



HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS

TRAIL STUDY FROM HIGHLANDS TO MCEVER ROAD TRAIL STUDY



MAY 2026



**A Resolution by the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization
Policy Committee Adopting the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Rd**

WHEREAS, the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for transportation planning within the Gainesville Metropolitan Area Boundary which includes all of Hall County and a portion of Jackson County following the 2020 Census; and

WHEREAS, the Policy Committee (PC) is the recognized decision making body for transportation planning with the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO); and

WHEREAS, GHMPO conducts bicycle and pedestrian planning to help establish active modes of transportation across the planning boundary; and

WHEREAS, the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Road provides GHMPO and all local jurisdictions with multiple options to expand the trail network between the University of North Georgia in Oakwood and downtown Flowery Branch, closing the last remaining major gap in the trail network;

NOW, THERE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization adopts the Highlands to Islands Trail Study: UNG to McEver Road.

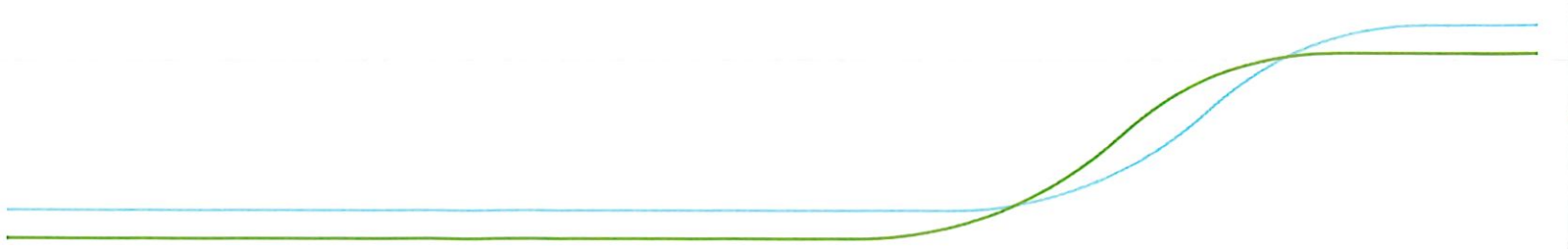
A motion was made by PC member Zack Thompson and seconded by PC member Oliver McClellan and approved this the 12th Day of May, 2026.



Chairman David Gibbs, Chair
GHMPO Policy Committee



Joseph Boyd, Director
GHMPO



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

PROJECT TEAM

GHMPO - Joseph Boyd, AICP

HALL COUNTY

CITY OF GAINESVILLE

CITY OF OAKWOOD

CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA - GAINESVILLE

PROJECT CONSULTANTS

POND & COMPANY | DESIGN TEAM

Matt Wilder, **Principal, PLA**

Kat Onore, **Project Manager, AICP**

Elizabeth Burke, **Planner**

Erika Herbel, **Landscape Designer**

STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Chris McCrary, **Flowery Branch, Planning and Community Development**

Brandon Smith, **Hall County, Parks and Leisure Assistant Director**

Jordan Wallace, **Hall County, Assistant County Engineer**

Adam Strzemienski, **UNG, Director of Facilities and Operations**

Derek Leonard, **UNG, Associate Vice President Real Estate & Auxiliary Services**

Anna Hester, **Vision 2030, Executive Director**

Dan Shulz, **City of Oakwood**

Matt Tarver, **City of Gainesville**

Brent Cook, **Hall County, Assistant Public Works Director**

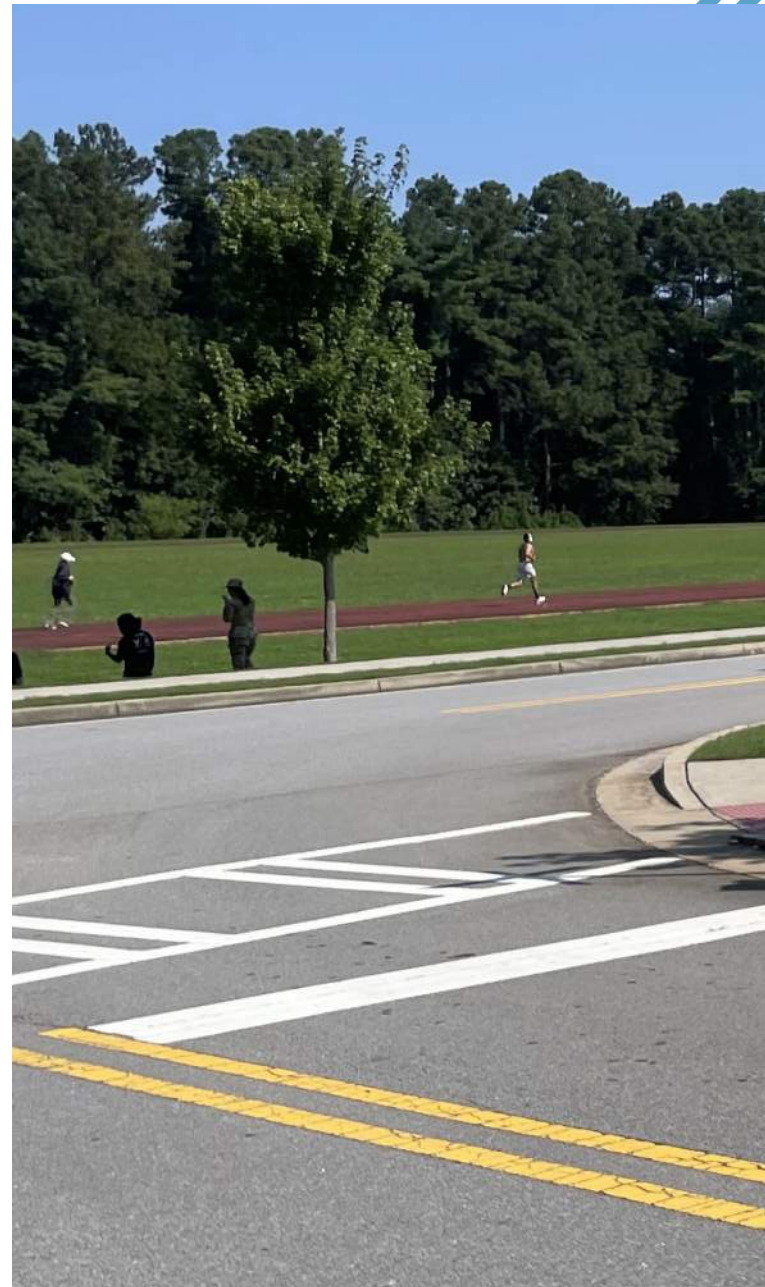


TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION SUMMARY	15
EXISTING CONDITIONS	19
ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS	27
PREFERRED ALIGNMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS	59
IMPLEMENTATION	91







Welcome

To The Exercise Trail

As you walk and run through this course, you'll have a chance to perform exercises designed to help you become more physically fit. If you have doubts about your ability to exercise, consult your doctor first.

Equipment is used for both children and adults. If you are just starting an exercise program, perform the number of repetitions marked "beginner"; you can work up to "advanced" repetitions on later visits.

 This symbol on direction signs means to walk to the next station.

 This symbol means turn right or left to the next station.

UNG UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA

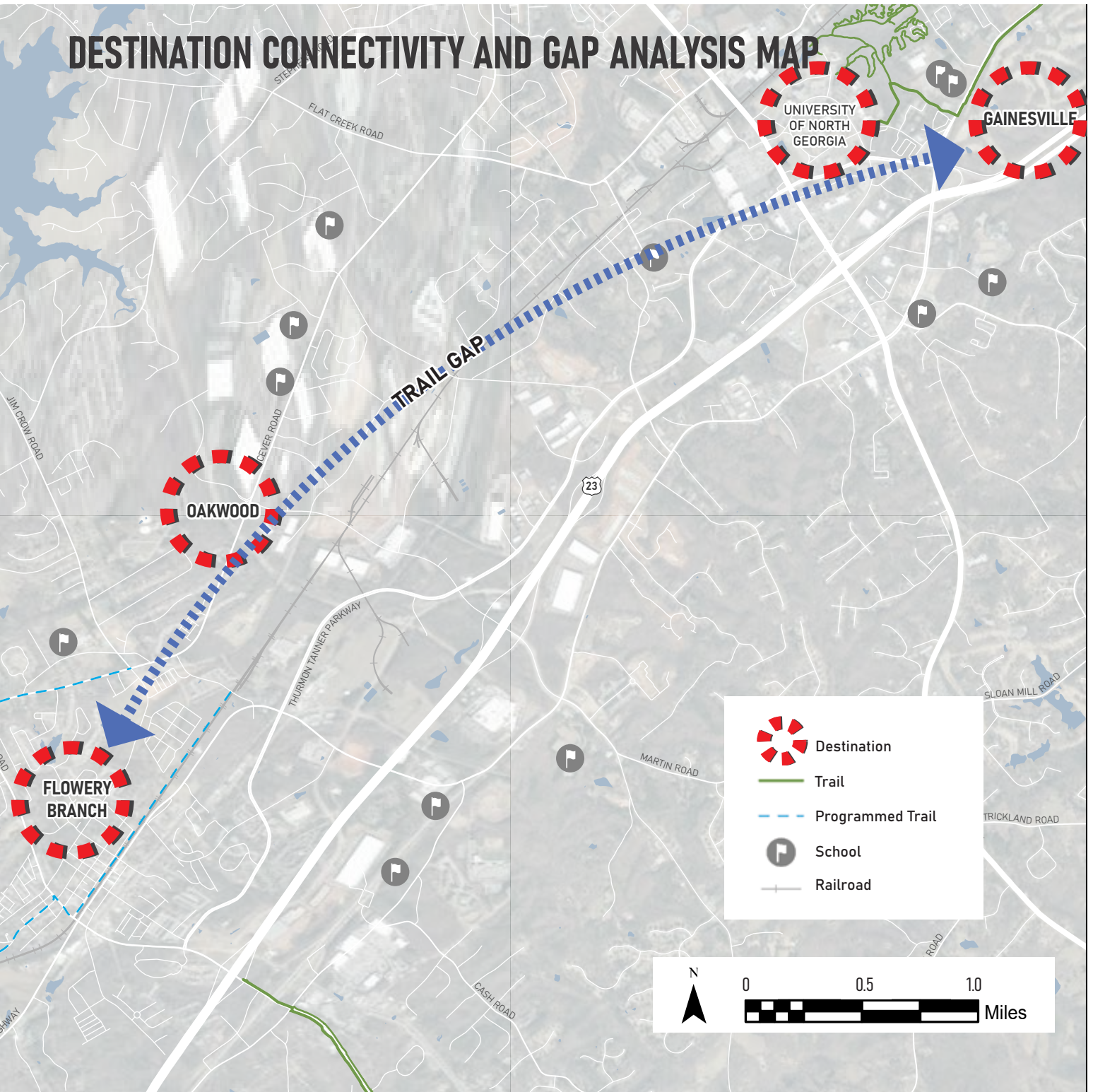
EXERCISE TRAIL



UNG Campus existing exercise trail

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

DESTINATION CONNECTIVITY AND GAP ANALYSIS MAP



STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of the Highlands to Islands trails study is to identify a preferred trail alignment to fill the existing gap from the University of North Georgia (UNG) to McEver Road. This plan is a part of the region's goal for multimodal connectivity and accessibility. One of the main objectives is to determine the best alternative for trail connectivity.

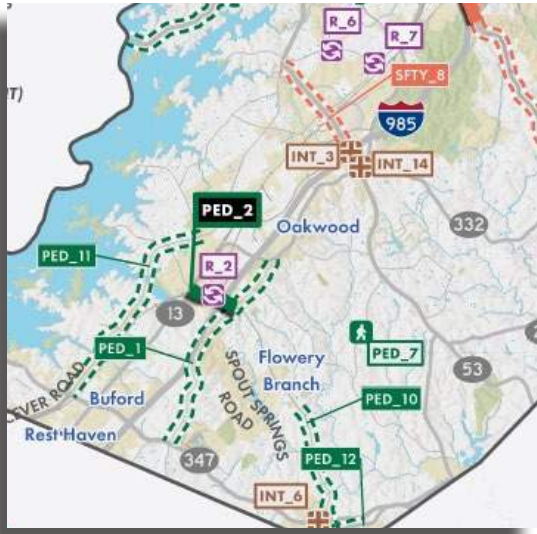
The overarching goal of this project is to develop a feasible and connected trail corridor as part of the regional Highlands to Islands Trail system. This corridor will strengthen multimodal connections between key destinations, expand access to active transportation options, and contribute to a cohesive trail network that benefits residents, students, and visitors throughout Hall County.

This plan has been developed to support that vision by completing a thorough analysis of existing conditions, community facilities, and community needs. The study focuses on identifying a safe, accessible, and context-sensitive route that enhances regional connectivity while supporting recreation, mobility, and community vitality.



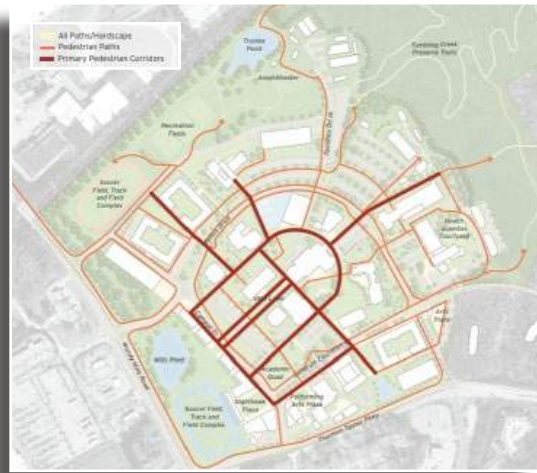
BACKGROUND: PREVIOUS PLANS

To ensure this study is aligned with existing initiatives, the team reviewed existing plans, studies, and initiatives that reflect the regional priorities for trail connectivity in Hall County. This review provided the insight needed to identify the goals, opportunities, and gaps that are addressed in this trail connection study.



HALL COUNTY SAFETY ACTION PLAN (2025)

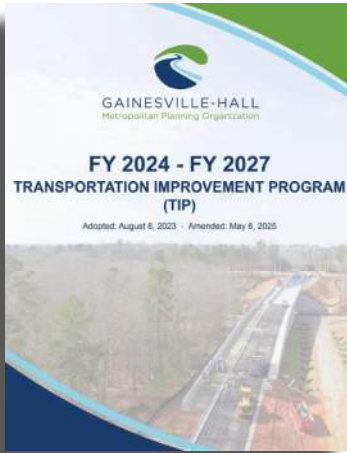
The Hall County Safety Action Plan was developed as a part of the federal Safe Streets for All initiative. The safety action plan component offers a strategic roadmap for reducing fatalities and serious injuries within the Hall County transportation network through the Safe System approach. Multi-modal connectivity is a key component of creating safer streets for all users through engineering, public awareness, and safety enforcement. Key recommendations include sidewalk installation along McEver Road south of Flowery Branch and along Mundy Mill Road.



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA CAMPUS MASTER PLAN (2025)

The University of North Georgia (UNG) Campus Master Plan was developed to guide long term growth across the Dahlonega and Gainesville campuses. The plan illustrates a strategic roadmap for updating campus facilities, expanding student amenities, and improving mobility. Public input found that recreational facilities, specifically walking and biking trails, were identified by participants as a significant priority for the campus improvements. Connectivity strategies are tailored towards campus districts and surrounding communities like Oakwood. The master plan encourages and supports investment in walkability and transportation infrastructure to enhance safety and promote active transportation to strengthen the university's position as a regional destination. Specific trail-related recommendations for the Gainesville campus include:

- Improve connection to Tumbling Creek Preserve Trails to provide access to regional trail networks
- Improve pedestrian connections to the Academic Core and nearby neighborhoods
- Improve connection to Tumbling Creek Preserve Trails to provide access to regional trail networks



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (2023)

The FY 2024-2027 TIP outlines the GHMPO's short-term investment plan for transportation in the region. It prioritizes safety, congestion, and multimodal connectivity through projects such as widening, bridge replacement, operations, and intersection improvements. There is also a trail-related project, the Chicopee Woods Area Park Commission, which is located near an existing segment of the Highlands to Island Trail along Atlanta Highway in Gainesville.



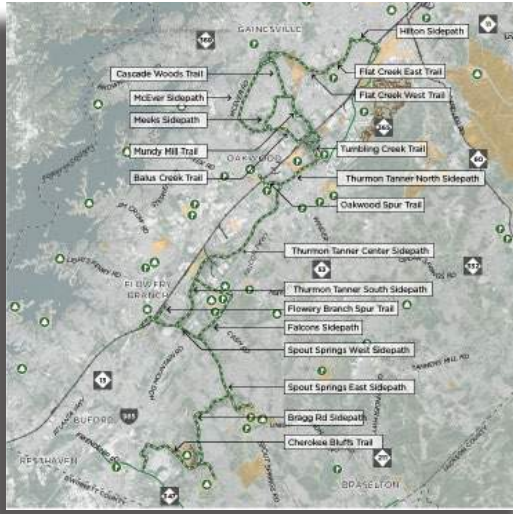
CITY OF OAKWOOD COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2022)

This plan focuses on the physical growth and development in Oakwood by establishing a long-term vision for creating purposeful development and improvements in the city. Character areas for preferred development are defined and applied throughout the City, many of which emphasize connections to greenways and opportunities for new parks. The framework for land use development and connectivity supports the regional goals by offering opportunities for interconnectivity of multimodal infrastructure. Specific strategies within the implementation program include the expansion of the Highlands to Island Trail system through the city, partnership with UNG and natural space preservation. This plan outlines a master plan for developing Oakwood's Town Center, including developments such as the Ink Interactive Neighborhood, a new City Hall building, and residences. This will be a key destination to connect to with the Highlands to Island Trail Network.



CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (2021)

This plan provides a policy guide for growth and development in Flowery Branch for the next 20 years (through 2041). Public input identified a need for parks and greenspaces throughout the City, as well as improved connectivity through sidewalks, multi-use trails, and bike lanes. The plan establishes Character Areas, which are applied to each parcel within the City to identify the desired development type. Many character areas include the integration of recreational amenities and pedestrian-oriented design principles, particularly those near downtown. The plan supports smart growth and multimodal connectivity to support the city and Hall County as a whole. Infrastructure improvements listed include the construction of an East Main Street Trail from Thurmon Tanner Road to Flowery Branch City Park.



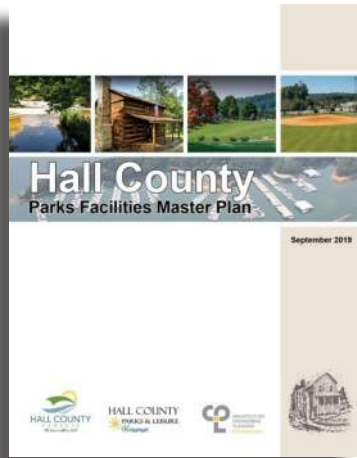
SOUTH HALL TRAIL STUDY (2019)

This study was completed in 2019 by the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO) to create a multi-use trail in southern Hall County. The study focuses on off-street paved connections to connect University of North Georgia (UNG), the downtown areas for Gainesville, Oakwood, and Flowery Branch, and other key community destinations like parks, schools, and employment centers. This plan primarily identified Thurmon Tanner Parkway as the preferred trail alignment in this plan's study area, but there has since been desire on the part of the MPO and local partners to better connect to the nearby downtowns and neighborhoods.



GAINESVILLE 2030 PARKS, GREENWAYS, AND OPEN SPACES MASTER PLAN (2019)

This plan developed a long-term strategy for expanding nature-based recreation throughout the city. Connectivity was highlighted as a central component of the plan which called for 20 miles of new greenways, 20 miles of natural surface trails, and 8 miles of mountain bike routes. It also emphasizes renovating existing facilities, land acquisition, safety, and accessibility. Collaboration with GHMPO is recommended to develop a comprehensive system for facilities, as well as partnership with landowners and utilities to secure right of way easements for trail development.



HALL COUNTY PARKS FACILITIES MASTER PLAN (2019)

This plan outlines a 10-year vision for expanding parks, trails, and greenways to meet community needs through 2030. The plan emphasizes connectivity and access by creating new parks to address the gaps in parkland and greenspace. This plan also emphasizes multimodal connectivity and aligning with the Highlands to Islands Trail and regional mobility goals. Public input collected during the planning process indicated that trails and greenways were the most desired facility type for development and expansion. Coordinated investment in recreation infrastructure is highlighted as a key element of supporting health and connectivity in the county. Specific recommendations include:

- Completion of the Highlands to Islands Trail Development
- Development of a Rail-Trail plan to expand trail opportunities
- Coordination with landowners for utility right of way easements for trail development
- Development of trail facilities south of Winder Highway
- Preservation of greenspace between Mundy Mill Road and SR-13

STUDY PROCESS OVERVIEW

The main objective of this study is to identify a viable connection between UNG and McEver Road. The analysis incorporated stakeholder engagement and a comprehensive review of existing site conditions to inform the development of alignment alternatives. Each alternative was assessed using defined evaluation metrics addressing safety, connectivity, constructability, and implementation considerations. The study framework aligns with Hall County's adopted multimodal transportation policies and builds upon prior regional planning initiatives.

1

PROJECT INITIATION

The project kicked off with coordination between GHMPO staff and the study team to align on objectives, milestones, and stakeholders for the Highlands to Islands trail study. The study team reviewed key planning documents while conducting background research to continue building on existing efforts in Hall County to reflect regional priorities.

2

DATA COLLECTION AND EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

Working with GHMPO, the team analyzed existing infrastructure and connectivity conditions, land use, facilities access, and topographic considerations to develop a baseline understanding and mapping of the study area. The team also conducted a field visit to verify data and inventory access and barrier points. This data was used to develop the alternatives and recommendations.

3

STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

Ongoing coordination with key stakeholders was a focal point for this study to ensure that the recommended trail concept was aligned with the goals and needs of the community. The coordination strategy involved monthly meetings with key stakeholders to provide project updates and receive feedback on key deliverables.

4

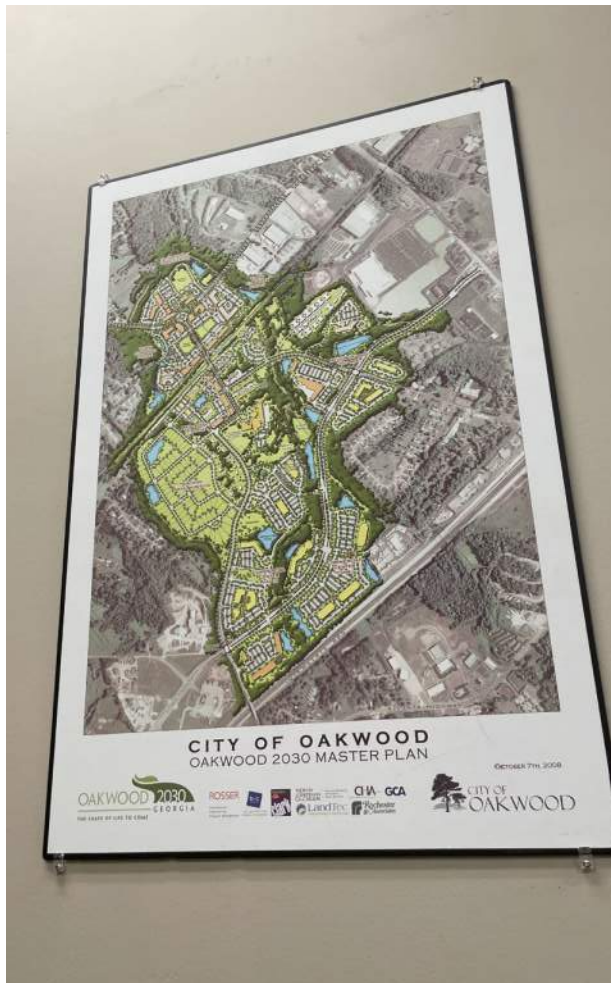
TRAIL STUDY DEVELOPMENT

This study is the final deliverable and includes the alignment alternatives and the preferred connectivity recommendation. It addresses the right of way availability, environmental conditions, and physical constraints of the preferred corridor. It also includes conceptual renderings and schematics for visualization. Additionally, planning-level cost estimates and an implementation framework guide has been developed to offer guidance for next steps.

STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION SUMMARY

Stakeholder outreach provided valuable insight into local priorities, constraints, and opportunities for filling this gap in the Highlands to Islands Trail system. The project team coordinated with the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization (GHMPO), Hall County, the University of North Georgia (UNG), and the cities of Gainesville, Oakwood and Flowery Branch through monthly check-ins and technical work sessions. Discussions with the stakeholders confirmed strong regional interest in expanding the trail network to enhance multimodal connectivity from UNG to Flowery Branch.

The collaborative discussions and field visits have established a clear path toward identifying preferred alternatives and pursuing funding partnerships to advance the next phase of trail planning and design. Stakeholder input directly informed the selection and development of preferred trail alignments. Final recommendations, which are outlined in section 4 and 5 of this report, reflect a shared commitment to safety, cost effectiveness, and accessibility to benefit the communities of Hall County.





Thurmon
Tanner Parkway
intersection



CHAPTER 2

STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF FIELD VISIT MEETINGS

1. UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA (UNG)

Discussions with UNG staff focused on aligning the trail recommendations with the university's property, coordination processes, and future growth considerations. They recently completed a Facilities Master Plan that emphasizes connecting the campus to the surrounding community and investing in multimodality. Property coordination would primarily be facilitated by the UNG Real Estate Foundation, which is the organization that manages university-owned property transactions. This operational structure offered a flexible alignment alternative compared to those that need to be approved by the state. SPLOST IX was identified as a potential funding source for trail development, which could be leveraged as a local match for federal or state funding programs. The future growth of UNG was also a topic of discussion, acknowledging that growth strategies will be focused on the Gainesville campus, where additional classroom space and potential housing are being evaluated. Overall, UNG supports a trail alignment that connects campus facilities safely to McEver Road, emphasizing visibility, community access, and multimodal mobility.

2. CITY OF OAKWOOD

A field meeting was held with the City of Oakwood to examine potential trail corridors and constraints related to railroad crossings and industrial development. A major constraint for this site is that Norfolk Southern currently prohibits trails within its right of way, which disqualifies Main Street as an option for alignment. As an alternative, a potential crossing along State Route 53 near Millside Parkway was identified as a more feasible option, providing 150–200 feet of width and less truck traffic than Main Street. It's important to note at this site that two industrial developments have recently been completed near the TT2 corridor, with limited sewer service and mostly private ownership. Additionally, a new elementary school on McEver Road presents an opportunity for school access via the trail but also increases the need for safe crossings and buffered segments. Coordination for aligning the trail would likely involve only four to five property owners, making ROW acquisition achievable though potentially costly.

3. CITY OF FLOWERY BRANCH

Coordination with Flowery Branch staff focused on the southern terminus of the proposed alignment and ongoing engagement with Norfolk Southern. Flowery Branch's real estate representative contacted Norfolk Southern to discuss potential coordination. The current trail extends from the railroad to Spout Springs Road, with long-term goals to connect to Radford Road and integrate into the regional trail system. Norfolk Southern has allocated \$2 million to Flowery Branch for crossing upgrades, creating potential synergies for trail safety improvements. The city expressed strong support for enhancing pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to downtown and nearby residential developments through the trail corridor.

4. HALL COUNTY

Coordination with Hall County focused on continuing the Highlands to Islands trail system and connecting the Chicopee Trail to the multiuse pathways along Friendship Road and Lanier Islands Parkway near Flowery Branch. The goal for the trail system for Hall County is to provide a continuous, off street trail connecting UNG, downtown Gainesville, downtown Oakwood, and downtown Flowery Branch.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- UNG: Supports a safe, visible trail connecting campus to McEver Road; coordination through the UNG Real Estate Foundation offers flexibility. SPLOST IX identified as a potential funding match; growth focused on Gainesville campus.
 - Oakwood: Main Street alignment infeasible due to Norfolk Southern restrictions; alternative route near SR 53/Millside Parkway identified. Trail coordination involves few property owners but may incur ROW costs.
 - Flowery Branch: Focused on southern trail terminus and coordination with Norfolk Southern. \$2M allocated for crossing upgrades; strong city support for enhancing pedestrian and bike connectivity.
 - Hall County: Focused on safe and accessible town interconnectivity.
-

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER MEETING

On October 14, 2025, the project team met with the stakeholder committee to review existing conditions, gathered stakeholder input, and identified preferred alternatives based on safety, connectivity, and cost feasibility. Attendees included representatives from Hall County, the University of North Georgia (UNG), the City of Oakwood, and the City of Flowery Branch to evaluate potential trail alignments for the UNG to Flowery Branch segment.

The five-mile study area was divided into four segments for evaluation and assessed using a decision matrix to guide alignment decisions. The four segments identified were:

- UNG to Oakwood
- Oakwood to Chamblee Road
- Chamblee Road to HF Reed Industrial Parkway
- HF Reed Industrial Parkway to Flowery Branch

DISCUSSION SUMMARY

Stakeholders were presented with multiple alignment options, which are illustrated in Chapter 4 of this study. Participants noted that GW1 (Mundy Mill) offered the safest crossing but had the highest cost, RT1 (Oakwood) provided the most direct route but required significant inter-agency coordination, and TT1 (Thurmon Tanner/Education Drive) supported future growth areas but poses a higher risk of intersection crash potential.

Pedestrian safety was established as a key priority to offer families and trail users with safe, comfortable, accessible transportation. Thurmon Tanner (TT1) was recognized as a cost-effective and implementable first phase that could be expounded upon for future recreational and connectivity needs.

IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

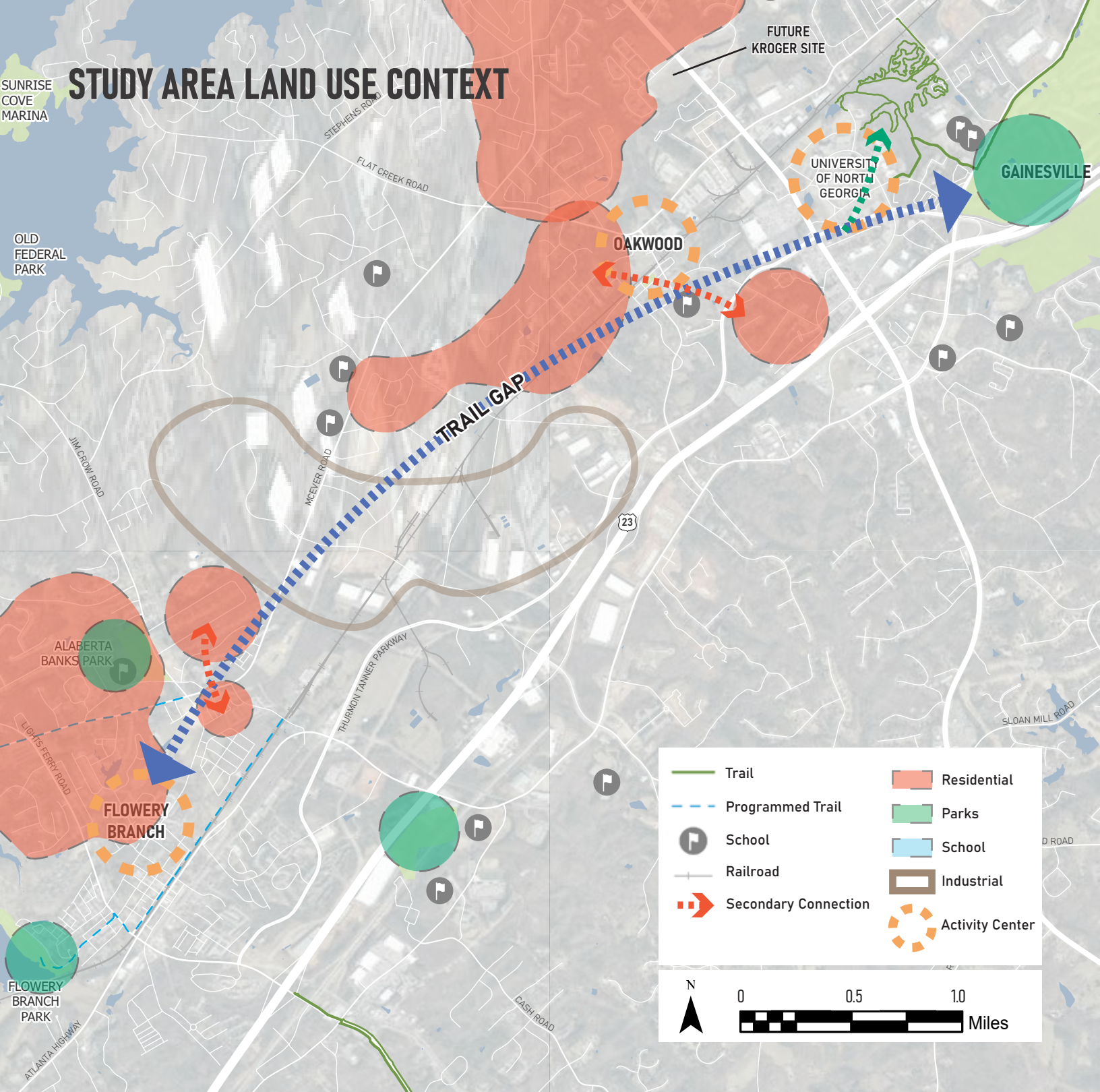
Active Transportation Program (ATP) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) are two potential funding sources for this phase of trail alignment because of bridge and infrastructure costs. The county expressed a preference for constructing a ramp or a free flow grade separated crossing to improve user safety and reduce maintenance costs.

This would be achieved through phased implementation, starting with the most feasible segments, eventually expanding to include shade, signage, and landscaping.



UNG Campus existing
sewer easement
trails.

CHAPTER 3
EXISTING CONDITIONS



The diagram illustrates some of the key land uses and facilities that would generate trail usage. Residential areas, industrial districts, community facilities, and significant parks are represented as broad influence zones that anchor the corridor. Town centers at each community provide focal points for activity, while surrounding parks and schools contribute recreational and civic destinations.

A potential trail or multimodal connection is depicted as a unifying spine extending from Flowery Branch to Gainesville. This connection links major population centers, employment areas, and recreational assets, establishing a continuous framework for enhanced mobility and wayfinding. By visually organizing these land-use elements, the diagram emphasizes how strategic connections between nodes can strengthen community access, support economic activity, and create a cohesive regional network.

STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

The study corridor for the Highlands to Islands Trail begins at the University of North Georgia's Gainesville Campus and extends approximately five miles south to the intersection of McEver Road and G.C. Crow Road. A planned widened sidepath originates at this intersection, with a potential future connection to downtown Flowery Branch. The corridor traverses the cities of Gainesville and Oakwood, providing a continuous link.

KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Within the study area, several key land use types and characteristics have been identified, including dense residential neighborhoods, large industrial zones, and areas of greenspace and recreation. The study seeks to strengthen connections between these destinations, enhancing overall continuity and accessibility across the corridor. Spanning the cities of Gainesville, Oakwood, and Flowery Branch, the area presents an opportunity to establish a continuous multi-use trail that could serve both recreational and transportation purposes between communities. By developing a central corridor, these distinct elements can be unified into a cohesive network.

The corridor is experiencing significant growth, with new grocery stores, recreational facilities, and housing developments emerging throughout. This wave of development offers a timely opportunity to integrate trail infrastructure that future projects can build around and benefit from. As new growth continues, expanding the active transportation network will be essential for long-term connectivity and mobility.

Two primary roadways—McEver Road and Thurmon Tanner Parkway—currently provide north-south connections through the study area from the University of North Georgia (UNG) to Flowery Branch. Thurmon Tanner offers a wide right of way that could accommodate sidepaths; however, its industrial setting and limited shade make it less appealing for casual trail use, and it lacks strong connections to nearby destinations.

McEver Road provides a more community-oriented route, linking residential areas and schools with some available right of way for trail development. While there are existing utilities and high traffic volumes to consider, the corridor remains a feasible option for an on-road or sidepath-type facility, though it would not function as a separated greenway.

A third potential alignment follows the existing railroad corridor. This centralized route would directly connect UNG to downtown Oakwood and extend into downtown Flowery Branch, where a planned trail network already exists—offering a strong opportunity for regional linkage. Several connecting road segments near the railroad could utilize nearby roadway rights-of-way, though some topographical and visibility constraints would need to be addressed. Ideally, the trail would follow the railroad right of way continuously from UNG to Flowery Branch. Portions of this alignment are owned by the City of Oakwood and could be readily utilized, and Flowery Branch has received positive feedback regarding use of the railroad right of way up to Radford Road. Coordination with the railroad company will be essential to advance this alignment, though the process may require significant time and coordination.



OPPORTUNITY: CONNECTIONS TO KEY DOWNTOWNS AND ACTIVITY CENTERS



The study area includes multiple downtowns and activity centers that were identified as key destinations for community members. Major destinations that should be considered for connectivity along the trail include UNG, downtown Oakwood, and downtown Flowery Branch. Linking these areas to nearby neighborhoods gives community members a safe way to be active and access local businesses and recreational assets.

CHALLENGE: NAVIGATING BUSY ROADWAYS



Several major roadways make north-south connections through the study area corridor, providing access to UNG, Oakwood, and Flowery Branch. These roads carry heavy vehicle traffic with relatively high speeds. In addition, limited existing active transportation facilities make walking and biking on these roads difficult and potentially dangerous. Significant safety features should be considered along trail routes that navigate these large roadways.

RAILROAD: OPPORTUNITY OR BARRIER?

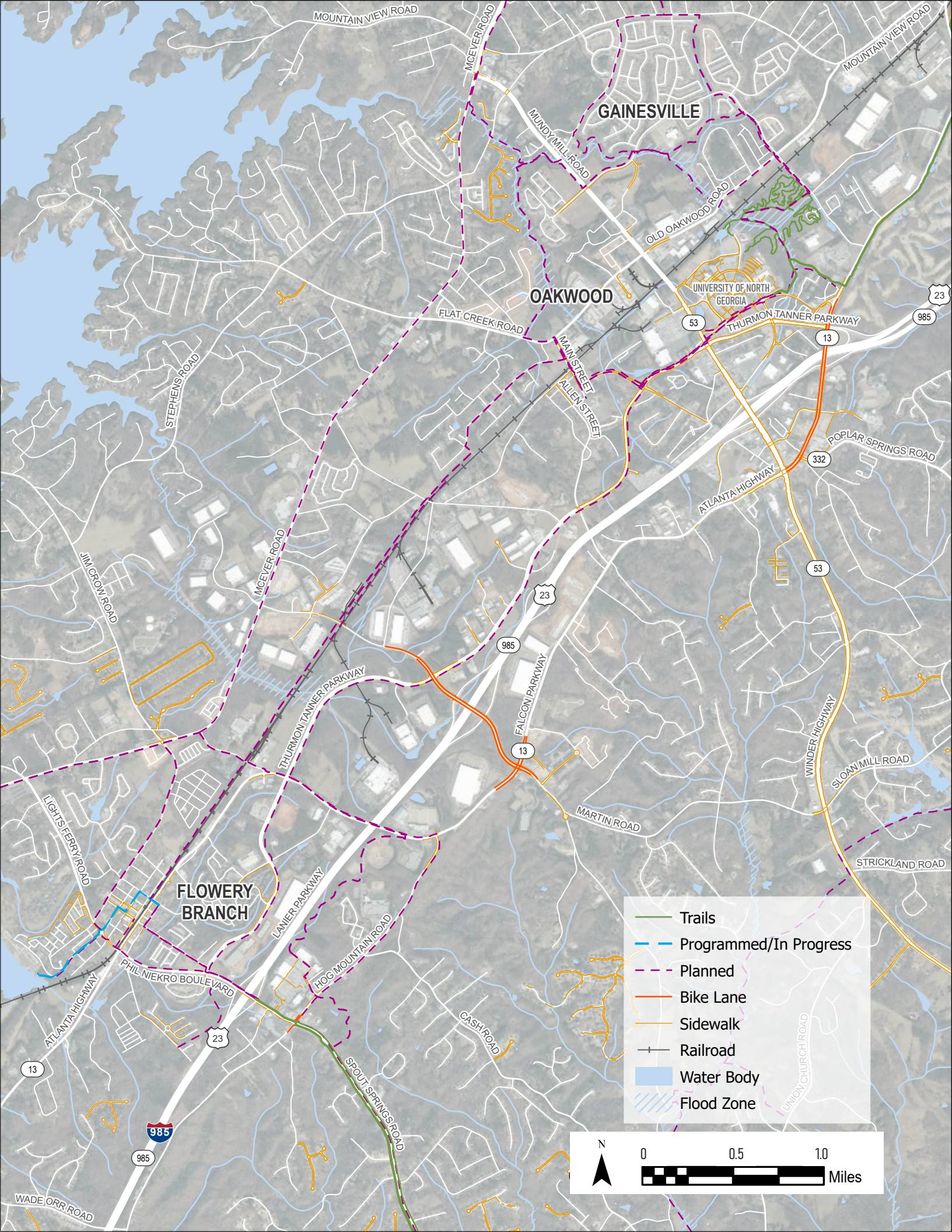
Norfolk Southern operates a rail line within the study area, connecting industrial uses within Hall County and throughout this corridor to the regional freight network. As a major rail company, Norfolk Southern owns a significant amount of land in this specific corridor as a buffer to the rail line. As the rail line virtually bisects the study area, it can be seen as both an opportunity and a barrier. Successful coordination with Norfolk Southern can present an opportunity for trail use along the rail line. On the other hand, existing rail crossings within the study area are fairly limited and may also require coordination with Norfolk Southern to implement safety improvements at potential trail crossings.



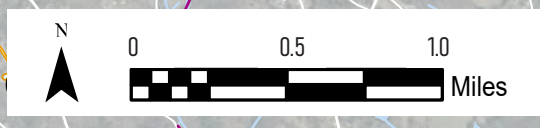
MIXING LAND USES

There are a number of land uses that can be found throughout the study area. Residential neighborhoods, civic spaces and parks, industrial operations, and commercial businesses are scattered along the corridor. The potential to connect these land uses with a trail facility presents an opportunity to improve access to destinations that residents in the area likely travel to each day, whether for employment opportunities, recreational spaces, or errands.





- Trails
- Programmed/In Progress
- Planned
- Bike Lane
- Sidewalk
- Railroad
- Water Body
- Flood Zone



EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Between UNG and McEver Road, the trail and sidewalk network is only partly connected. The Tumbling Creek Trail near UNG has helped improve access around campus. Past that point, though, sidewalks and paths become inconsistent, with gaps, heavy traffic, and industrial areas making it harder and less safe to walk or bike. The railroad right of way also limits where a trail can go. There are many trail systems in planning stages from Hall County as well as the GHMPO.

CONNECTIVITY TO PLANS AND PROJECTS

In 2019 the GHMPO did the South Hall Trail Study to explore potential alignments from Lee Gilmer Memorial Airport connecting to the sidepath along Friendship Road. The goals for this study were to provide access to recreational trails, provide connections to high demand areas, as well as to improve long distance cycling through the county and region. The UNG Campus Master Plan further supports these goals by identifying Tumbling Creek as a key regional trail corridor and recommending strengthened pedestrian and trail connections between UNG, Oakwood, and surrounding communities.

The South Hall Trail Study identified the preferred alignment as a sidepath on Thurmon Tanner, coming to an end in Flowery Branch with some trail spurs along the way. Instead of using the railroad right of way, it connects to the Tumbling Creek Trail which then connects to Thurmon Tanner. There are spurs recommended for Oakwood as well as Flowery Branch.

An upcoming transportation project at McEver Road and GC Crow Road presents a key connection point for this study. This project includes widening the road and adding a sidepath which extends down McEver Road toward the marina, as well as down Gainesville Street into Flowery Branch.

The Flowery Branch Downtown Trail is already in design and beginning stages of construction. Phase 1 uses a sidepath on Mitchell Street beginning at the marina, heading north to Spring Street, turning east and ending at Mulberry Street. Phase 2 will extend from Mulberry street south to Main Street, and east to connect to Thurmon Tanner Parkway.

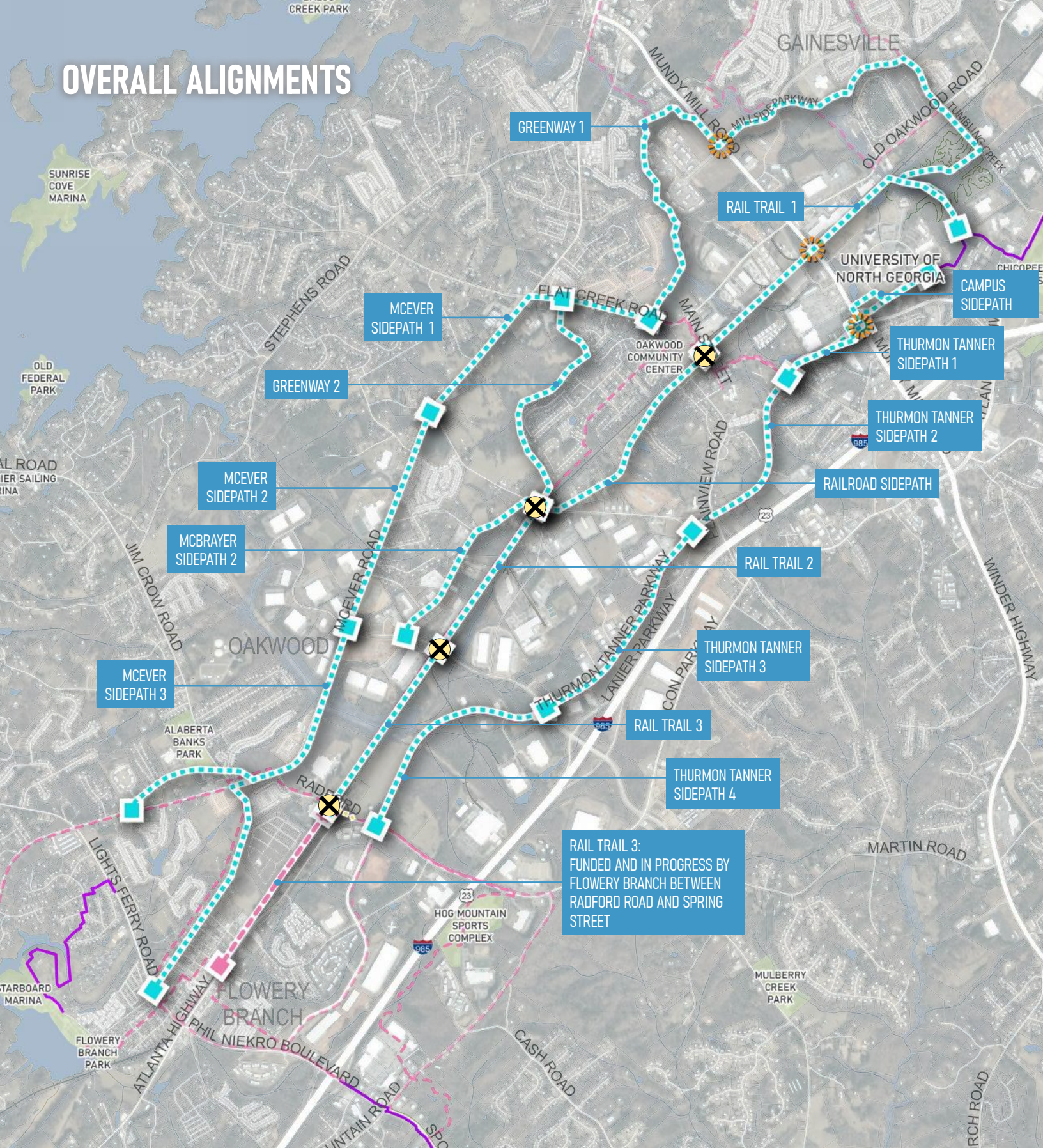









Golf cart zone ending sign on a main road.


