

Hokies to prioritize developing offensive line rotation in season opener

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THE ROANOKE TIMES

WHERE YOUR STORY LIVES

Saturday, September 5, 2026

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ROANOKE | EVANS SPRING

Seeking a new vision for site

Grant to help fund a look at different options for forested tract

NORA SHELLEY
The Roanoke Times

Local advocacy groups are hoping to create a community vision for what might become of Evans Spring, the largest tract of undeveloped land in Roanoke.

The Blue Ridge Land Conservancy and Friends of Evans Spring group are planning to work with Roanoke-based Hill Studio on creating a plan laying out potential options for the forested, 150-acre site, which is in the northwest part of the city

near Interstate 581.

The land is privately owned, but the city put together a master plan approved by the Roanoke City Council in 2024 recommending commercial and mixed-use development should any of the landowners choose to build on the land.

The plan raised concern from some

about what development could mean for gentrification in the area, which includes the predominantly Black Melrose-Rugby, Fairland and Villa Heights neighborhoods.

The council amended the development master plan this year to add conservation

Please see **GRANT**, Page A5

ROANOKE RIVER

BUILDING A WAVE



HEATHER ROUSSEAU, THE ROANOKE TIMES

Roanoke's upcoming whitewater and kayak park is seen under construction in early August at Wasena Park on the Roanoke River.

New park will add adventures for kayakers, tubers starting next year

NORA SHELLEY
The Roanoke Times

Just upstream of the Roanoke River Greenway bridge connecting Wasena and Vic Thomas parks, white sandbags meander on the riverbed of the site of an under-construction in-river park.

The sandbags are part of the "cofferdam" diverting water around parts of the riverbed. Sheets of metal enclose one area where

equipment whirs as it pumps water out of the river and downstream. Crews are working on the in-stream white water feature for the park, which when it's done will include a "wave" for paddlers to tackle and for tubers to float over and calmer eddies for waders.

Construction on the park started about a year ago, and on Thursday, Katie Slusher,

Please see **KAYAK**, Page A5

CHRISTIANSBURG

Passenger rails return on track for NRV

Plan received another \$1 million in state and federal funding

ETHAN HUNT
The Roanoke Times

CHRISTIANSBURG — The plan to bring passenger rail to Christiansburg received another \$1 million in state and federal funding last week as officials say the project remains on track to begin service in 2027.

The \$1 million from the Appalachian Regional Commission, a federal-state partnership that supports economic opportunity across 13 states, will go

Please see **RAILS**, Page A5

ECONOMY

Nonfarm payrolls surge in August

LUCIA MUTIKANI
Reuters

WASHINGTON — U.S. job growth accelerated sharply in August while the unemployment rate held steady at 4.1%, suggesting an improvement in the labor market after recent struggles, keeping an interest rate increase from the Federal Reserve this month on the table.

The larger-than-expected increase in nonfarm payrolls last month reported

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Person shot, killed outside church

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2 flood survivors found in Nepal

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Weather
P.M. t-storm
High: 91 Low: 69
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