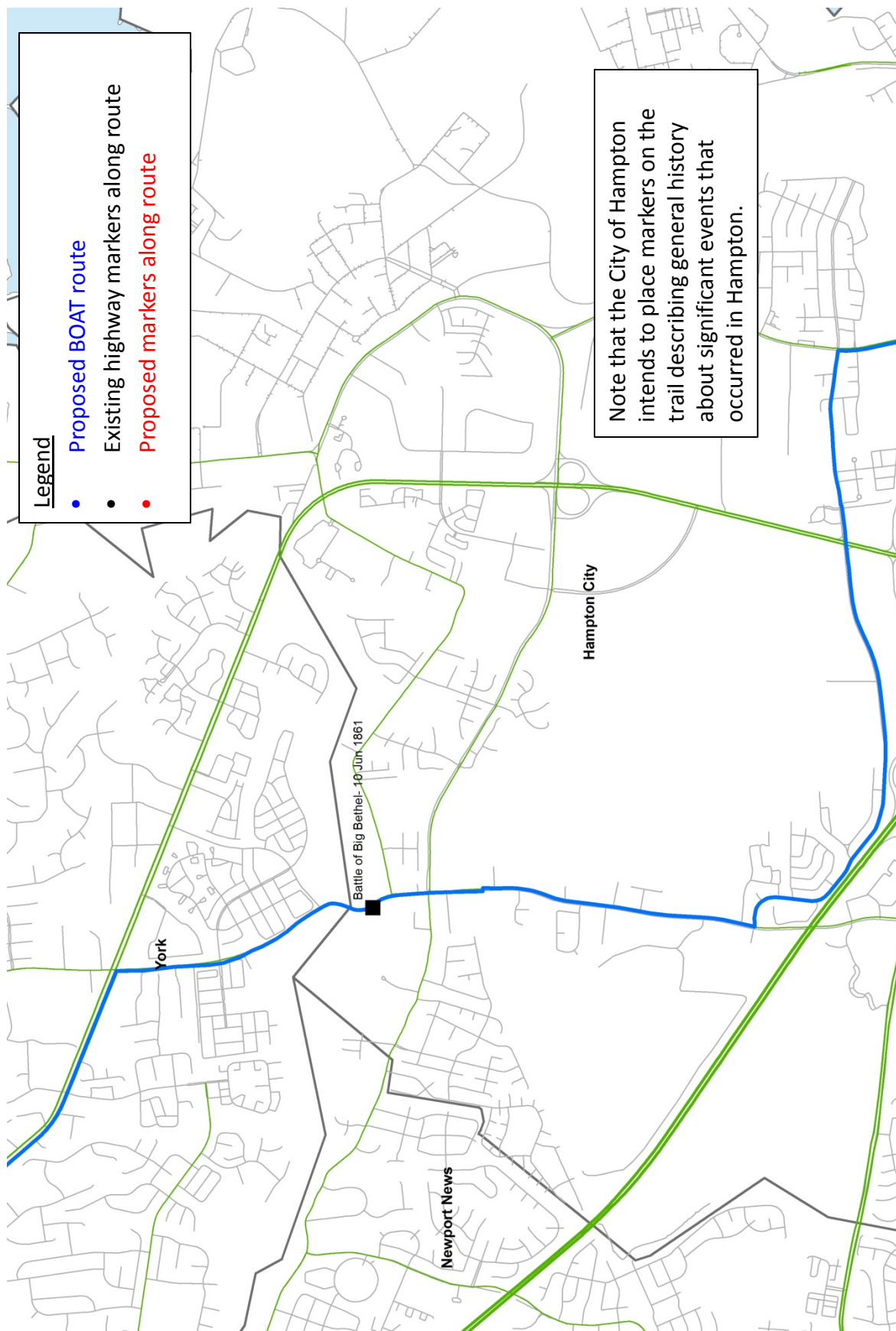


FIGURE 8 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- Hampton #1



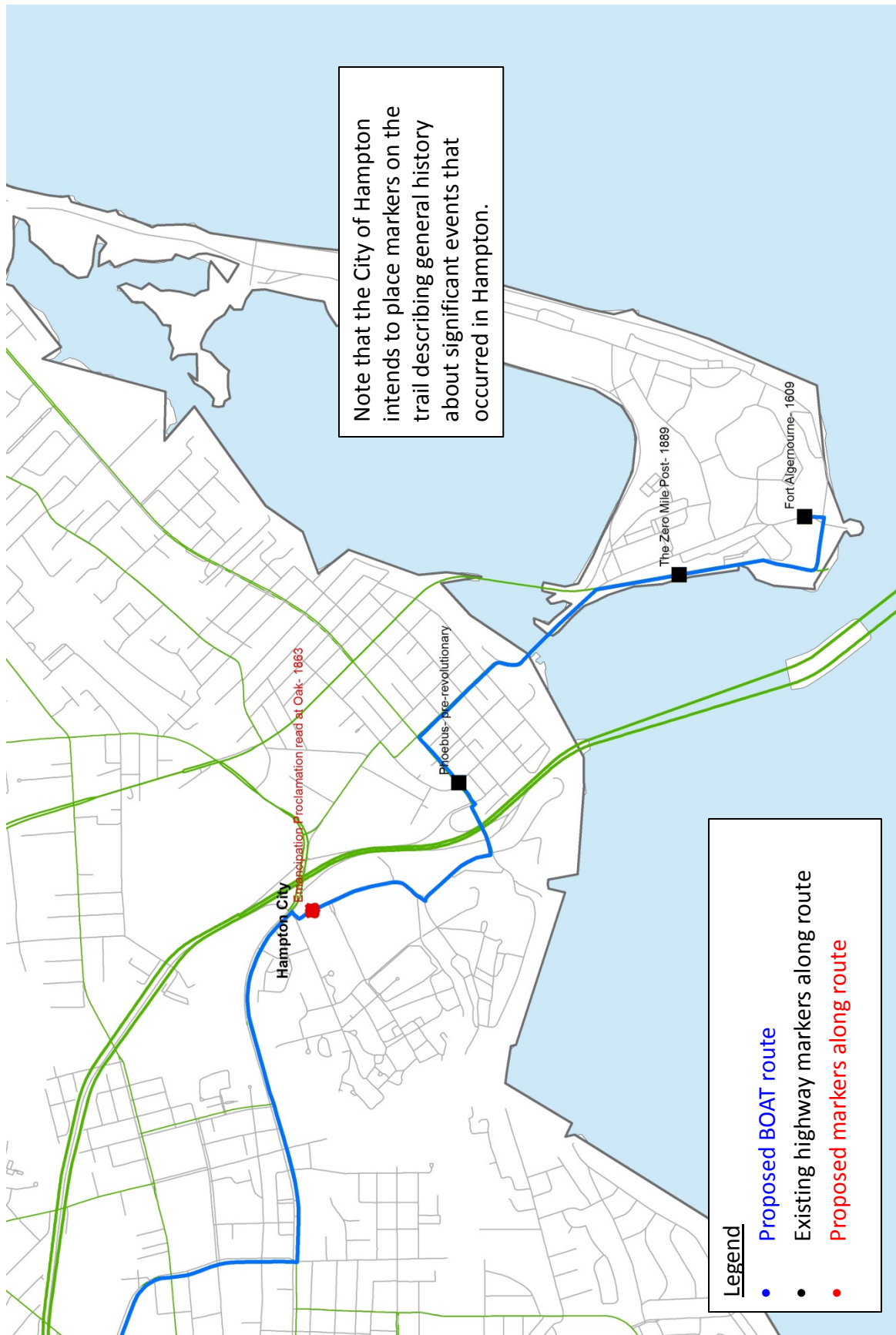


FIGURE 10 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- Surry

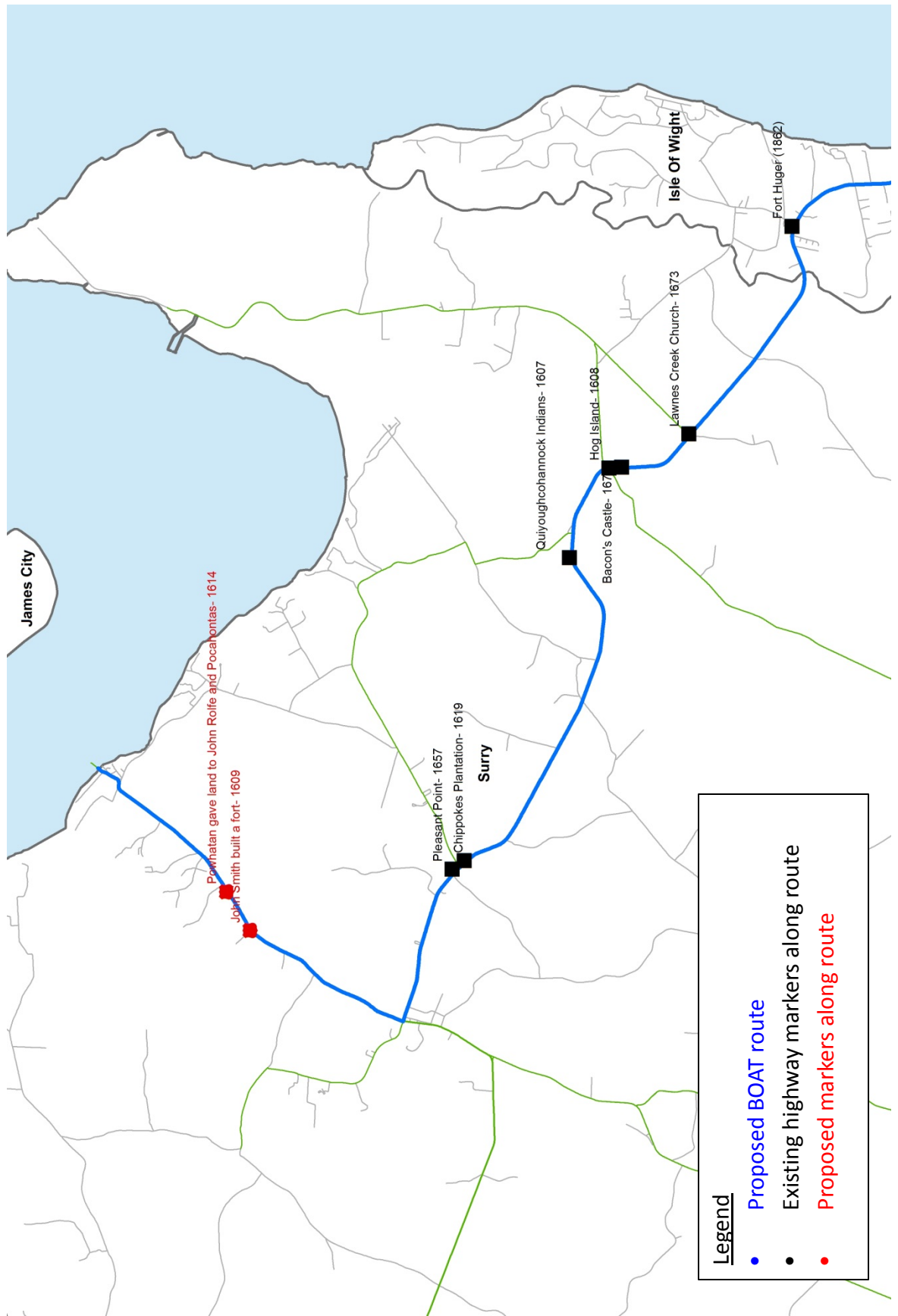