CHAPTER 4
ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS


OVERALL ALIGNMENTS



RAIL TRAIL 3: FUNDED AND IN PROGRESS BY FLOWERY BRANCH BETWEEN RADFORD ROAD AND SPRING STREET

-  SR 53 CROSSING OPTIONS
-  RAILROAD CROSSINGS
-  UNPAVED TRAILS
-  SEWER EASEMENT
-  FLOODWAY

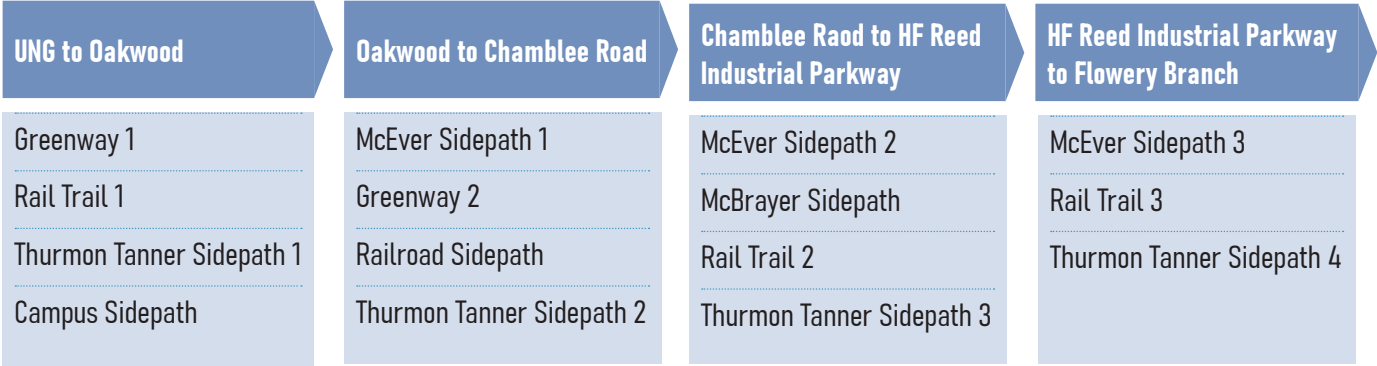
- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
- Status
-  Complete
 -  Previously Planned

- SEGMENTS
-  Segment Options



SECTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

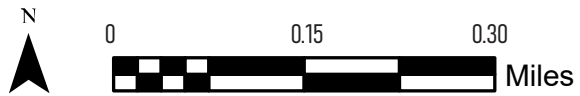
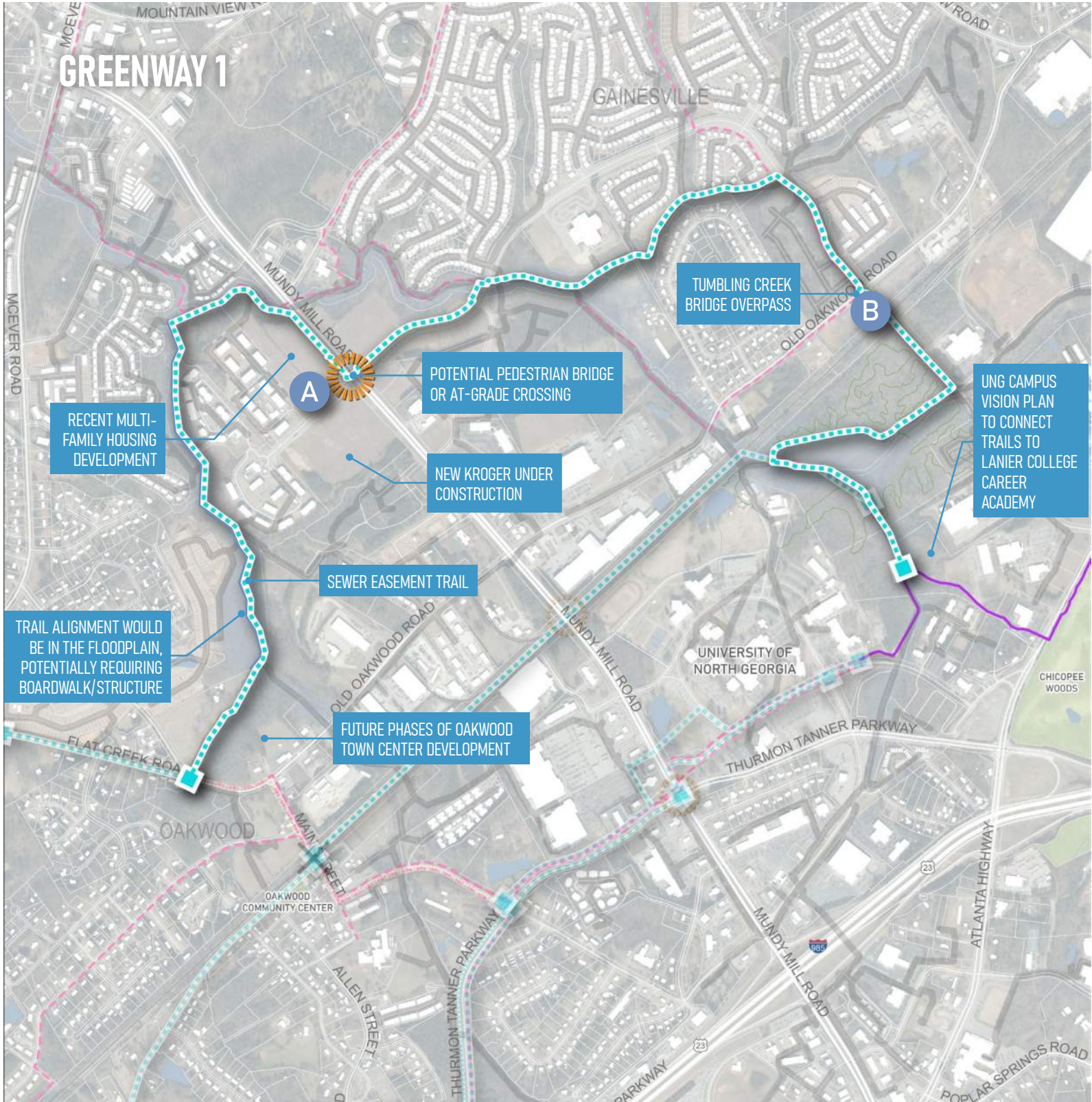
The following pages provide an overview of each segment, including a map enlargement, description, pros/cons, and a decision matrix. The alignments are organized into the following sections:



For each alignment alternative on the following pages, there is a decision matrix that compares the segment to the others in the same section. The decision criteria and general parameters are described in the table below.

	<input type="radio"/> Neutral	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Better	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Best
Directness	greater distance, less direct route, multiple crossings	medium distance, limited street and intersection crossings	the shortest, most straightforward path with the fewest deviations or stops
Safety	highest crash risk exposure for trail users	medium crash risk exposure for trail users	lowest crash risk exposure for trail users
Environmental	relatively high impact to environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, floodplains) and undeveloped land	some impact to environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, floodplains) and undeveloped land	relatively low impact to environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, floodplains) and undeveloped land
Cost-Effective	higher cost alternative	middle-cost alternative	lowest cost alternative
Timeline	longest expected timeframe, due to minimal coordination with stakeholders and property owners	middle expected timeframe, due to minimal coordination with stakeholders and property owners	shortest expected timeframe, due to minimal coordination with stakeholders and property owners
Access	access to destinations requires a relatively high amount of out of direction travel	access to destinations requires minimal out of direction travel	provides direct access to many key origins and destinations
Coordination	requires coordination with and cooperation from several key stakeholders	requires coordination with and cooperation from some key stakeholders	requires coordination with and cooperation from few key stakeholders

GREENWAY 1



- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| RAILROAD CROSSINGS | HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK | SEGMENTS |
| UNPAVED TRAILS | Status | Segment Options |
| SEWER EASEMENT | Complete | Connections |
| FLOODWAY | Previously Planned | |

UNG TO OAKWOOD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Greenway 1 4.2 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment connects from the end of the existing Highlands to Islands Trail through UNG’s campus to Tumbling Creek Road. It crosses the railroad via the existing 10’ path on the new Tumbling Creek Road bridge. It continues on to a sewer easement near a densely populated neighborhood. It connects to SR 53 / Mundy Mill Road near the new Kroger site. It could cross SR 53 / Mundy Mill Road either at-grade with enhancements or via a new path bridge. It continues south through more residential areas via the sewer easement to connect to Flat Creek Road.

PROS

- Utilizes existing 10’ path on Tumbling Creek Bridge to cross railroad
- Connects to large neighborhoods and many residents
- Connects to new Kroger
- Crosses SR 53 / Mundy Mill Road where it has fewer travel lanes at or near Millside Parkway

CONS

- Cost would be considerably higher than Thurmon Tanner or the Railroad due to circuitous route and boardwalk structure requirements in the floodplain
- Alignment in environmentally sensitive areas
- Would require connection to Oakwood via Main Street
- Path bridge would require intensive and expensive infrastructure



The trail could cross SR-53 / Mundy Mill Road at Millside Parkway, either at-grade with intersection enhancements, or via a new path bridge to the west of the intersection.

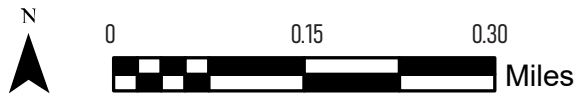
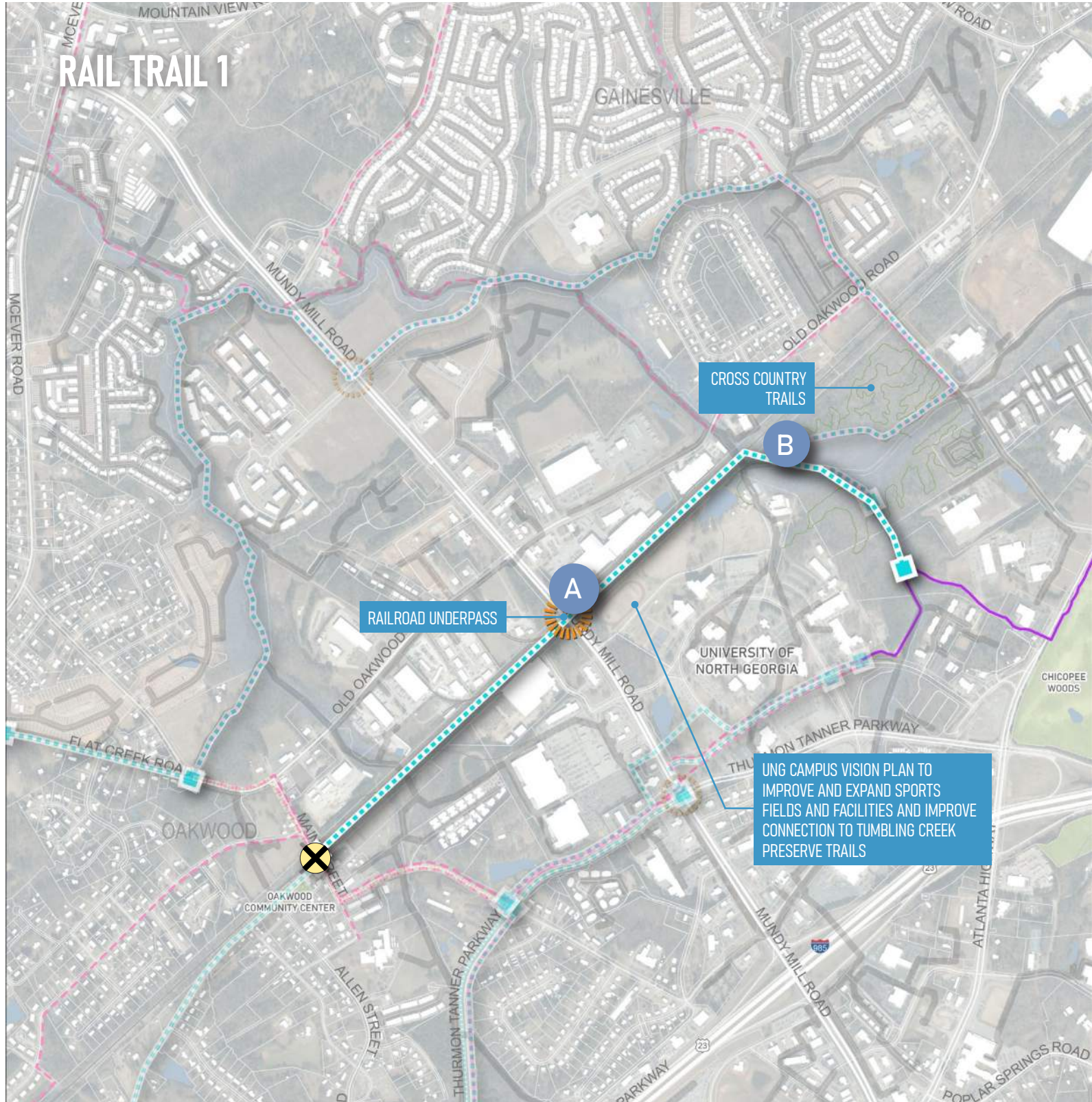


The Tumbling Creek Road bridge (over the railroad) was recently replaced, and was built with a 10’ sidewalk which can serve as a link for the Highlands to Islands trail system.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
Greenway 1	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rail Trail 1	●	●	●	○	○	●	○
Thurmon Sidepath 1	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
Campus Sidepath	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

RAIL TRAIL 1



- | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| RAILROAD CROSSINGS | HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK | SEGMENTS |
| UNPAVED TRAILS | Status | Segment Options |
| SEWER EASEMENT | Complete | Previously Planned |
| FLOODWAY | Connections | |

UNG TO OAKWOOD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Rail Trail 1 1.8 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment connects from the end of the existing Highlands to Islands Trail through UNG’s campus to the railroad right of way. It ties into the campus cross country trails and utilizes the railroad corridor underpass to cross beneath SR 53. It continues to cross through to some new high density residential developments and it ends on Main Street near the Oakwood Community Center.

PROS

- Most direct connection between UNG and Downtown Oakwood
- Utilizes existing underpass to cross SR 53, avoiding at-grade crossing

CONS

- Requires approval and coordination from Norfolk Southern which can take a long time and is not guaranteed
- May require coordination/easement from adjacent property owners



The trail could be raised into the slope on the other side of the bridge piers if the railroad gives permission to use their right of way.

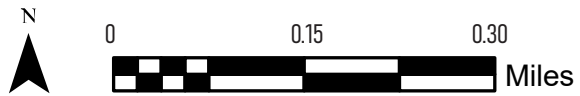
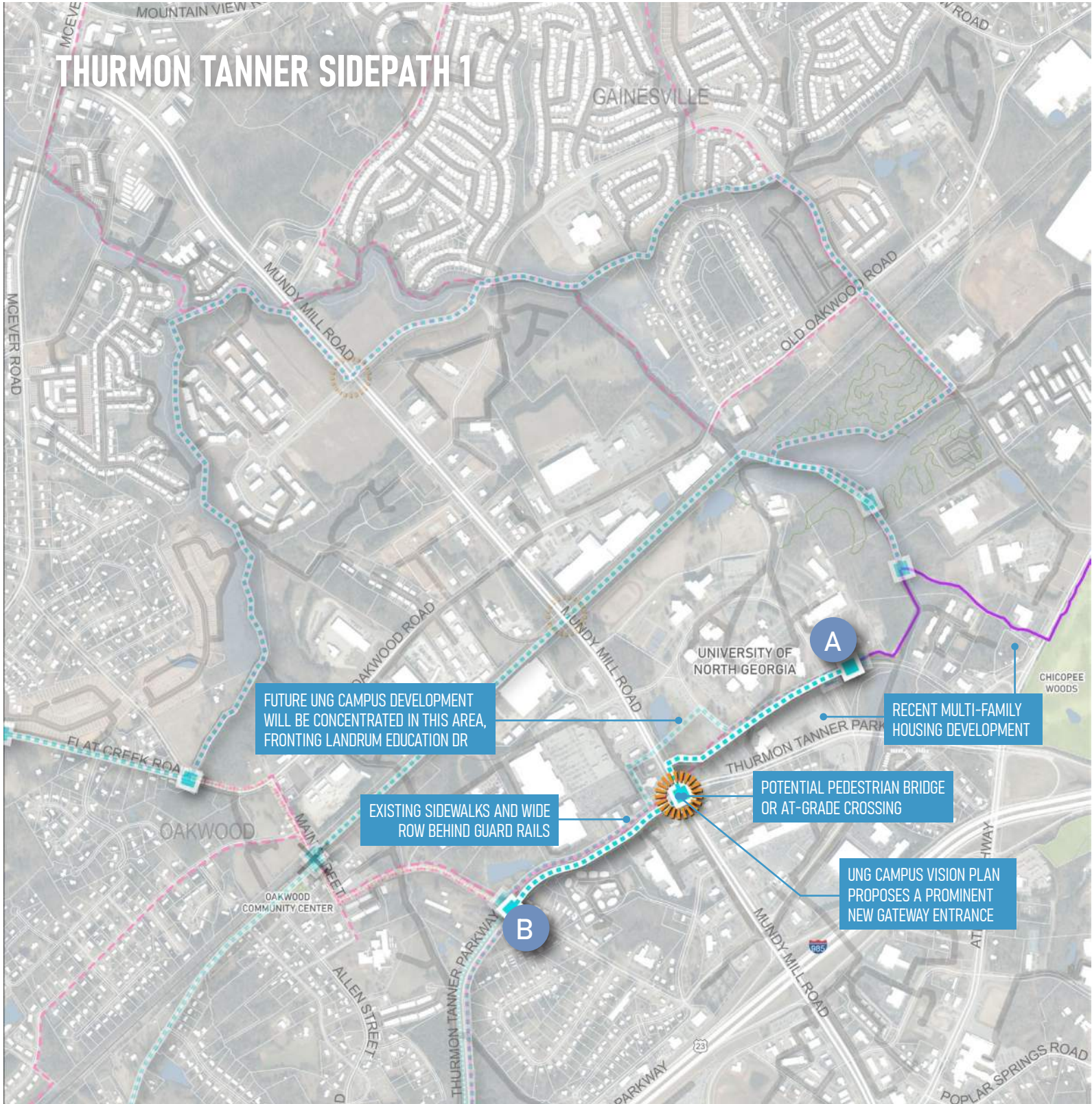










There is an existing cross country trail system on the UNG campus that leads directly to the railroad tracks.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
Greenway 1	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rail Trail 1	●	●	●	○	○	●	○
Thurmon Sidepath 1	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
Campus Sidepath	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

THURMON TANNER SIDEPATH 1



-  RAILROAD CROSSINGS
-  UNPAVED TRAILS
-  SEWER EASEMENT
-  FLOODWAY
- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status
 -  Complete
 -  Previously Planned
- SEGMENTS
 -  Segment Options
 -  Connections

UNG TO OAKWOOD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 1 0.9 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment connects from the end of the existing Highlands to Islands Trail through UNG’s campus to the intersection of Thurmon Tanner Parkway and SR 53 by the shopping center. It could cross SR 53 / Thurmon Tanner Parkway either at-grade with enhancements or via a new path bridge. It would connect to Downtown Oakwood via Oakwood Road. There are existing sidewalks that could be widened to accommodate the trail.

The major benefit of this alignment is that it utilizes wide road right of way, so there would be less property acquisition or coordination required. It also connects to the area where UNG anticipates its future growth to be concentrated, along Landrum Education Dr.

PROS

- Existing sidewalks with curb and gutter
- Wide right of way, plenty of space to put in a path

CONS

- Crosses SR 53 at its busiest point. Separated grade crossing would require substantial ramps to meet ADA requirements
- Busy road with a lot of traffic
- Thurmon Tanner Parkway lacks “destination trail” character, with minimal shade and destinations
- Would require spur connection to downtown Oakwood via Oakwood Road



The trail crosses SR 53 at the busiest intersection. A separated grade crossing would require substantial ADA improvements.

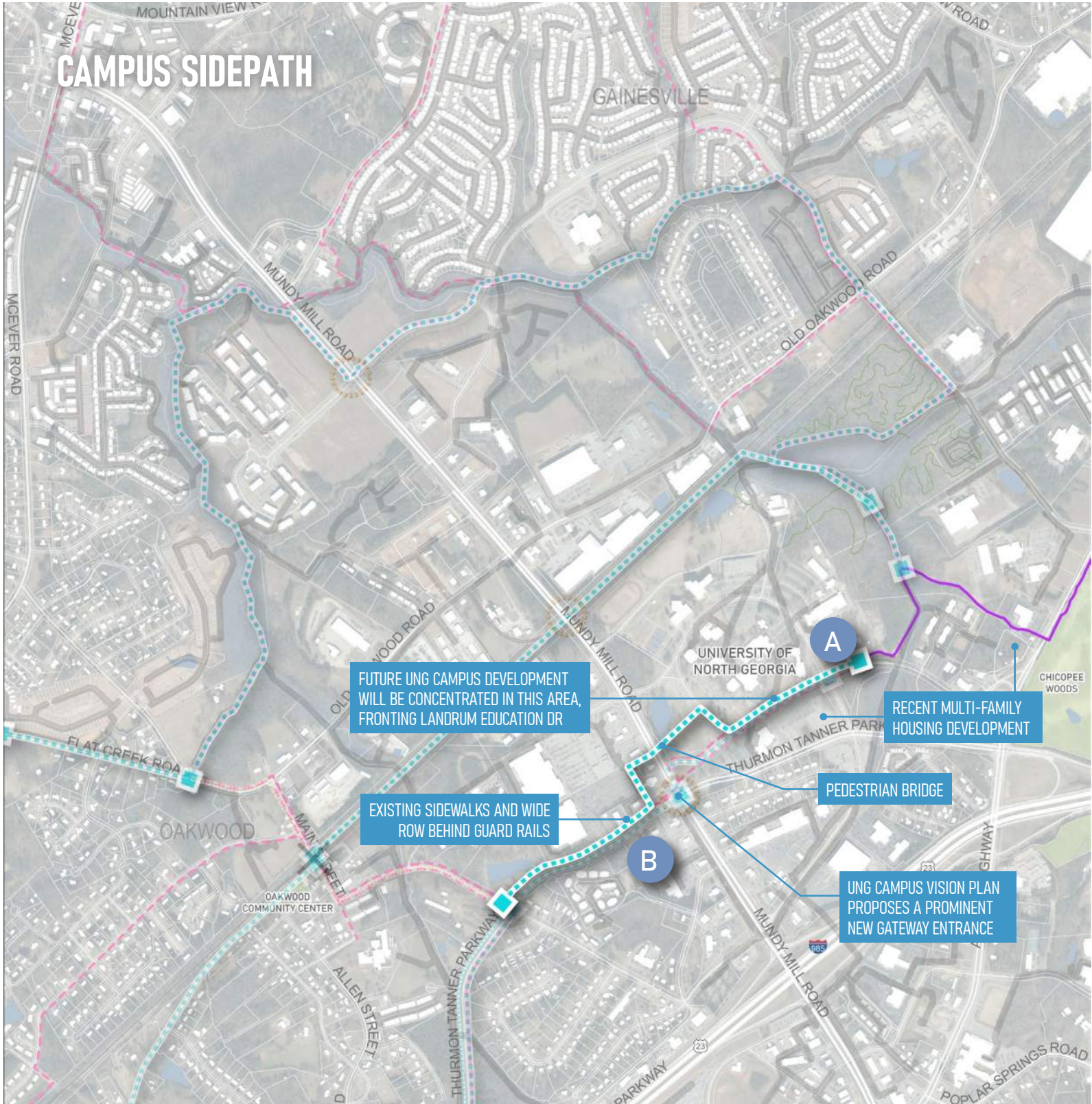


The trail could cross the Thurmon Tanner intersection at Oakwood Road to connect to the continuous sidewalk or turn with no crossing to stay on the north side of the street.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
Greenway 1	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rail Trail 1	●	●	●	○	○	●	○
Thurmon Sidepath 1	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
Campus Sidepath	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

CAMPUS SIDEPATH



FUTURE UNG CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT WILL BE CONCENTRATED IN THIS AREA, FRONTING LANDRUM EDUCATION DR

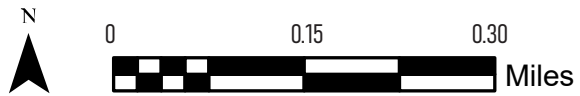
EXISTING SIDEWALKS AND WIDE ROW BEHIND GUARD RAILS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA

RECENT MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

UNG CAMPUS VISION PLAN PROPOSES A PROMINENT NEW GATEWAY ENTRANCE



UNG TO OAKWOOD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Campus Sidepath 1 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment connects from the end of the existing Highlands to Islands Trail through UNG’s campus along Landrum Education Center, turns onto Campus Drive, and cuts through the undeveloped lot to cross SR 53 as a raised pedestrian bridge. The trail goes through between the Wendy’s and the New Lucky Crab House, and turns behind the Merchants Walk Shopping Center to transition back to sidepath on Thurmon Tanner Parkway until Oakwood Road.

PROS

- Campus connection
- Existing sidewalks with curb and gutter
- Wide right of way, plenty of space to put in a path
- Large portion of the route uses Gainesville-Hall County Property

CONS

- Crosses SR 53 at its busiest point. Separated grade crossing would require substantial ramps to meet ADA requirements
- Busy road with a lot of traffic
- Thurmon Tanner Parkway lacks “destination trail” character, with minimal shade and destinations



The trail passes a dense parking area through campus along Landrum Education Drive.

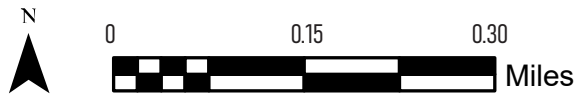
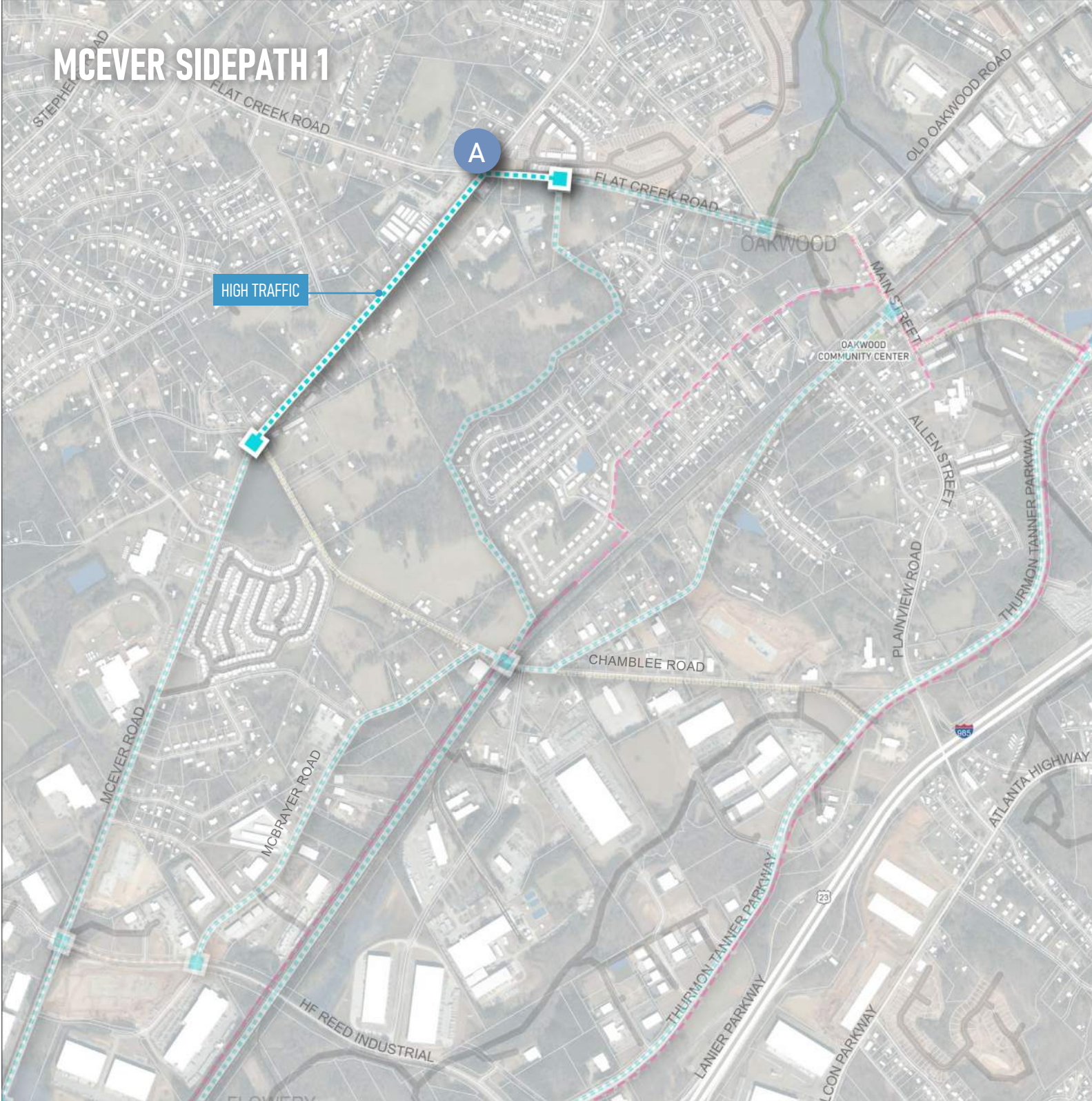






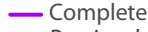

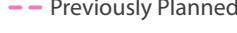

The trail spits out from behind the shopping center onto Thurmon Tanner Parkway next to the Captain D’s driveway.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
Greenway 1	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rail Trail 1	●	●	●	○	○	●	○
Thurmon Sidepath 1	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
Campus Sidepath	●	●	●	○	●	●	●

● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

MCEVER SIDEPATH 1



- | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
|  RAILROAD CROSSINGS |  UNPAVED TRAILS |  SEWER EASEMENT |  FLOODWAY | HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
Status | SEGMENTS |
| | | | |  Complete |  Segment Options |
| | | | |  Previously Planned |  Connections |

OAKWOOD TO CHAMBLEE ROAD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

McEver Sidepath 1 0.9 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment begins on Flat Creek Road, and turns south on McEver Road. It runs along McEver Road to Chamblee Road. Both are two-lane roads.

On Flat Creek Road, there is roughly 25-30 feet of ROW available for sidepath on either side, but some grading would be required regardless of which side the sidepath is on. There is enough space to route the trail around existing utility poles.

McEver Road traffic counts are about 13,000 vehicles/day. Available ROW on either side of the street ranges from 10-30 feet. Both sides are relatively flat and have space to work around existing utility poles.

PROS

- Minimal ROW acquisition required
- No major utility barriers
- Could align trail construction with planned roundabout at McEver Road and Flat Creek Road

CONS

- More industrial character
- Exposure to traffic
- Less direct connectivity to neighborhoods and destinations

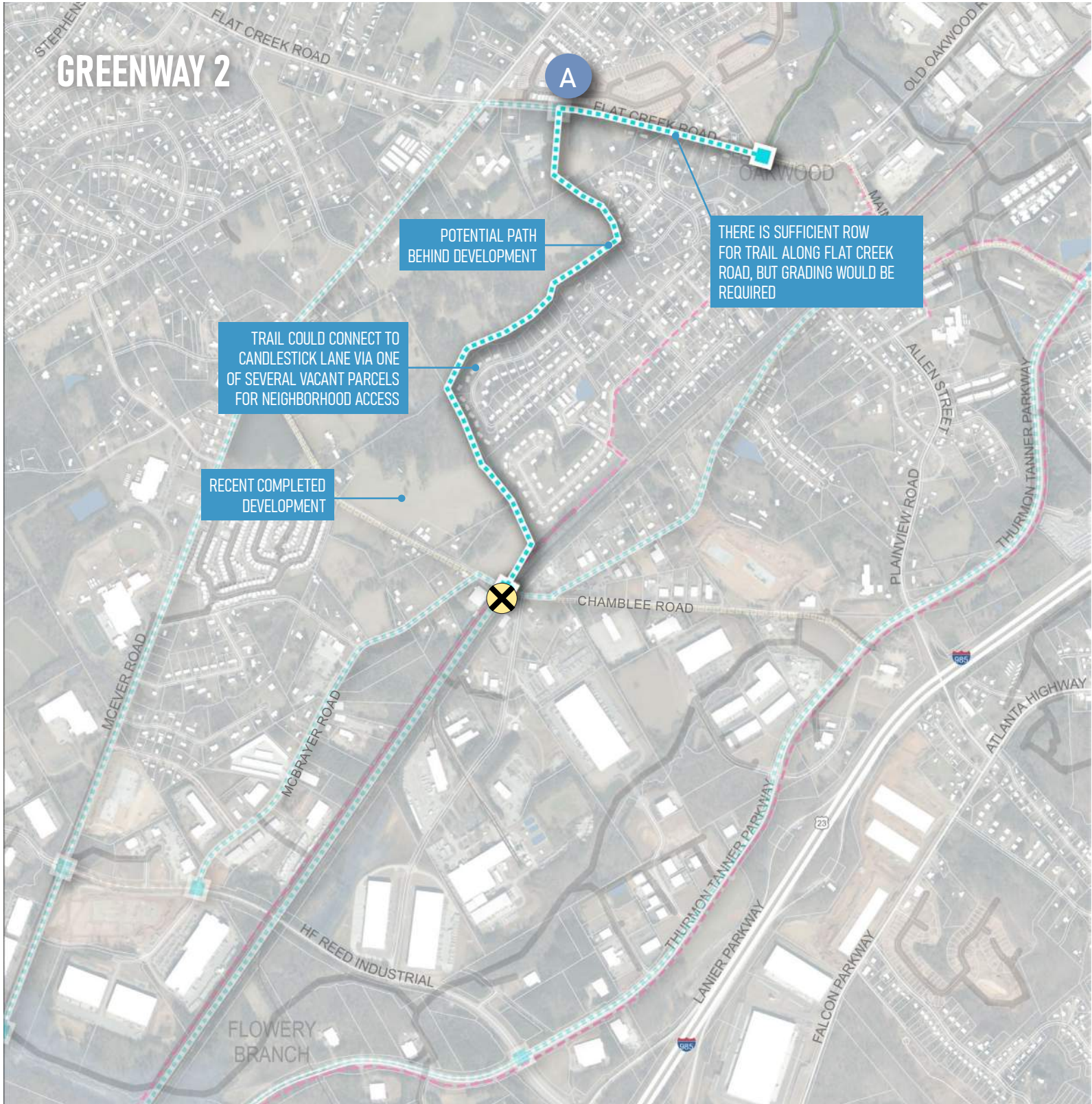


The trail would use the intersection of McEver Road and Flat Creek Road to continue south on McEver Road. The trail could align with the planned roundabout.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 1	○	○	●	○	●	○	●
Greenway 2	●	●	○	○	○	●	○
Railroad Sidepath	●	○	●	○	●	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 2	○	○	●	○	●	○	●

● BEST ○ BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

GREENWAY 2

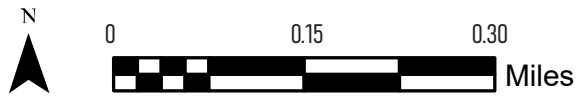


POTENTIAL PATH
BEHIND DEVELOPMENT

THERE IS SUFFICIENT ROW
FOR TRAIL ALONG FLAT CREEK
ROAD, BUT GRADING WOULD BE
REQUIRED

TRAIL COULD CONNECT TO
CANDLESTICK LANE VIA ONE
OF SEVERAL VACANT PARCELS
FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESS

RECENT COMPLETED
DEVELOPMENT



- RAILROAD CROSSINGS
- UNPAVED TRAILS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- FLOODWAY

- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
Status
- Complete
 - Previously Planned

- SEGMENTS
- Segment Options
 - Connections

OAKWOOD TO CHAMBLEE ROAD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Greenway 2 1.7 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment connects from Flat Creek Road to Chamblee Road using the existing driveway off Flat Creek Road then would cut behind the housing development. This segment would require purchasing property and/or multiple easements. This option would provide more of “greenway” character separated from road traffic.

PROS

- True greenway away from the road and vehicle traffic
- Direct access for large residential community
- Relatively few property owners

CONS

- Requires property acquisition or easements
- May generate some opposition from property owners on the trail-side of Candlestick Lane

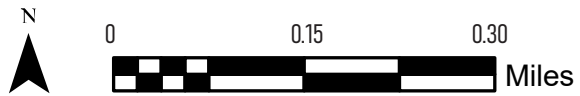


The trail would follow as a sidepath on Flat Creek Road and turn on to the existing driveway behind the housing development to be an off-road greenway.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 1	○	○	●	○	●	○	●
Greenway 2	●	●	○	○	○	●	○
Railroad Sidepath	●	○	●	○	●	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 2	○	○	●	○	●	○	●

● BEST ○ BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

RAILROAD SIDEPATH



- | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|----------------|--|----------------|---|----------|
| | RAILROAD CROSSINGS | | UNPAVED TRAILS | | SEWER EASEMENT | | FLOODWAY |
| | | | | HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status
Complete
Previously Planned | | SEGMENTS
Segment Options
Connections | |

OAKWOOD TO CHAMBLEE ROAD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Railroad Sidepath 1.2 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment runs along Railroad Street from Main Street near the Oakwood Community Center to Chamblee Road. This portion would be a sidepath along the road. There are some sections of 10-foot sidepath existing on the east side of Railroad Street (near the Community Center and further south).

There are some pinch points where there is less than 10-feet of available ROW, and acquisition would be required.

PROS

- Central/more direct route
- Light traffic
- Green surroundings

CONS

- Limited ROW
- Two railroad crossings, need coordination with Norfolk Southern
- Industrial surroundings



The portion of Railroad Street next to the Oakwood Community Center is limited due to Norfolk Southern owning part of the road as their ROW.

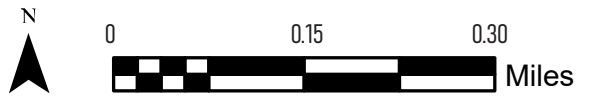
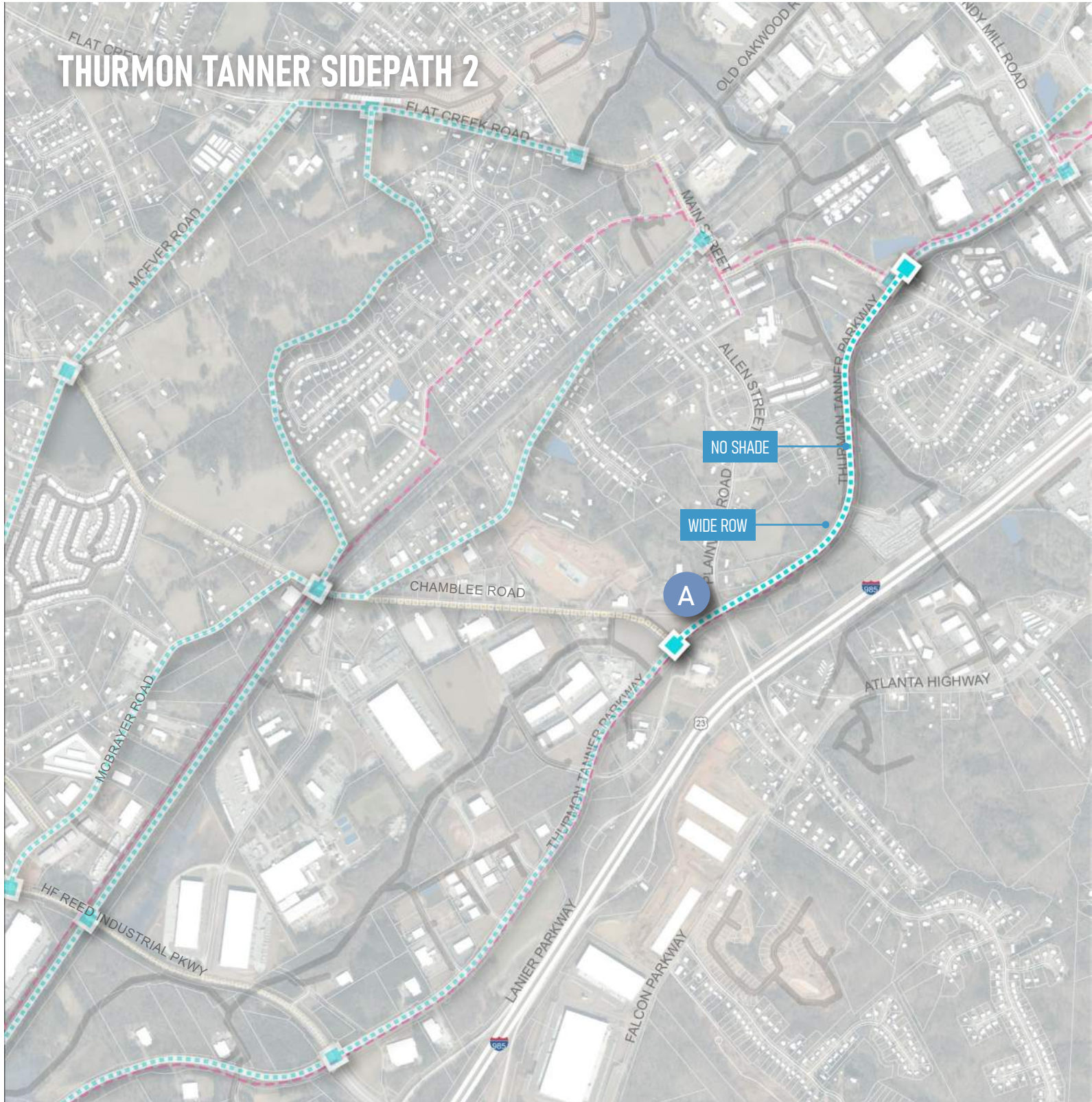






There are some existing sidewalks on this portion and there is available right of way to complete the trail.



	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 1	○	○	●	○	●	○	●
Greenway 2	●	●	○	○	○	●	○
Railroad Sidepath	●	○	●	○	●	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 2	○	○	●	○	●	○	●



● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

THURMON TANNER SIDEPATH 2



-  RAILROAD CROSSINGS
-  UNPAVED TRAILS
-  SEWER EASEMENT
-  FLOODWAY

- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status
-  Complete
 -  Previously Planned

- SEGMENTS
-  Segment Options
 -  Connections

OAKWOOD TO CHAMBLEE ROAD

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 2 0.9 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment utilizes Thurmon Tanner Parkway from Oakwood Road to Chamblee Road. Thurmon Tanner Parkway has wide, available right of way and would be relatively easy to construct sidepath along the road, but its current character lacks the “destination trail” setting that is desired by the broader Highlands to Island Trail system. Thurmon Tanner Parkway is a multi-lane road with limited shade and adjacent development.

There is existing 5-foot sidewalk existing along a lot of this road as well as some nice streetscaping. There are some sections that would require grading and guardrail relocation to widen existing sidewalk.

PROS

- Existing sidewalk could be widened relatively easily
- Wide ROW
- Would not need to acquire any property

CONS

- Multi-lane roadway
- Not the most direct
- Does not connect to Oakwood
- Would need to move existing light poles and guardrails to accommodate widening the sidewalk

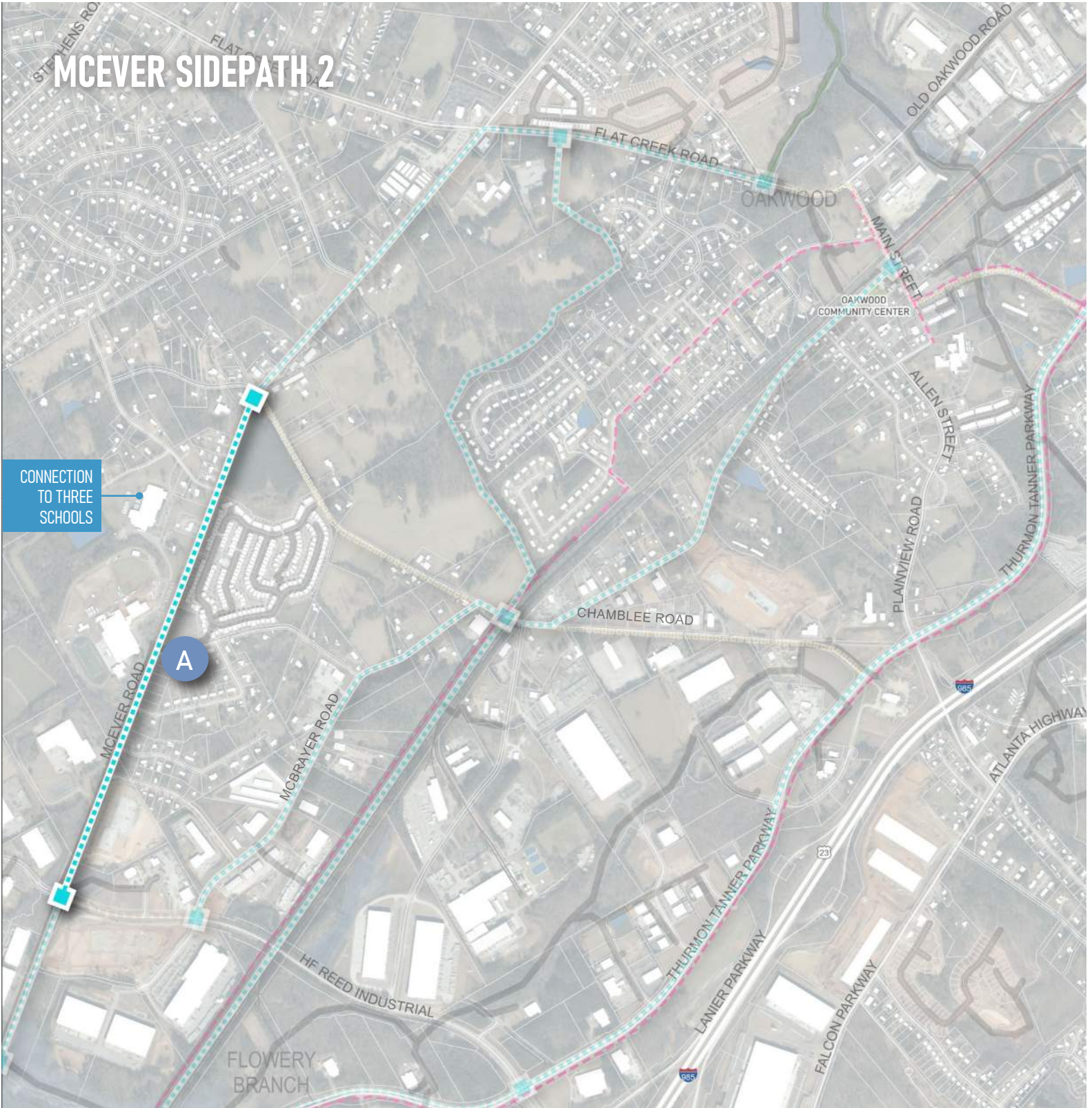


The trail could fit within the ROW going through the existing streetscaped area which provides some shade.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 1	○	●	●	●	●	○	●
Greenway 2	●	●	●	○	●	●	○
Railroad Sidepath	●	○	●	●	●	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 2	○	○	●	●	●	○	●

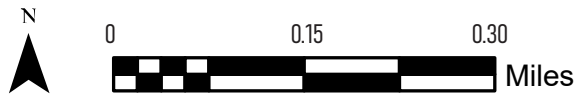
● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

MCEVER SIDEPATH 2



CONNECTION TO THREE SCHOOLS

A



- RAILROAD CROSSINGS
- UNPAVED TRAILS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- FLOODWAY

- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status
- Complete
 - Previously Planned

- SEGMENTS
- Segment Options
 - Connections

CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

McEver Sidepath 2 1.1 MI

DESCRIPTION

This sidepath follows McEver Road from Chamblee Road to HF Reed Industrial Parkway. McEver Road is one lane in each direction through this stretch. It runs provides direct access to West Hall Middle and High schools.