FIGURE 11 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- Isle of Wight

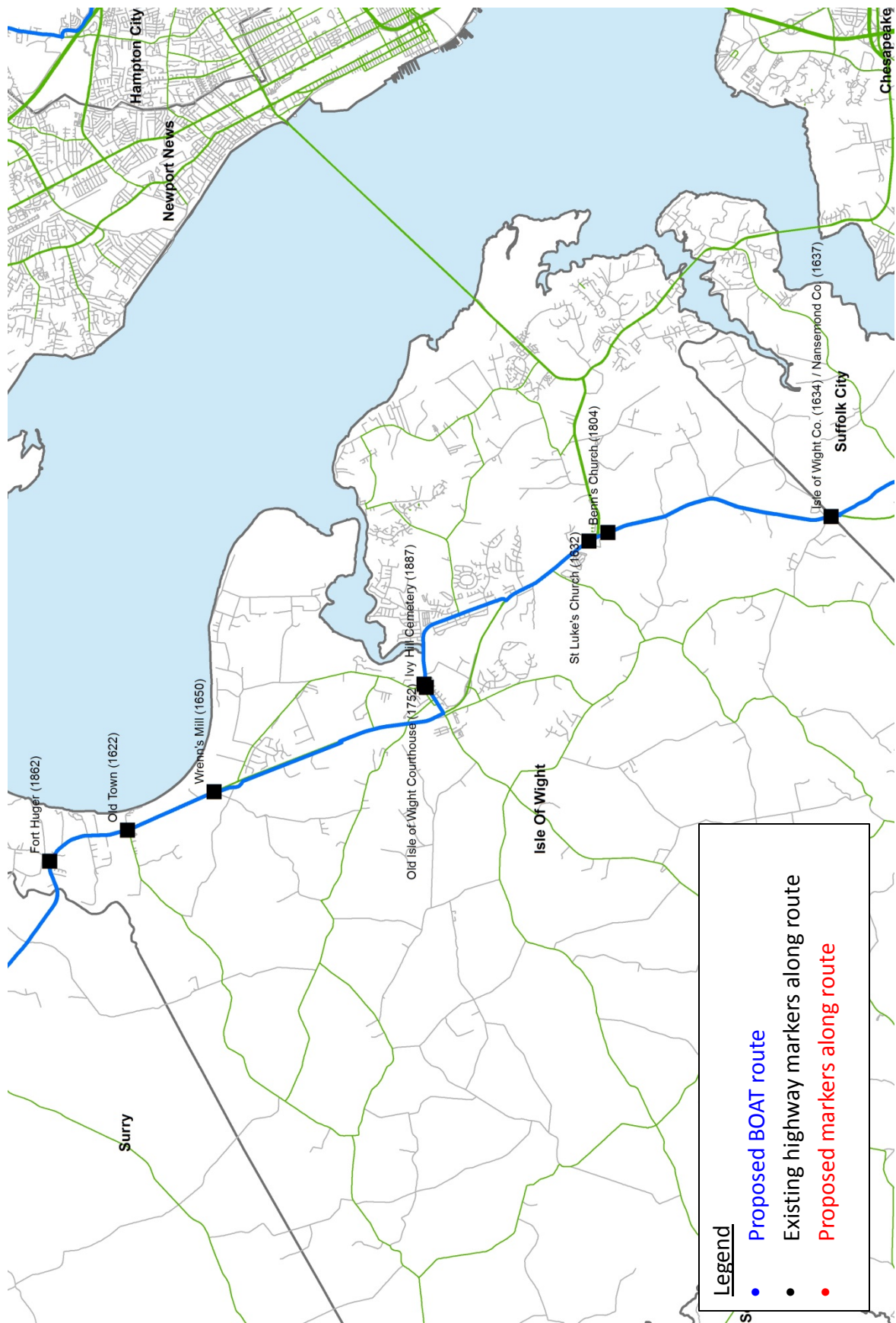
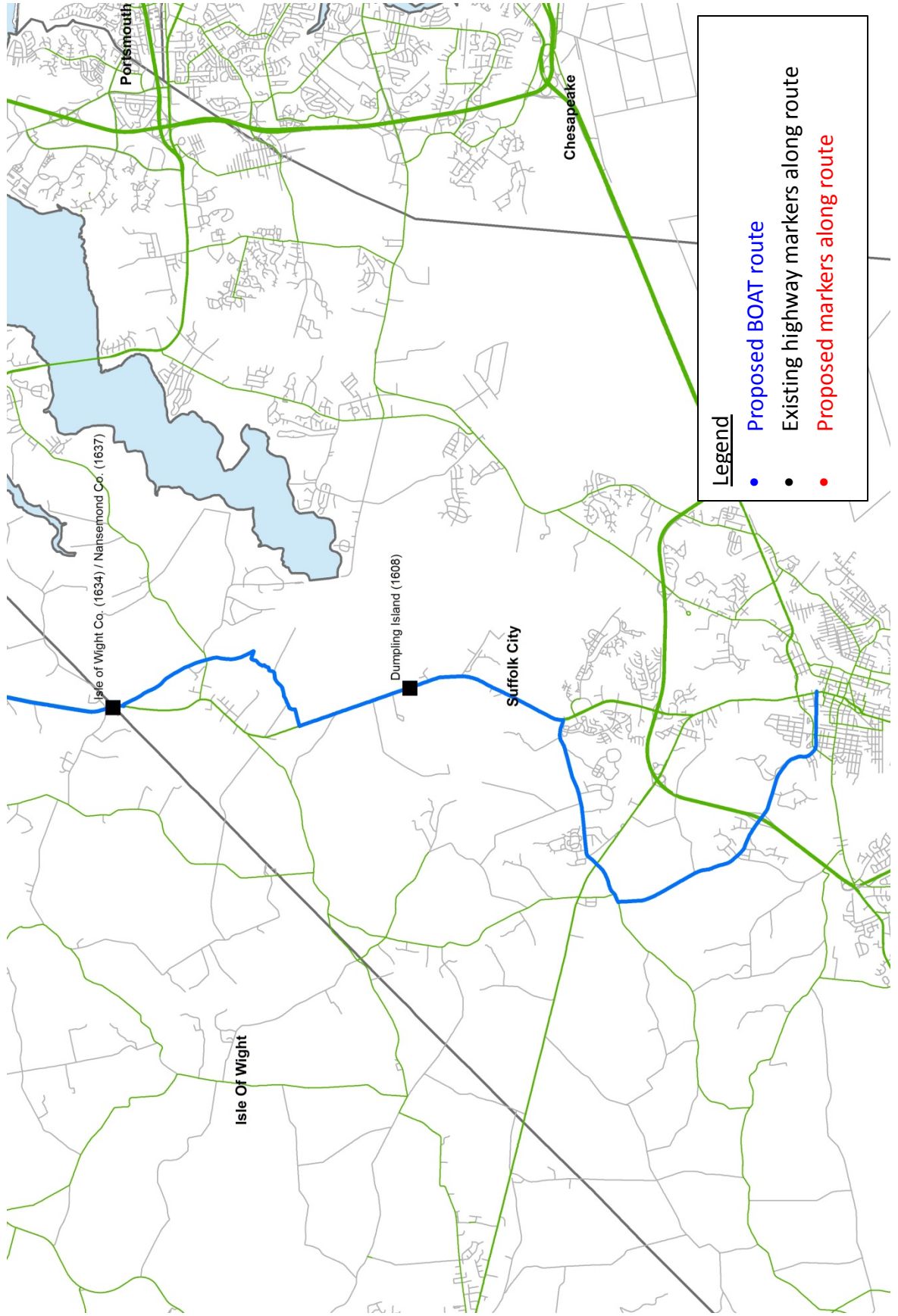


FIGURE 12 Existing and Proposed Historical Markers along Proposed Trail Route- Suffolk



Summary

The purpose of this document is to guide the developers of segments of the Birthplace of America Trail (VDOT, localities, etc.) in the inclusion of historical markers in segment construction.

This document:

- recommends that developers of the trail include historical markers in the design and construction of trail segments
- recommends that historical makers added to the trail (by trail developers) be DHR Historical Highway Markers
- recommends that trail markers highlight those events related to the nation's birth (from Jamestown in 1607 to Yorktown in 1776)
- recommends that developers of the trail use the subject table and maps as follows:
 - use the existing markers data to determine where historical markers are needed
 - use the proposed markers data to aid them in determining the topic and content of markers they choose to include in segment construction.