For the most part, there is 10-30 feet of available space on either side of McEver Road. There is one pinch point on the east side where a small amount of right of way coordination would be required.

PROS

- Direct connection to three schools, offering safer pathways for children going to and from school
- Available ROW
- Relatively low cost

CONS

- Exposure to traffic
- Does not provide the off-street "destination trail" that is desired with the broader Highlands to Islands system
- Utility impacts on either side of the road

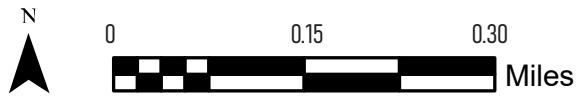
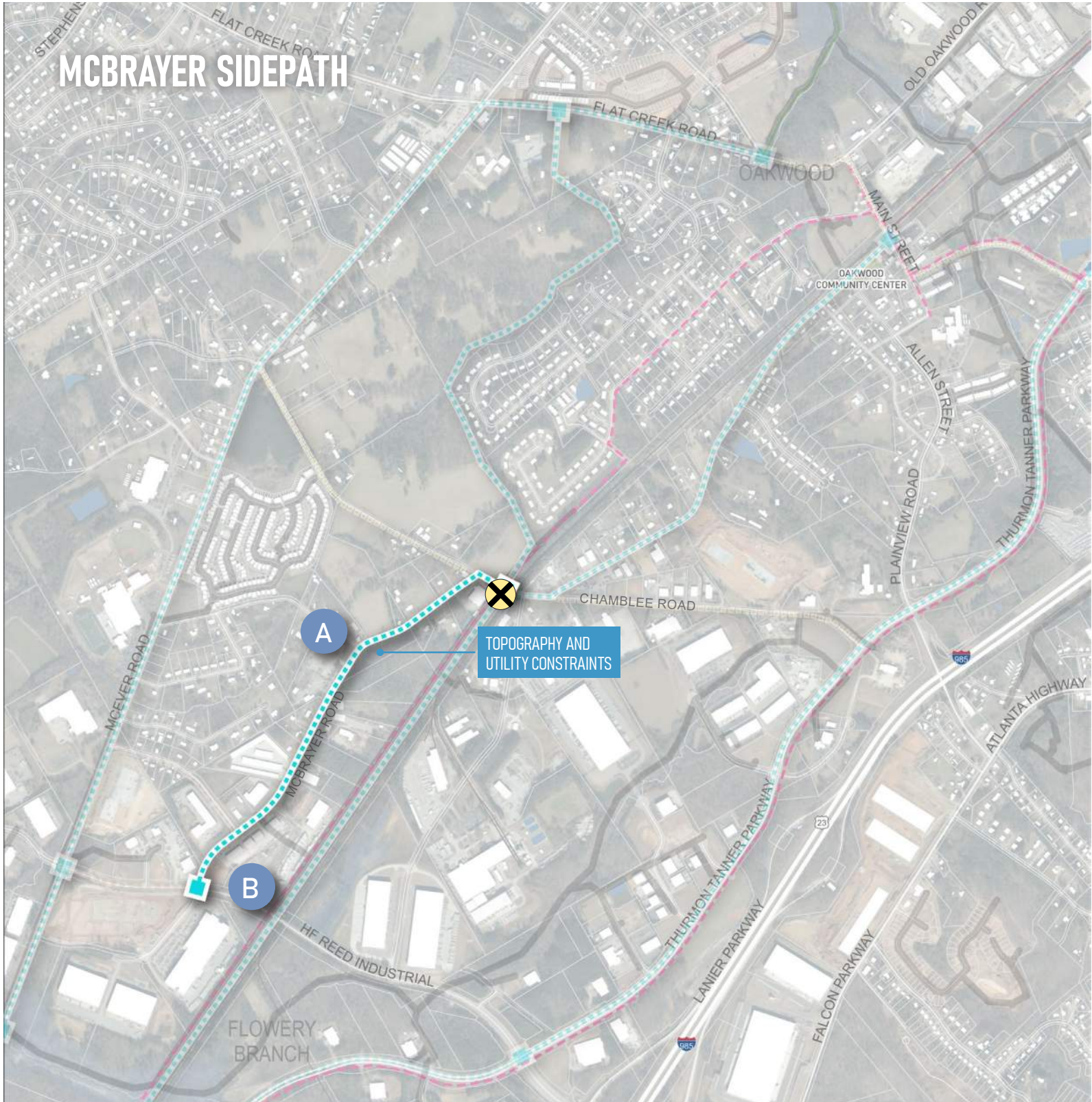


The sidepath would connect to three schools along McEver Road offering safer routes for children going to school.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 2	○	◐	●	◐	●	●	●
McBrayer Sidepath	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐
Rail Trail 2	●	●	●	○	◐	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 3	◐	○	●	◐	○	◐	●

● BEST ◐ BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

MCBRAYER SIDEPATH



- | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|----------|---|-----------------|
| RAILROAD CROSSINGS | UNPAVED TRAILS | SEWER EASEMENT | FLOODWAY | HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
Status | SEGMENTS |
| | | | | Complete | Segment Options |
| | | | | Previously Planned | Connections |

CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

McBrayer Sidepath 1.0 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment runs along McBrayer Road from Chamblee Road to HF Reed Industrial Parkway. The trail would be a sidepath utilizing public Right of Way.

Existing traffic volumes on McBrayer Road are relatively low (<1000 AADT), reducing exposure to vehicle traffic for trail users. The adjacent land uses are mainly active industrial with some residential mixed in.

PROS

- Lower traffic volumes
- ROW available
- Connect to King's Hawaiian

CONS

- Industrial surroundings most of the trail
- Many driveways to cross
- Railroad crossing requiring coordination with Norfolk Southern
- Utility poles and fire hydrants close to the road



The trail would be a sidepath along the road. This area is tree-lined and pleasant.



The trail would come up to the intersection at HF Reed Industrial Parkway. King's Hawaiian has shown interest in connection to their property.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 2	○	◐	●	◐	●	●	●
McBrayer Sidepath	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐
Rail Trail 2	●	●	●	○	◐	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 3	◐	○	●	◐	○	◐	●

● BEST ◐ BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

RAIL TRAIL 2



- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|---|--|-----------------|
| | RAILROAD CROSSINGS | | HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status | | SEGMENTS |
| | UNPAVED TRAILS | | Complete | | Segment Options |
| | SEWER EASEMENT | | Previously Planned | | Connections |
| | FLOODWAY | | | | |

CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Rail Trail 2 0.8 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment runs along a parcel owned by the City of Oakwood. The parcel is about 30-feet wide, and runs parallel to the railroad ROW. There appears to be an active rail spur that runs across the Oakwood parcel. Coordination would be required to determine a crossing if that spur is indeed active.

PROS

- Oakwood owns property adjacent to the railroad
- Direct route into Flowery Branch
- Sewer easement on the north side of the railroad

CONS

- Potential coordination with railroad for spur



The trail could cross beneath HF Reed Industrial Parkway using the railroad underpass.

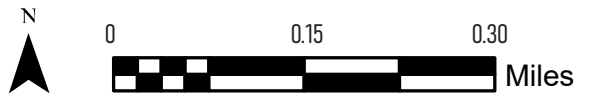










Railroad crossing at Chamblee Road to connect to the property on the north west side.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 2	○	◐	●	◐	●	●	●
McBrayer Sidepath	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐
Rail Trail 2	●	●	●	○	◐	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 3	◐	○	●	◐	○	◐	●

● BEST ◐ BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

THURMON TANNER SIDEPATH 3



- | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|
|  RAILROAD CROSSINGS |  UNPAVED TRAILS |  SEWER EASEMENT |  FLOODWAY | HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status | SEGMENTS |
| |  Complete | | |  Previously Planned |  Segment Options |
| | | | | |  Connections |

CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 3 1.1 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment follows Thurmon Tanner at Chamblee Road to HF Reed Industrial Parkway which would connect to the existing Highlands to Islands Trail in Flowery Branch.

PROS

- Large ROW
- Connection to Downtown Flowery Branch

CONS

- Busy road, portions of industrial surroundings
- Large intersection crossing Atlanta Highway



The trail would connect to the completed Highlands to Islands Trail in Flowery Branch.

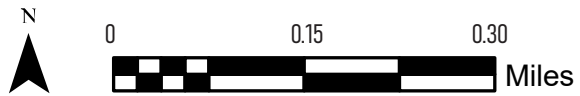


The trail would utilize the large ROW on Thurmon Tanner.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 2	○	◐	●	◐	●	●	●
McBrayer Sidepath	○	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐	◐
Rail Trail 2	●	●	●	○	◐	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 3	◐	○	●	◐	○	◐	●

● BEST ◐ BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL STUDY
MCEVER SIDEPATH 3



- | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------------|
| RAILROAD CROSSINGS | HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status | SEGMENTS |
| UNPAVED TRAILS | Complete | Segment Options |
| SEWER EASEMENT | Previously Planned | Connections |
| FLOODWAY | | |

HF REED INDUSTRIAL BLVD TO FLOWERY BRANCH

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

McEver Sidepath 3 2.4 MI

DESCRIPTION

This sidepath would run along McEver Road from HF Reed Industrial Parkway and then turns down Gainesville Street to connect to downtown Flowery Branch. It also includes a spur along Radford Road to connect to Alberta Banks Park, Flowery Branch Elementary School, and Just People Flowery Branch Village.

McEver Road has at least 10 feet of available ROW on either side of the road for sidepath construction. Available ROW for the Radford Road spur is tighter, with about 8-10 feet available on the north side of the street, but two of the largest parcels are owned by Hall County and the Georgia Education Authority. Gainesville Street has at least 10 feet available on the east side, and Flowery Branch owns a large parcel along the east side of the street.

PROS

- Limited ROW acquisition required
- Direct access to community destinations and neighborhoods

CONS

- Exposure to roadway traffic
- At-grade crossing across McEver Road either at Radford Road or Gainesville St
- May require a bridge or culvert extension over Mud Creek



The trail would continue as sidepath along McEver Road and turn onto Gainesville Street to connect to Downtown Flowery Branch

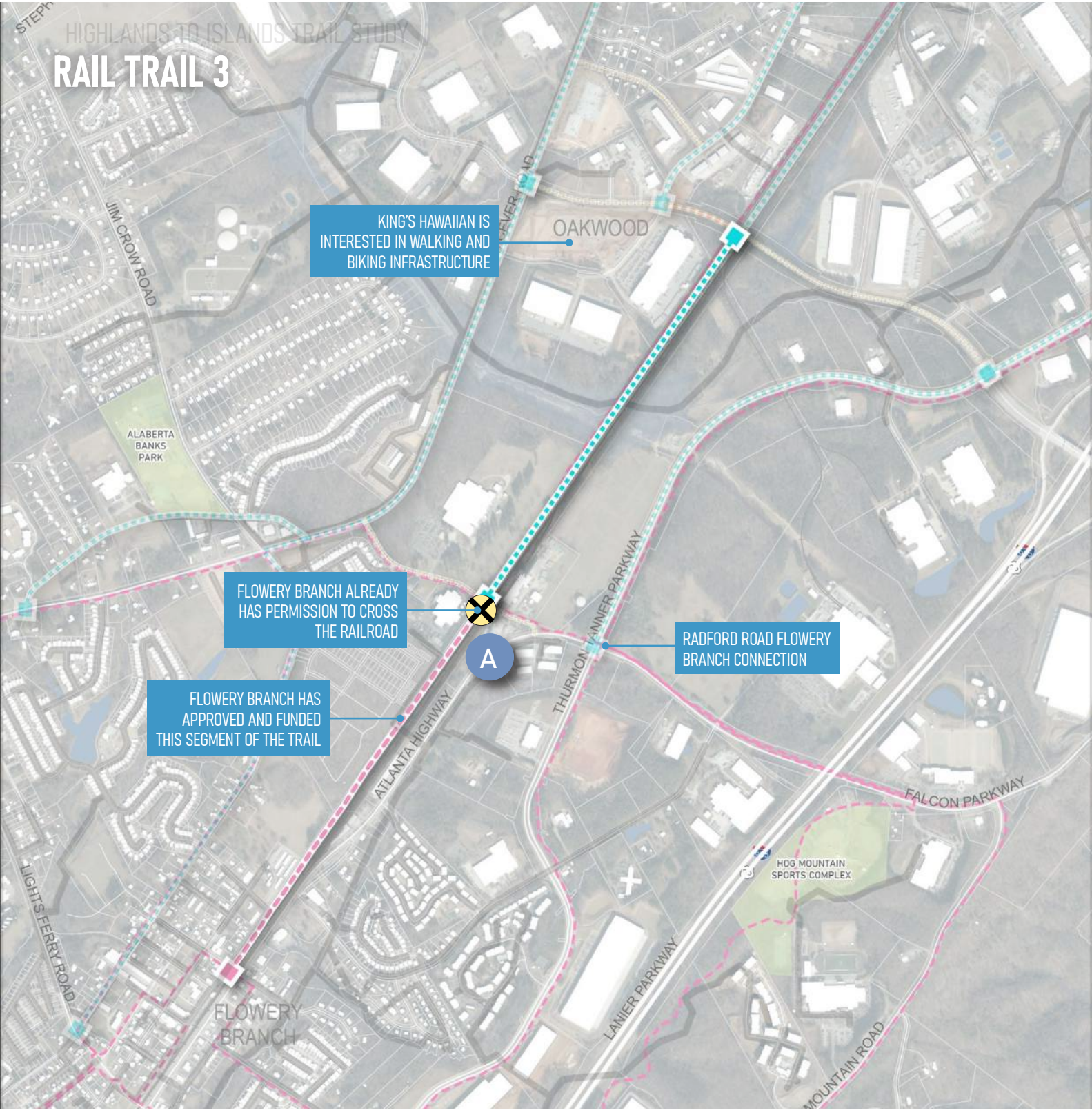


The path would require acquisition of ROW to maintain the sidepath on McEver Road

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 3	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rail Trail 3	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 4	○	○	●	●	○	○	●

● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

RAIL TRAIL 3



- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|--------------------|--|-----------------|
| | RAILROAD CROSSINGS | | Complete | | Segment Options |
| | UNPAVED TRAILS | | Previously Planned | | Connections |
| | SEWER EASEMENT | | | | |
| | FLOODWAY | | | | |

HF REED INDUSTRIAL BLVD TO FLOWERY BRANCH

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Rail Trail 2 1.8 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment would be rail with trail along the railroad corridor from HF Reed Industrial Parkway to Flowery Branch's programmed trail project on Spring Street. Flowery Branch has already been in talks with Norfolk Southern about installing a trail in their ROW from Spring Street to Radford Road. This segment would require extending that project to the city boundary to the north. The northern portion would rely on coordination and cooperation between the City of Oakwood and Norfolk Southern.

PROS

- Provides a trail away from roadway, utilizing railroad
- Most direct connection
- Could provide a destination railroad experience with a viewing area

CONS

- At-grade crossing at Radford Road
- Some grading would like be required near Radford Road crossing
- Requires Norfolk Southern cooperation
- Some sections of floodplain between HF Reed Industrial Parkway and Radford Road, would require boardwalk/ structure
- Would require a bridge over Mud Creek parallel to the railroad corridor



The trail could extend along the railroad alignment if the railroad will give permission to use some of their ROW.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 3	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rail Trail 3	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 4	○	○	●	●	○	○	●

● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL

THURMON TANNER SIDEPATH 4



- RAILROAD CROSSINGS
- UNPAVED TRAILS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- FLOODWAY

- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status
- Complete
 - Previously Planned

- SEGMENTS
- Segment Options
 - Connections

HF REED INDUSTRIAL BLVD TO FLOWERY BRANCH

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 4 2.2 MI

DESCRIPTION

This segment would follow Thurmon Tanner Parkway south from HF Reed Industrial Parkway then turn west onto Atlanta Hwy and continue to Flowery Branch. There is over 30-feet of ROW available on the west side of Thurmon Tanner Parkway. There are some sections (approximately 1500 linear feet) where guardrail would need to be adjusted with intensive grading.

PROS

- Available ROW on Thurmon Tanner Parkway

CONS

- Atlanta Hwy is a state-owned road, requires GDOT coordination
- Less direct connection to destinations and residences
- ROW acquisition would be required in some pinch points along Atlanta Hwy
- Impacts to the landscape and the efforts needed to fit the trail and accommodate drainage



The trail would connect to the completed Highlands to Islands Trail in Flowery Branch.



The trail would utilize the large ROW on Thurmon Tanner.

	DIRECTNESS	SAFETY	ENVIRONMENT	COST- EFFECTIVE	TIMELINE	ACCESS	COORDINATION
McEver Sidepath 3	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Rail Trail 3	●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Thurmon Tanner Sidepath 4	○	○	●	●	○	○	●

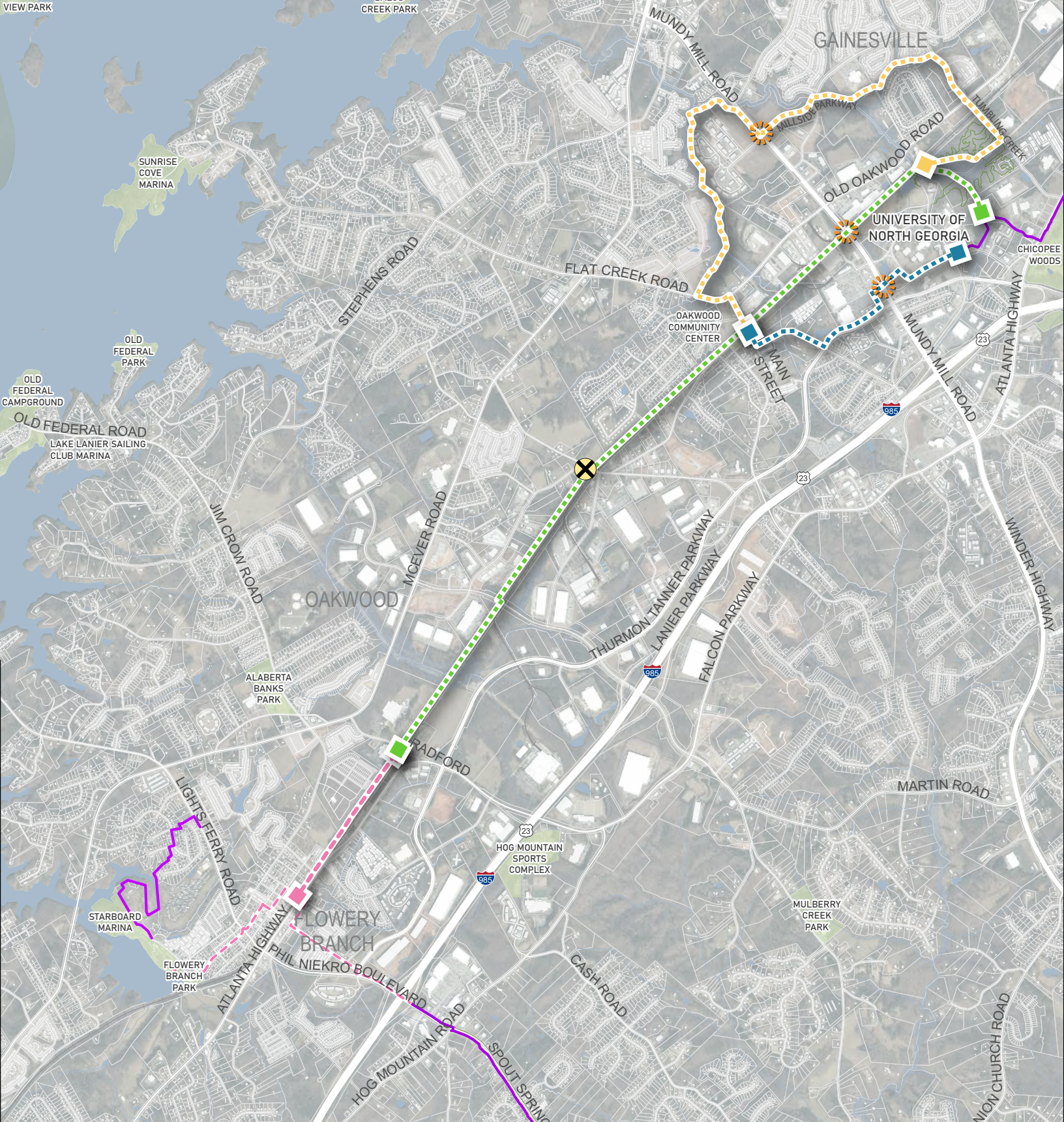
● BEST ● BETTER ○ NEUTRAL








Norfolk Southern
Railroad Corridor




CHAPTER 5

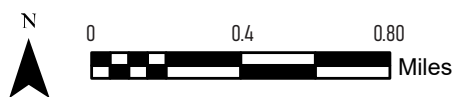
**PREFERRED ALIGNMENTS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS**



-  SR 53 CROSSING OPTIONS
-  UNPAVED TRAILS
-  SEWER EASEMENT

- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
- Status
-  Complete
 -  Previously Planned

- SEGMENTS
-  Preferred Alignment
 -  Alternative Alignment
 -  UNG Campus Alignment



PREFERRED ALIGNMENT

RAIL TRAIL

The preferred alignment is the rail trail option that follows along the existing railroad right of way. The alignment begins on the UNG campus, connecting to their cross country trails as well as a portion of the already complete Highlands to Islands Trail. This starting point aligns with the UNG master plan, which identifies Tumbling Creek and the surrounding open space as key amenities for regional connectivity and mobility. This reinforces UNG's support for expanded trail access for the university and the surrounding community. The trail would begin on the east side of the railroad tracks, switching over to the west side by crossing at Main Street. The City of Oakwood owns a parcel of land that extends along the edge of the railroad right of way between Chamblee Road and HF Reed Industrial Parkway. The City is willing to allow the trail on that land which is a significant portion of the corridor and supports Oakwood's goal to expand upon the city's multimodal infrastructure and connectivity. Between HF Reed Industrial Parkway and Radford Road, the trail would merge back into the railroad right of way, connecting into Flowery Branch. The City of Flowery Branch has received encouraging feedback on their proposed trail that also utilizes the railroad right of way, into which the trail could connect. This would create a multi-jurisdictional off-road greenway that supports regional connectivity and mobility.

When the alignment options were presented to the stakeholders, the rail trail was the majority preferred option due to its potential for a safe and direct route to connect the surrounding community. The rail trail would be an off the road option with a greenway type of environment, being away from traffic and road noise. It would be a destination experience with direct connections to the different downtowns which is consistent with the growing regional greenway vision reflected in both the South Hall Trail Study and the UNG Campus Master Plan.

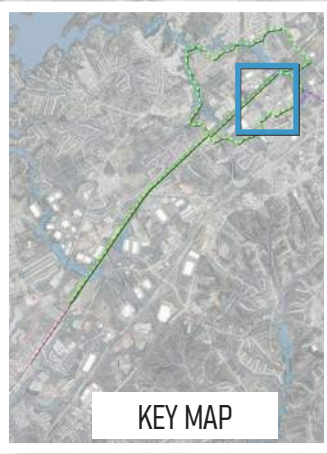
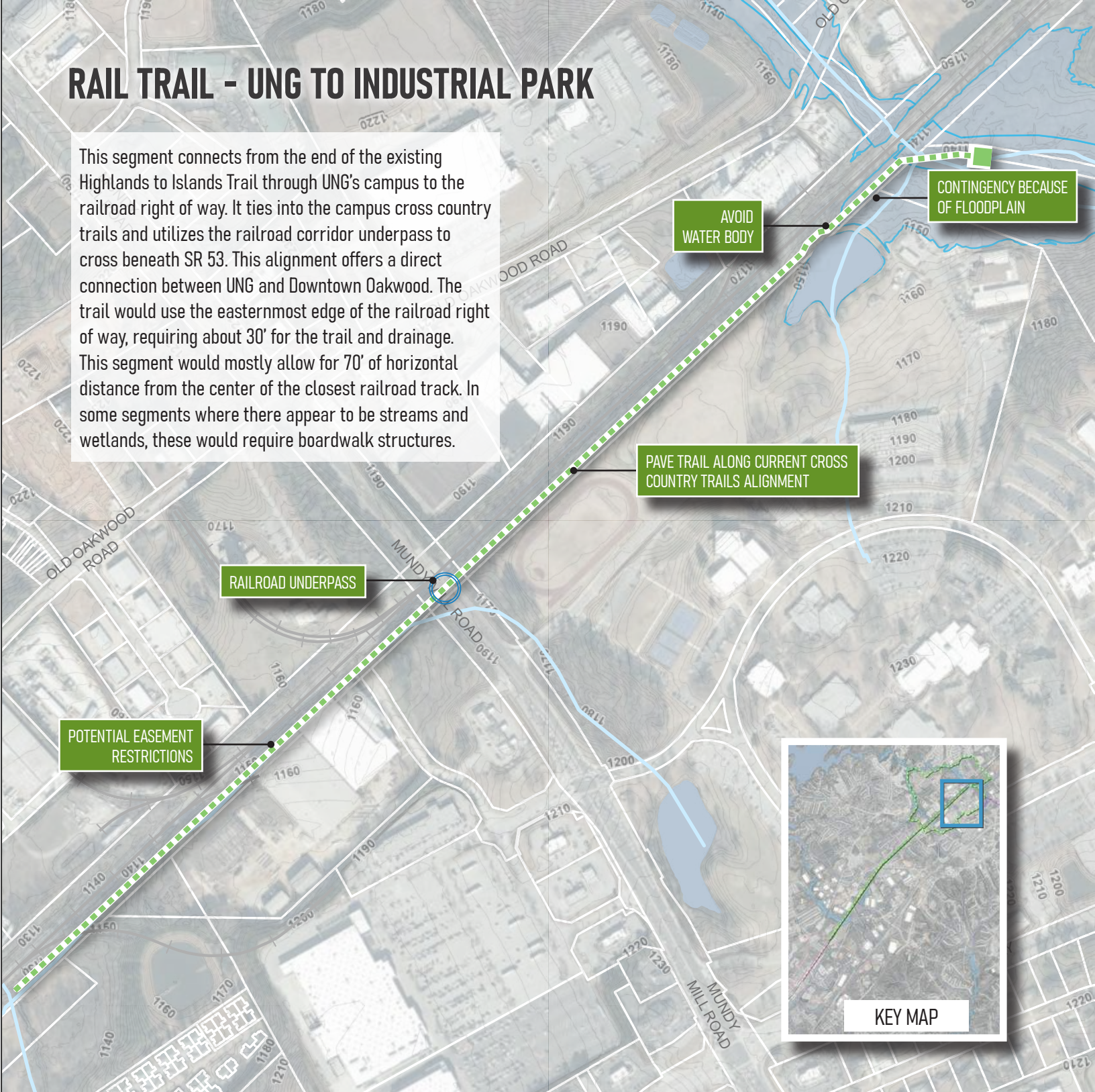
This alignment plugs into the Highlands to Islands already built trails at UNG, would transect some of their planned trails that utilize the sewer easements, and connect directly to the Flowery Branch trails.



Norfolk Southern Railroad

RAIL TRAIL - UNG TO INDUSTRIAL PARK

This segment connects from the end of the existing Highlands to Islands Trail through UNG's campus to the railroad right of way. It ties into the campus cross country trails and utilizes the railroad corridor underpass to cross beneath SR 53. This alignment offers a direct connection between UNG and Downtown Oakwood. The trail would use the easternmost edge of the railroad right of way, requiring about 30' for the trail and drainage. This segment would mostly allow for 70' of horizontal distance from the center of the closest railroad track. In some segments where there appear to be streams and wetlands, these would require boardwalk structures.



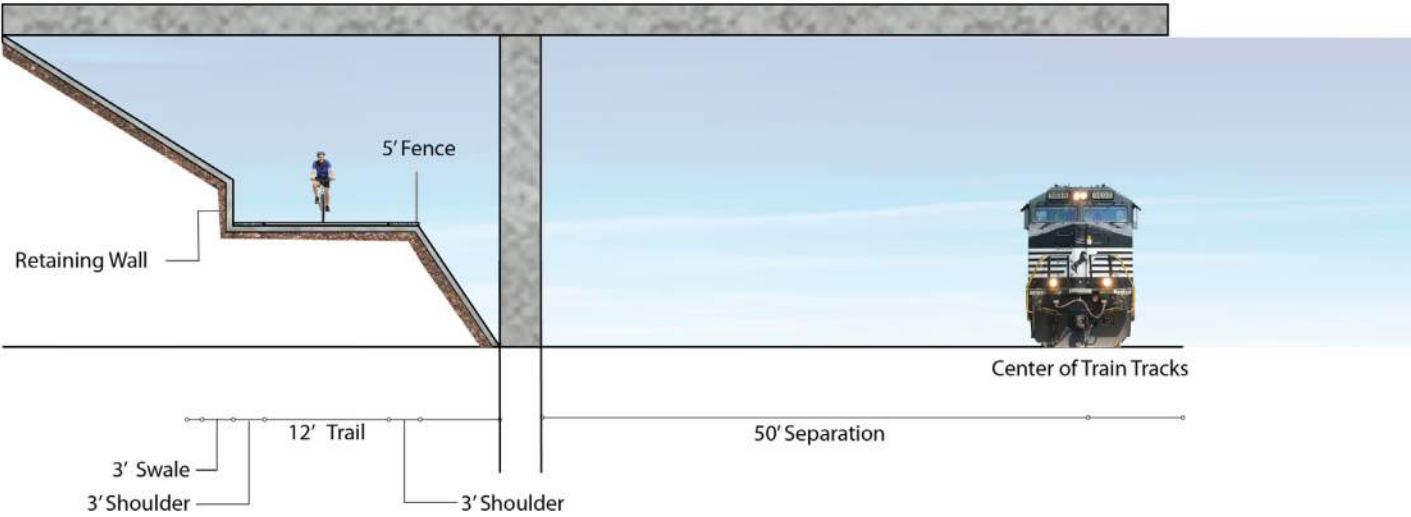
- UNPAVED TRAILS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- FLOODWAY
- ◆ STREET CROSSING
- ≡ BRIDGE/CULVERT
- RAILROAD UNDERPASS
- ⊗ RAILROAD CROSSINGS



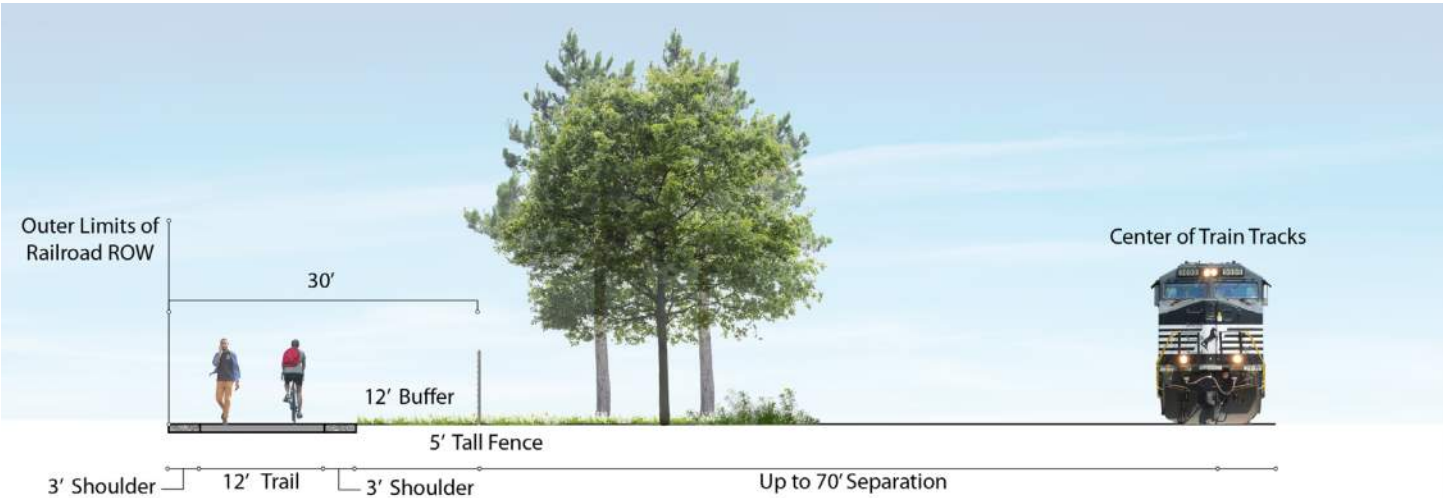
RAIL TRAIL - UNG TO INDUSTRIAL PARK SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
UNG to Industrial Park	3150'	UNG, NORFOLK SOUTHERN	\$1,493,208	0	220'	0	0

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



ROAD UNDERPASS CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, BUILT INTO EMBANKMENT AND SEPARATED FROM TRAIN BY COLUMNS



TYPICAL CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, +/- 70' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS

RAIL TRAIL - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO MAIN STREET

Continuing from Mundy Mill Road south, the trail transitions from the east side to the west side crossing at Main Street. This crossing needs to be coordinated with Norfolk Southern but would include an asphalt pedestrian crossing at the railroad tracks.

POTENTIAL EASEMENT RESTRICTIONS

POTENTIAL WETLANDS, DESKTOP DATA MAY BE INACCURATE

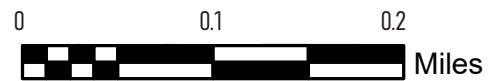
FUTURE OAKWOOD TOWN CENTER DEVELOPMENTS

STREAM CROSSING POSSIBLE, BOARDWALK OR STRUCTURE NEEDED



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
RAILROAD CROSSINGS

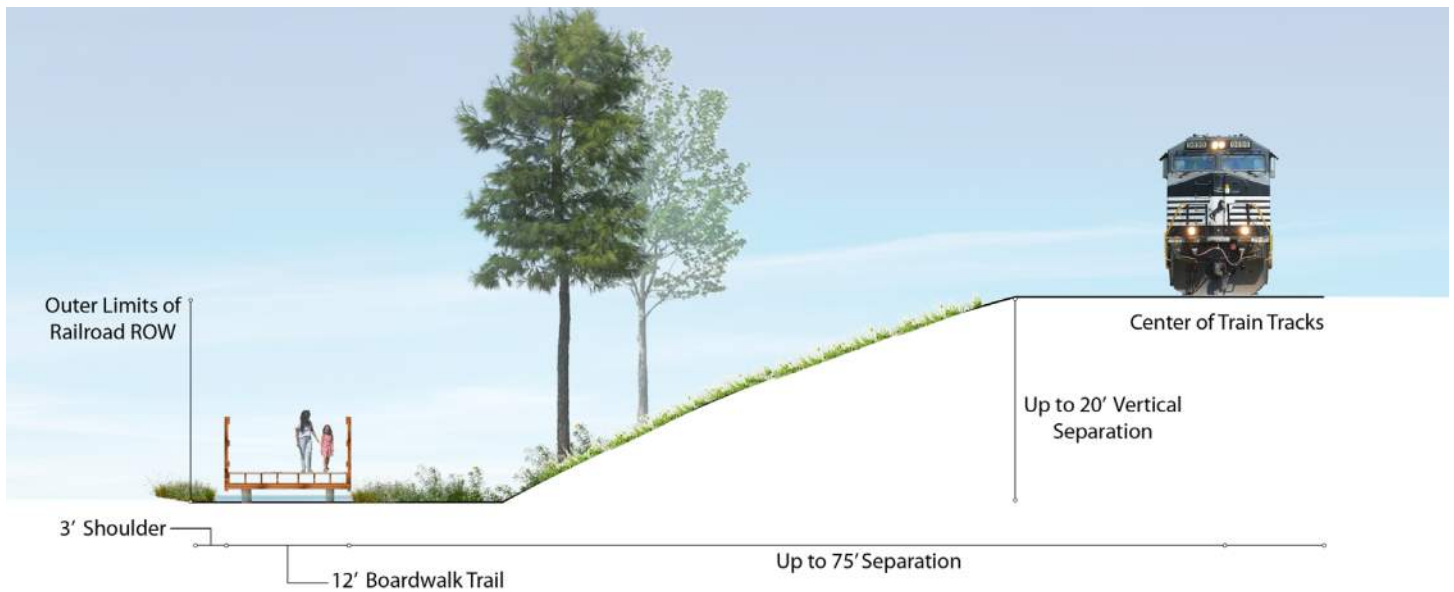


RAIL TRAIL - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO MAIN STREET

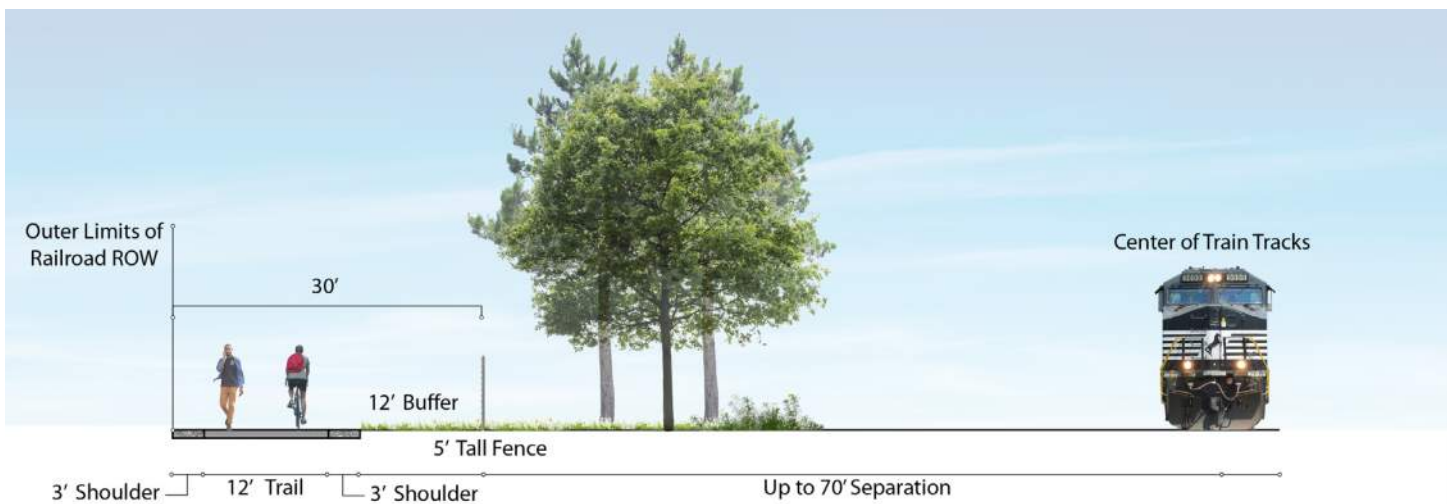
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
MUNDY MILL ROAD TO MAIN STREET	3291'	NORFOLK SOUTHERN	\$2,325,990	491'	0	0	0

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



BOARDWALK CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE RAISED BOARDWALK TRAIL, +/- 75' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS



TYPICAL CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, +/- 70' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS

RAIL TRAIL - MAIN STREET TO CHAMBLEE ROAD

This portion begins on the north side of the tracks at Main Street and continues using an approximately 30' easement on the edge of the railroad right of way. Oakwood owns an approximately 30' wide right of way parcel close to Chamblee Road, which the trail would transfer over to in order to minimize the use of the railroad as much as possible.

RAILROAD CROSSING

TRAIL CROSSES TO WEST SIDE OF TRACKS

BRIDGE/CULVERT NEEDED

EARTHWORK AND RETAINING WALL NEEDED

BOARDWALK/STRUCTURE NEEDED

MAY REQUIRE VERIFICATION OF SOLID GROUND AND LACK OF WETLANDS

OAKWOOD-OWNED ROW PARALLEL TO RAILROAD ROW ON WEST SIDE (~30' WIDE) FROM CHAMBLEE RD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
RAILROAD CROSSINGS



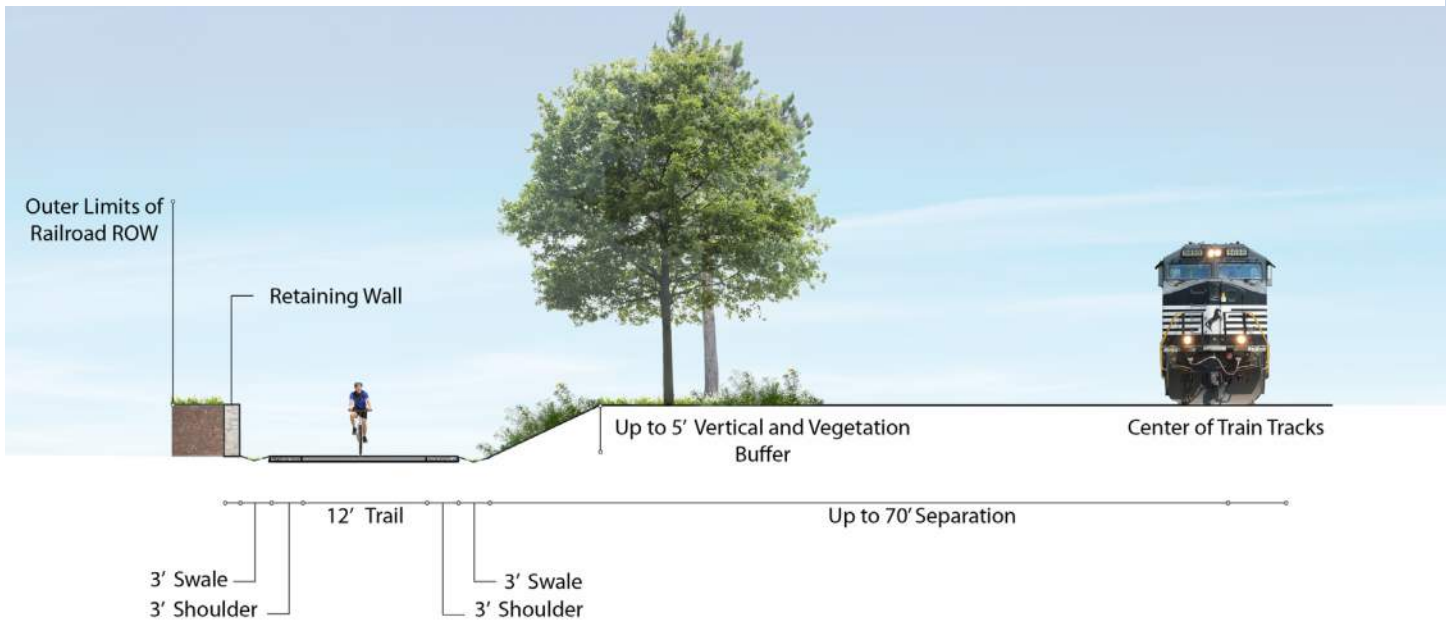
0 0.1 0.2 Miles

RAIL TRAIL - MAIN STREET TO CHAMBLEE ROAD

SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
MAIN STREET TO CHAMBLEE ROAD	5690'	NORFOLK SOUTHERN	\$3,272,261	310'	300'	1	1

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



RETAINING WALL CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS AND 3' DRAINAGE SWALES ON EITHER SIDE, SHORT RETAINING WALL



MAIN STREET RAILROAD CROSSING (Will need design and implementation approval from Railroad)

RAIL TRAIL - CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY

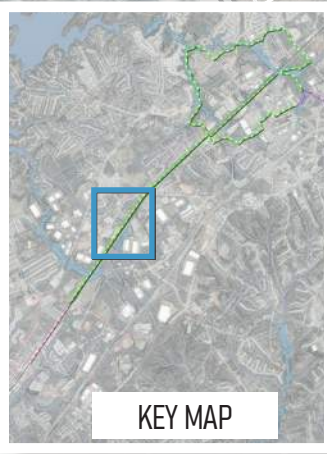
This segment would be rail with trail along the railroad corridor from Chamblee Road to HF Reed Industrial Parkway. This entire segment would utilize the right of way 30' easement that is owned by Oakwood, only using the railroad right of way to cross Chamblee Road at grade and to cross under HF Reed Industrial as a trail built into the structure of the bridge wall. This segment would offer a typical greenway environment with plenty of separation from the railroad tracks, and requires little to no grading.

OAKWOOD-OWNED ROW PARALLEL TO RAILROAD ROW ON WEST SIDE (~30' WIDE) FROM CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY

TRAIL CROSSES OVER RAILROAD SPUR IN PRIVATE PROPERTY

HF REED/RR UNDERPASS: STRUCTURAL WALL AND TRAIL BUILT ON GRADE BEHIND WALL

OAKWOOD-OWNED PARCEL ENDS. TRANSITION BACK TO RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY



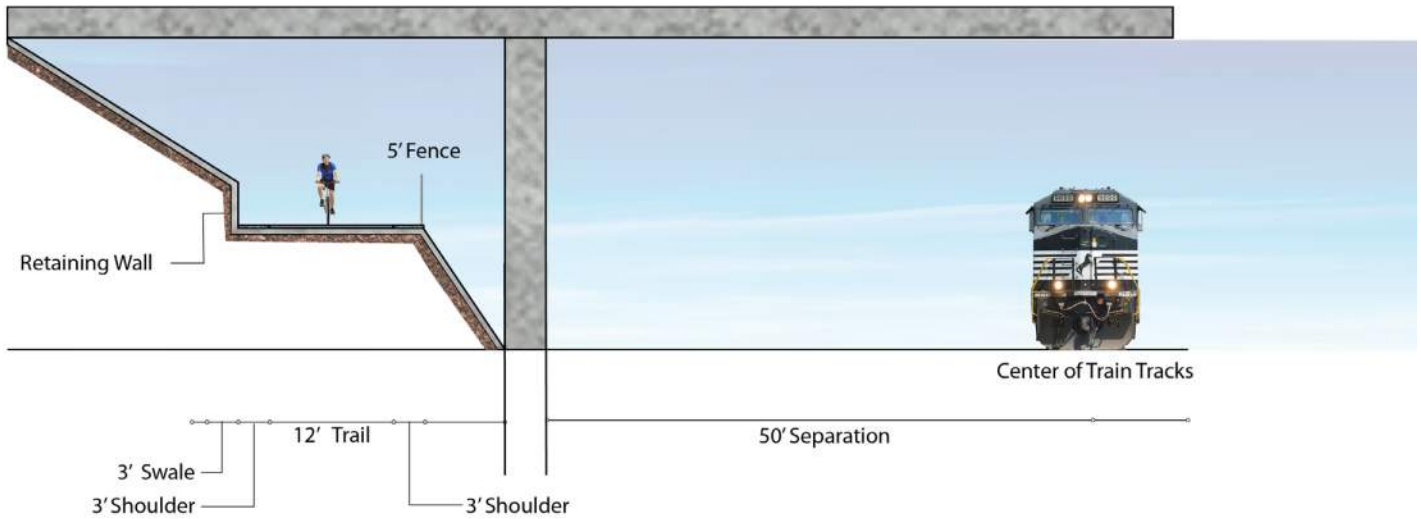
- UNPAVED TRAILS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- FLOODWAY
- ◆ STREET CROSSING
- = BRIDGE/CULVERT
- RAILROAD UNDERPASS



RAIL TRAIL - CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY	5544'	CITY OF OAKWOOD, NORFOLK SOUTHERN	\$2,288,168	0'	177'	1	1

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



ROAD UNDERPASS CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, BUILT INTO RETAINING WALL AND SEPARATED FROM TRAIN BY COLUMNS



OAKWOOD PROPERTY TRAIL TRANSITION TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY UNDERPASS

RAIL TRAIL - HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY TO RADFORD ROAD

This segment would be rail with trail along the railroad corridor from HF Reed Industrial Parkway to Flowery Branch's programmed trail project on Spring Street. Flowery Branch has already been in talks with Norfolk Southern about installing a trail in their ROW from Spring Street to Radford Road. This segment would require extending that project to the city boundary to the north. The northern portion would rely on coordination and cooperation between the City of Oakwood and Norfolk Southern.

TRANSITION BACK TO RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY

KING'S HAWAIIAN IS INTERESTED IN WALKING AND BIKING INFRASTRUCTURE

NEED STRUCTURE/ BOARDWALK OVER FLOODWAY

POSSIBLE RETAINING WALL OR CULVERT

NEED PIPE OR CULVERT

FLOWERY BRANCH HAS CLEARANCE FROM NORFOLK SOUTHERN TO CONSTRUCT THE TRAIL IN RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY SOUTH OF RADFORD ROAD

RADFORD RD FLOWERY BRANCH CONNECTION



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT



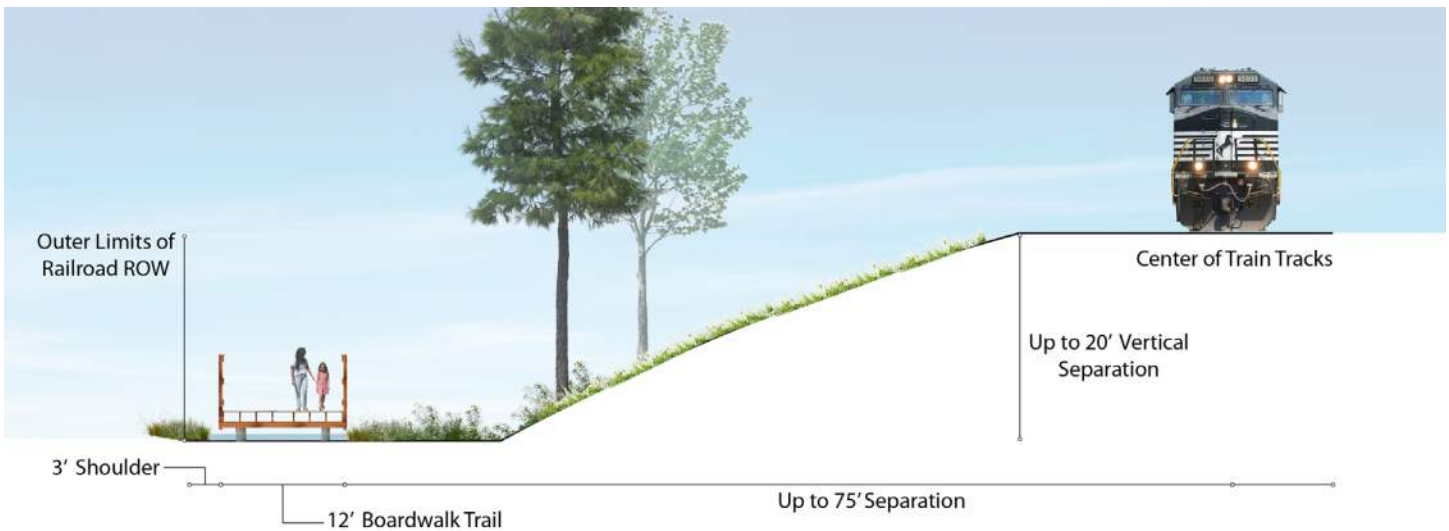
0 0.1 0.2 Miles

RAIL TRAIL - HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY TO RADFORD ROAD

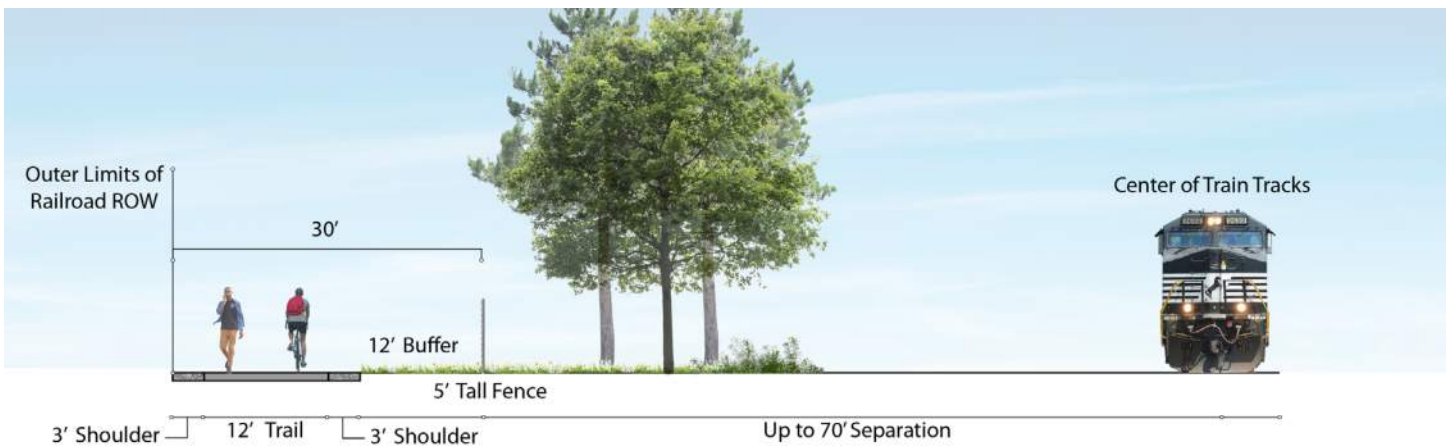
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY TO RADFORD ROAD	4851'	NORFOLK SOUTHERN	\$2,264,386	122'	147'	0	0

*Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 95.



BOARDWALK CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE RAISED BOARDWALK TRAIL, +/- 75' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS



TYPICAL CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, +/- 70' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS

RAIL TRAIL - RADFORD ROAD TO SPRING STREET

This segment would be rail with trail along the railroad corridor from Radford Road to Flowery Branch's programmed trail project on Spring Street. Flowery Branch has received preliminary approval for a trail easement in Norfolk Southern's property in this segment. The City has also allocated some funding for implementation. This segment would require extending that project to the city boundary to the north. The northern portion would rely on coordination and cooperation between the City of Oakwood and Norfolk Southern.

The lease agreement between the City and Norfolk Southern has been signed and executed to allow them to build a trail from Chattahoochee Street to Radford Road.

AT-GRADE CROSSING.
RADFORD RD FLOWERY
BRANCH CONNECTION

FLOWERY BRANCH
PHASE 1 ENDS HERE



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

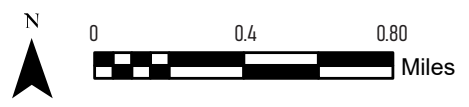
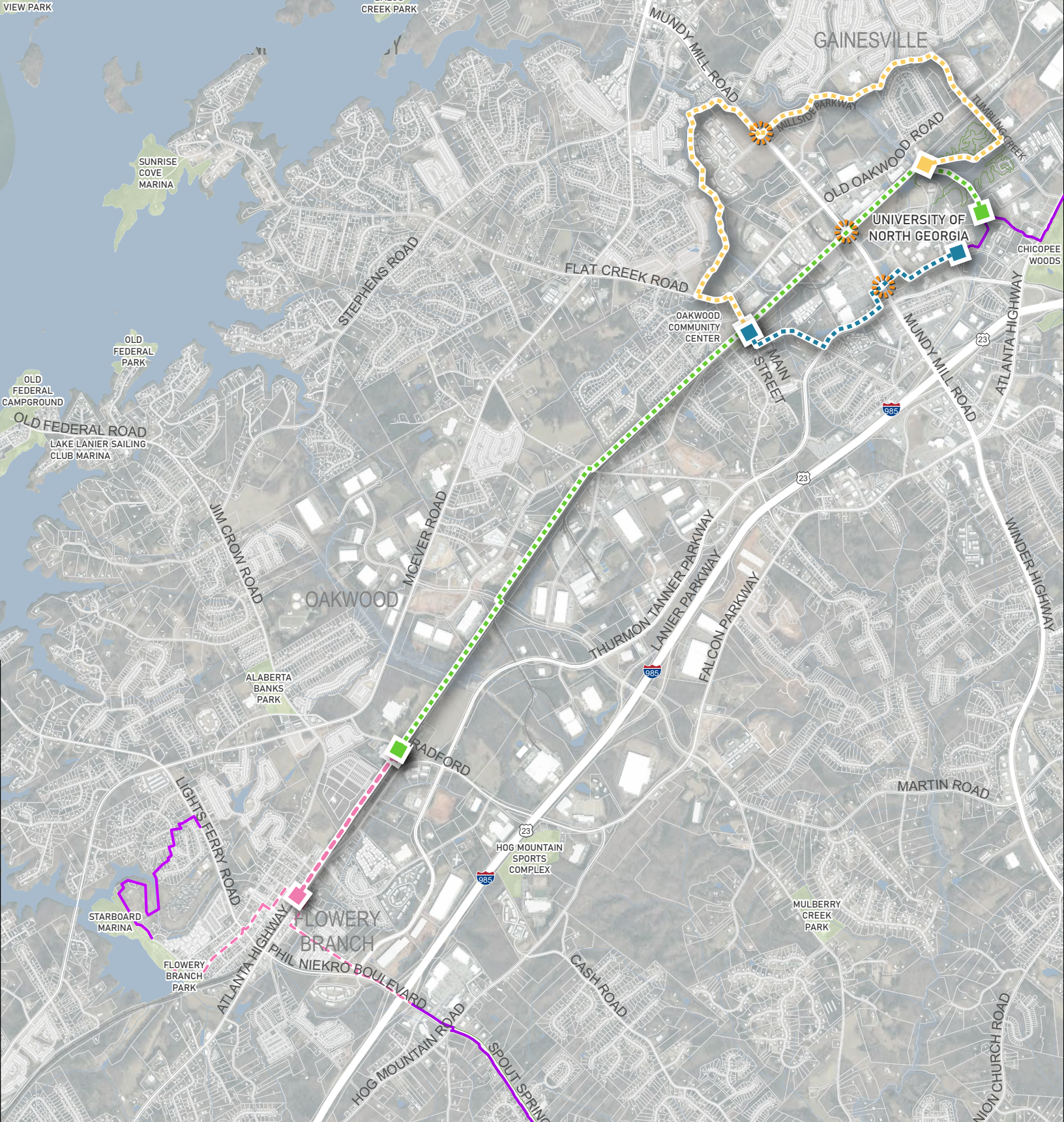
STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT








0 0.1 0.2 Miles






Norfolk Southern Railroad Right of Way



-  SR 53 CROSSING OPTIONS
-  UNPAVED TRAILS
-  SEWER EASEMENT

- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
- Status
-  Complete
 -  Previously Planned

- SEGMENTS
-  Preferred Alignment
 -  Alternative Alignment
 -  UNG Campus Alignment

ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT

GREENWAY

An alternative preferred alignment is the greenway sewer easement trail. Similar to the rail trail alignment, this alignment begins on the UNG campus, connecting to their cross country trails as well as a portion of the already complete Highlands to Islands Trail. This starting point aligns with the UNG master plan, which identifies Tumbling Creek and the surrounding open space as key amenities for regional connectivity and mobility. The alignment reinforces UNG's support for expanded trail access for the university and the surrounding community.

The trail begins at UNG as a greenway and crosses over the creek, connecting to the existing trail system on campus. It reaches Tumbling Creek Road, continuing on the south side of the roadway as sidepath before following the sewer easement through a wooded area as a greenway facility. The trail then crosses Millside Parkway and continues as a sidepath to Mundy Mill Road, providing access to existing sidewalk along Millside Parkway that connects to the largely residential area and schools along this corridor. At the intersection with Mundy Mill Road, the trail alignment crosses Mundy Mill Road as an enhanced at-grade crossing or with a new walking and biking bridge to provide separation from vehicle traffic. This crossing location capitalizes on future development that may occur on the

southern side of this intersection, including a Kroger that is planned for development, providing improved opportunities for active mode trips to this destination.

The trail follows Mundy Mill Road as a sidepath until reaching Balus Creek, where a greenway facility generally follows the creek until reaching the location of future phases of the Oakwood Town Center and connecting to Flat Creek Road. As a sidepath, the trail continues along Flat Creek Road and along Main Street, where the trail terminates at the railroad. This segment through central Oakwood provides direct access to a key activity center and nearby residential areas.

This alignment provides significant connections between many residential areas and key destinations within the study area, providing opportunities for residents to use active modes as a replacement for car trips as well as expanding opportunities for recreation. The varied trail facilities create a unique experience where users can access natural areas and green spaces within the larger urban context.



Mundy Mill Road and Millside Parkway Intersection

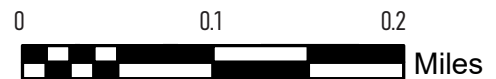
GREENWAY - CAMPUS TRAIL CONNECTION



This greenway segment begins at the newest portion of the trail network, the UNG Connector which connects the Chicopee Trail with UNG and provides access to both Landrum Education Drive and the planned Tumbling Creek Trails. The trail begins as greenway until Millside Parkway then turns into sidepath along Millside Parkway until it follows the sewer easement behind the residential development and switches back to a greenway inside of the easement.

- UNPAVED TRAILS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- FLOODWAY

- STREET CROSSING
- BRIDGE/CULVERT
- SEGMENT BEGINNING/END

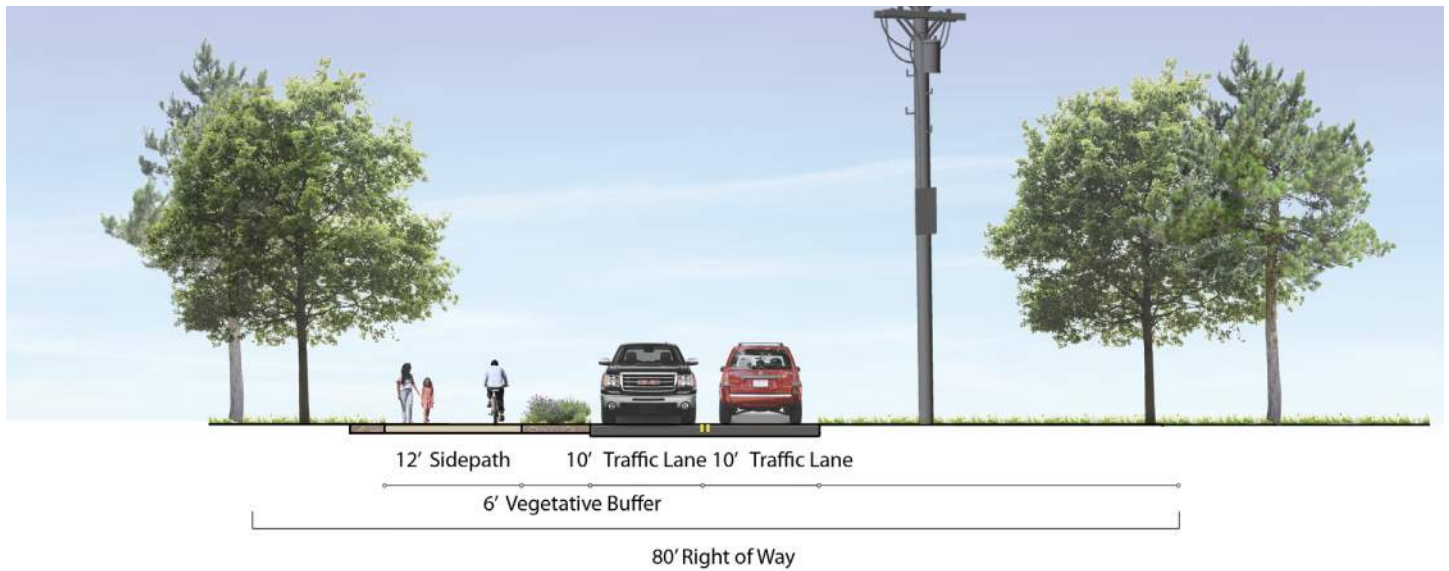


GREENWAY - CAMPUS TRAIL CONNECTION

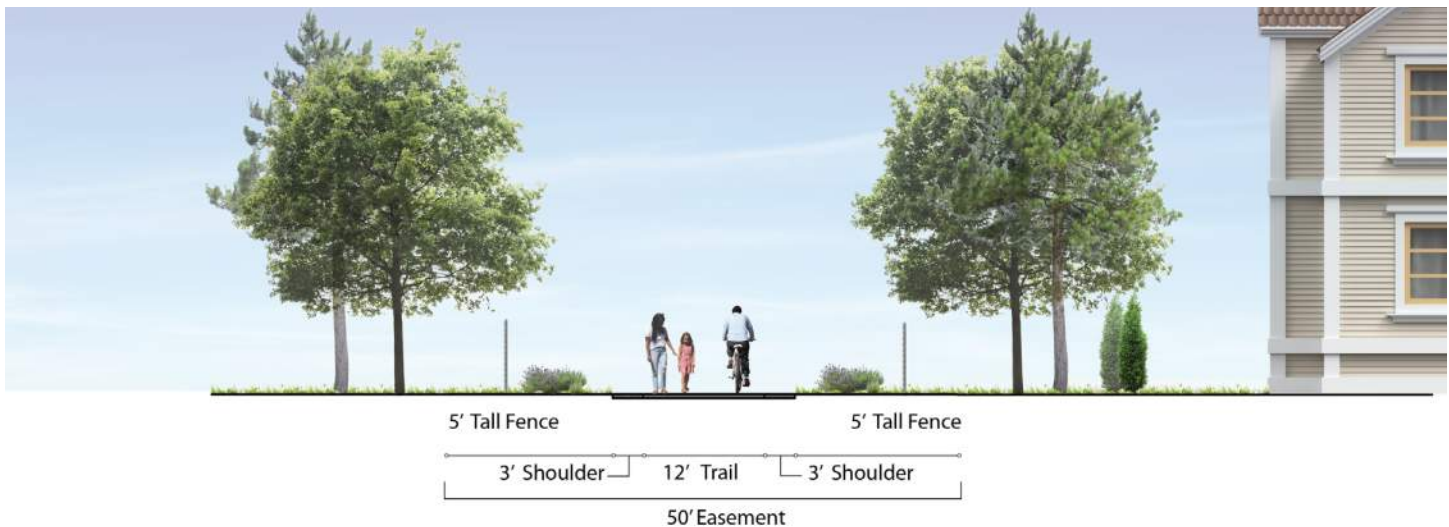
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
CAMPUS TRAIL CONNECTION	9450'	UNG, CITY OF GAINESVILLE	\$4,806,984	500'	0	0	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 96.



SIDEPATH CROSS SECTION: 80' RIGHT OF WAY. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 6' VEGETATIVE BUFFER FROM ROAD TRAFFIC



GREENWAY CROSS SECTION: 50' EASEMENT BETWEEN PROPERTIES. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, 5' FENCES

GREENWAY - MILLSIDE PARKWAY TO MUNDY MILL ROAD

This portion continues as greenway using the sewer easement from Millside Parkway until Mundy Mill Road. The segment of the trail is within the floodway and will cross over the stream so will require boardwalk as well as a bridge or culvert to cross over the stream.



SR53 (MUNDY MILL RD)
CROSSING OPTIONS: ENHANCE
EXISTING AT-GRADE CROSSING
OR CONSTRUCT WALKING AND
BIKING BRIDGE

FUTURE
KROGER SITE

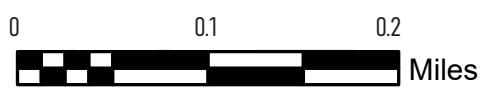
BRIDGE/CULVERT NEEDED

BOARDWALK/STRUCTURE
MAY BE NEEDED



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
SEGMENT BEGINNING/END

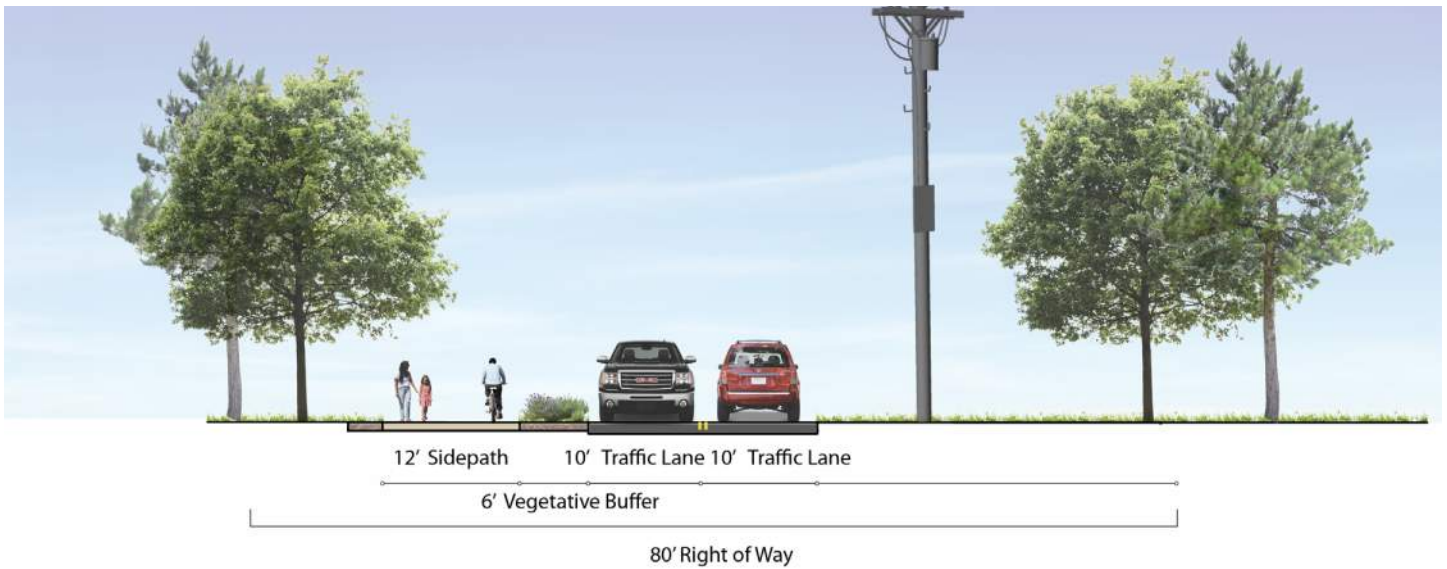


GREENWAY - MILLSIDE PARKWAY TO MUNDY MILL ROAD

SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
MILLSIDE PARKWAY TO MUNDY MILL RD	5830'	CITY OF GAINESVILLE	\$16,538,488	105'	0	1	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 96.



SIDEPATH CROSS SECTION: 80' RIGHT OF WAY. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 6' VEGETATIVE BUFFER FROM ROAD TRAFFIC



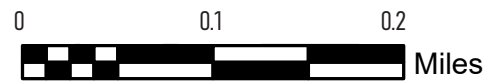
PROPOSED BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE AT THE INTERSECTION OF MUNDY MILL ROAD AND MILLSIDE PARKWAY

GREENWAY - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO BALUS CREEK



- UNPAVED TRAILS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- FLOODWAY

- ◆ STREET CROSSING
- ⌋ BRIDGE/CULVERT
- SEGMENT BEGINNING/END

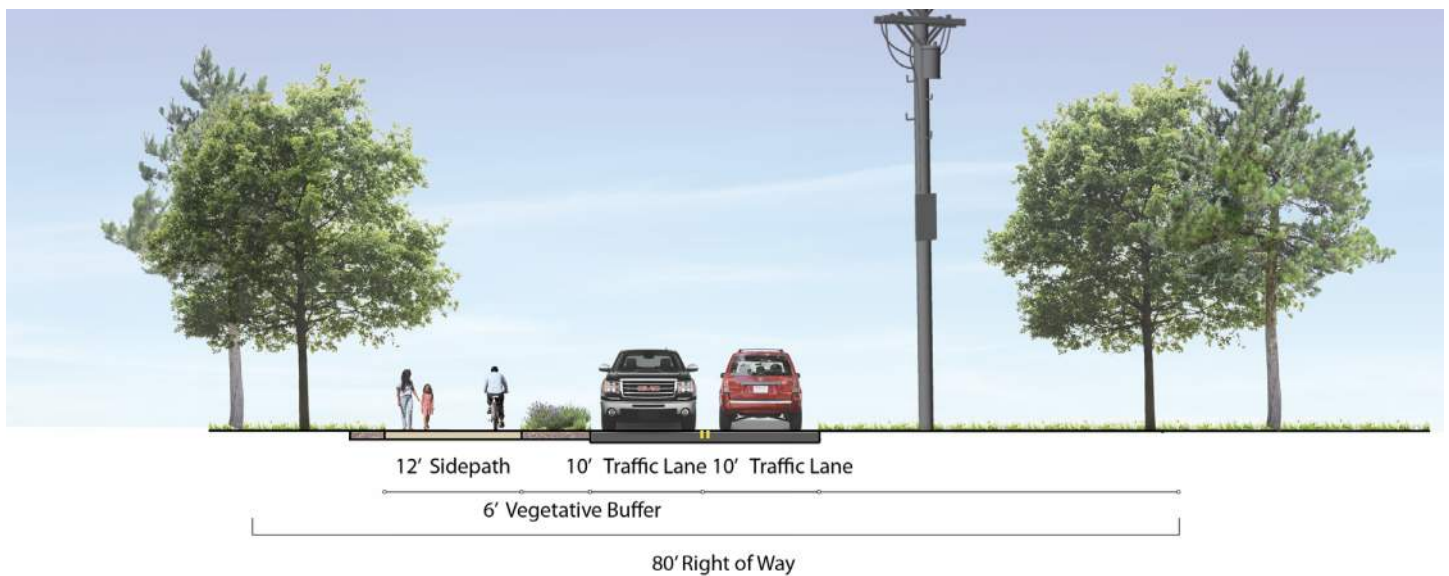


GREENWAY - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO BALUS CREEK

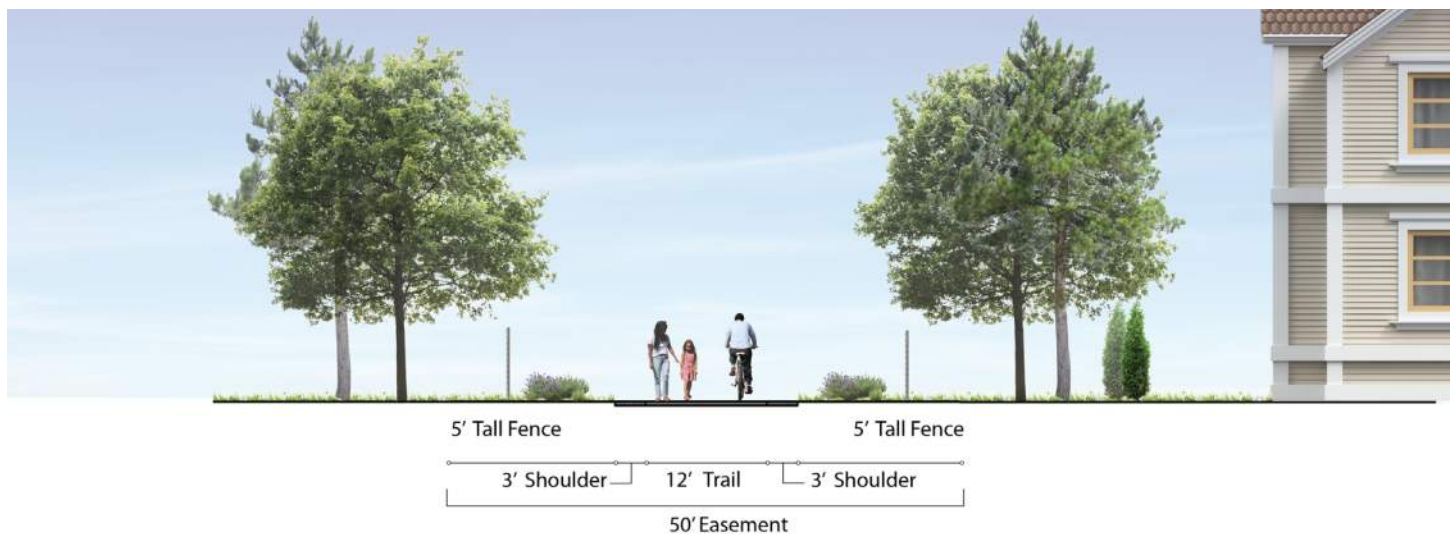
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
MILLSIDE PARKWAY CROSSING MUNDY MILL	5477'	CITY OF GAINESVILLE, CITY OF OAKWOOD	\$2,424,666	200'	0	0	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 96.



SIDEWALK CROSS SECTION: 80' RIGHT OF WAY. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 6' VEGETATIVE BUFFER FROM ROAD TRAFFIC



GREENWAY CROSS SECTION: 50' EASEMENT BETWEEN PROPERTIES. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, 5' FENCES

GREENWAY - BALUS CREEK TO MAIN STREET

This portion begins as a greenway trail on the north side of Flat Creek Road using the existing sewer easement next to Balus Creek. A majority of the easement is located within the floodway, which would require boardwalk segments for the trail in some areas. The trail crosses over the creek which would require a bridge or culvert, then transitions to a sidepath as it follows Flat Creek Road. While there is sufficient right of way on either side of Flat Creek Road, more detailed analysis should be done in further design phases to determine the preferred side of the street as well as the preferred street crossing on Flat Creek Road or at the intersection of Old Oakwood Road and Main Street. The trail continues south onto Main Street, terminating at the railroad corridor.

STREAM CROSSING MAY REQUIRE BRIDGE OR CULVERT

FUTURE PHASES OF OAKWOOD TOWN CENTER DEVELOPMENT

POTENTIAL STREET CROSSING

POTENTIAL STREET CROSSING

TRANSITION TO SIDEPATH ON FLAT CREEK ROAD

TIES INTO RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY



UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT
SEGMENT BEGINNING/END



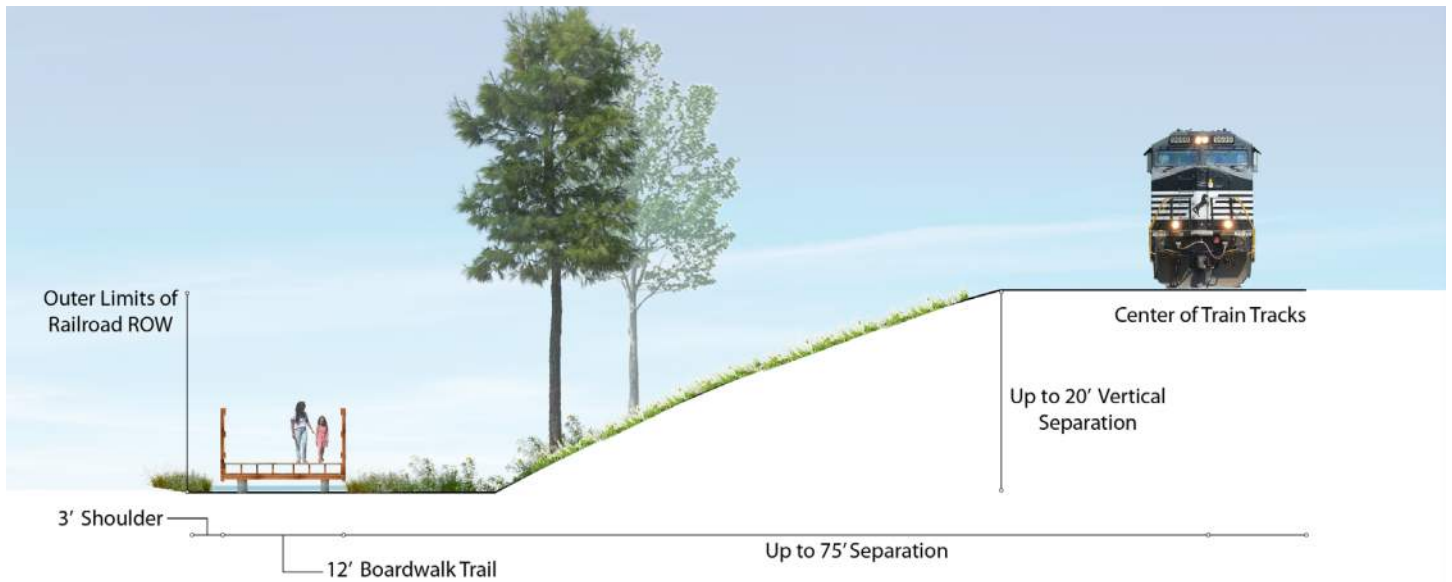
0 0.1 0.2 Miles

GREENWAY - BALUS CREEK TO MAIN STREET

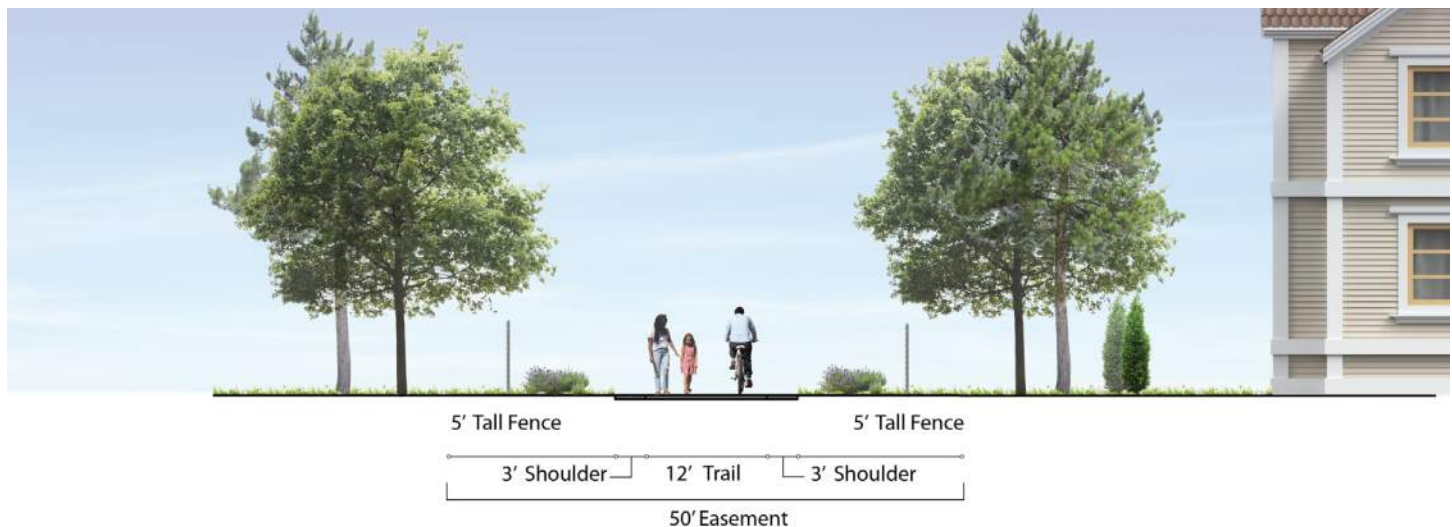
SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
FLAT CREEK CONNECTION	5625'	CITY OF GAINESVILLE, CITY OF OAKWOOD	\$2,134,860	115'	0	1	0

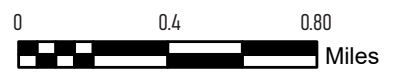
* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 96.








BOARDWALK CROSS SECTION: 12' WIDE RAISED BOARDWALK TRAIL, +/- 75' SEPARATION FROM CENTER OF NEAREST TRAIN TRACKS






GREENWAY CROSS SECTION: 50' EASEMENT BETWEEN PROPERTIES. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 3' SHOULDERS ON EITHER SIDE, 5' FENCES



-  SR 53 CROSSING OPTIONS
-  UNPAVED TRAILS
-  SEWER EASEMENT

- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK
- Status
-  Complete
 -  Previously Planned

- SEGMENTS
-  Preferred Alignment
 -  Alternative Alignment
 -  UNG Campus Alignment

PREFERRED ALIGNMENT

CAMPUS SIDEPATH

The preferred alignment reflects planned improvements identified in the UNG Gainesville Campus Master Plan. The route originates at the existing Highlands to Islands UNG Connector and proceeds as a sidepath along Landrum Education Drive, incorporating segments of existing sidewalk within the public right of way. This portion of the alignment enhances connectivity for adjacent multi-family residential developments.

From Landrum Education Drive, the trail crosses Campus Drive in a northwesterly direction to the west side of the roadway, then traverses university-owned property between Mills Pond and the soccer field complex. The alignment includes a raised pedestrian bridge over Mundy Mill Road, with the abutment located between the Wendy's and New Lucky Crab House properties. South of Mundy Mill Road, the trail continues to Thurmon Tanner Parkway, where it resumes as a sidepath utilizing existing sidewalks and available right of way, ultimately terminating at Oakwood Road.

This alignment provides a grade-separated crossing for pedestrians and bicyclists, improving safety and continuity. In addition, the UNG Campus Vision Plan identifies the opportunity for a prominent gateway feature; the proposed pedestrian bridge could serve as a distinctive and visually significant entrance to the university.



UNG Campus Pond

CAMPUS SIDEPATH - UNG CAMPUS TO OAKWOOD ROAD



This segment extends from the existing Highlands to Islands Trail on the UNG campus, following a sidepath along Landrum Education Drive. It crosses Campus Drive and continues briefly along its alignment before traversing UNG property adjacent to the fountain. The route proceeds across SR 53 via an elevated pedestrian bridge, then turns toward Thurmon Tanner Parkway. From there, it shifts southwest, turning onto Oakwood Road and terminating at Main Street.

UNPAVED TRAILS
SEWER EASEMENT
FLOODWAY

STREET CROSSING
BRIDGE/CULVERT



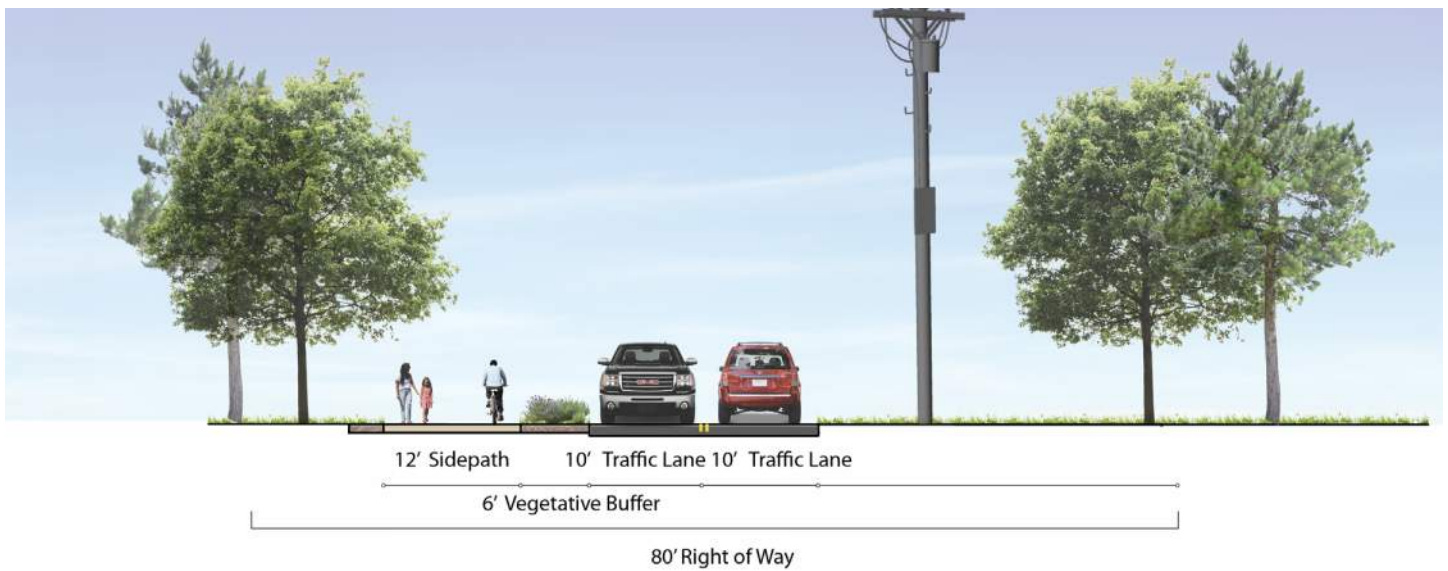
0 0.15 0.3 Miles

CAMPUS SIDEPATH - UNG CAMPUS TO OAKWOOD ROAD

SEGMENT SUMMARY

	LENGTH	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP	OOPC*	LINEAR FEET OF BOARDWALK	LINEAR FEET OF RETAINING WALL	NUMBER OF STREET CROSSINGS	NUMBER OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS
UNG CAMPUS TO OAKWOOD RD	8000'	CITY OF GAINESVILLE, PRIVATE OWNERS	\$26,062,878	135'	0	1	0

* Opinion of Probable Cost includes Project Management and Contingency costs. More detailed cost data can be found on Page 97.



SIDEPATH CROSS SECTION: 80' RIGHT OF WAY. 12' WIDE TRAIL WITH 6' VEGETATIVE BUFFER FROM ROAD TRAFFIC



PROPOSED BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE ACROSS MUNDY MILL ROAD

AT-GRADE RAILROAD CROSSINGS: MAIN STREET CROSSING

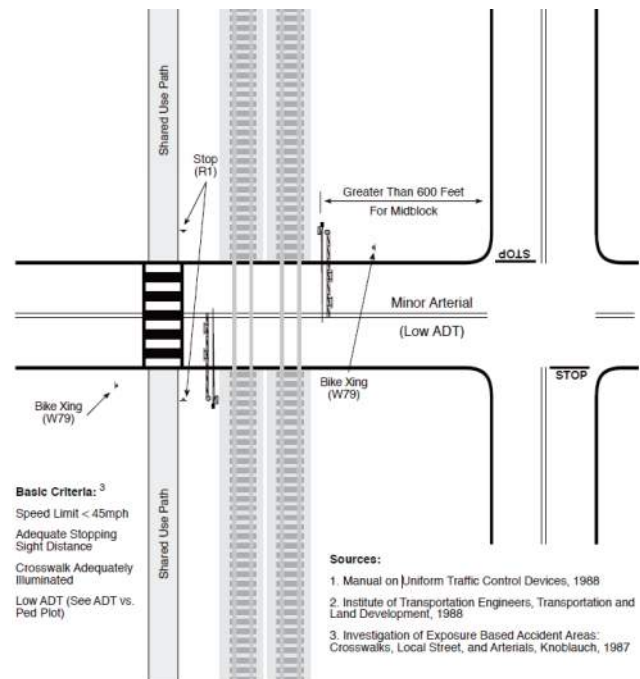
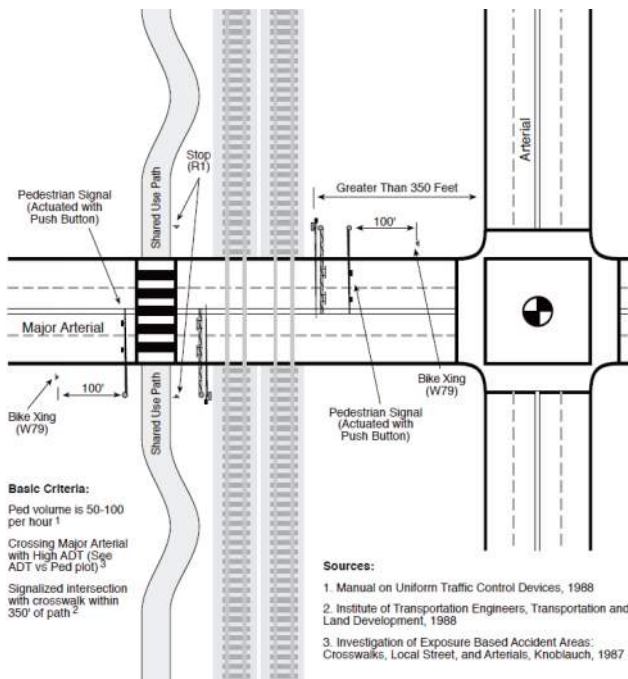


Z-Gate Railroad Crossing example



Z-Gate Railroad Crossing example

AT-GRADE STREET CROSSINGS: CHAMBLEE ROAD AND RADFORD ROAD



Signalized Crossing: involves a reconfiguration of the road and installation of traffic signals and signage. The new signal needs to be coordinated with other nearby signals.

Unsignalized Crossing: can create safety hazards for trail users and motorists but may be used where sight lines are good and traffic volumes are low.

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



Chamblee Road/
Norfolk Southern
Railroad Corridor

CHAPTER 6

IMPLEMENTATION

OPINION OF PROBABLE COST (OOPC)

Planning-level cost estimates were calculated for each preferred alignment. Baseline estimates were developed from the characteristics of proposed improvements and determined unit costs, which can be found in the table below.

The cost estimate includes an estimate for Overhead & Profit/Project Management/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance, which was determined to be 25% of construction costs. In addition, a 15% contingency was applied to cost estimates. While these project cost estimates were derived in 2025 dollars, costs may need to be adjusted to account for inflation in the year of expenditure for programming of future costs. An estimated annual escalation of 3% is recommended.

IMPROVEMENT TREATMENT	UNIT	UNIT COST
Concrete sidewalk	SF	\$16
High-Visibility Crosswalks	LF	\$250.00
CIP Gravity Wall (assumes 5' height)	SF	\$180.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	SF	\$105.00
Static Sign (assumes 1 static sign installation)	EA	\$600.00
Multi-Use Bridge over Roadway	SF	\$1,500.00
Enhanced Identity Bridge over Roadway	SF	\$1,500.00
Creek Bridge (assumes the bridge has a 12' wide deck and is 60' long. Cost includes structure, basic pier supports, and installation.)	EA	\$140,000.00

RAIL TRAIL ALIGNMENT COST ESTIMATE

ITEM	NUMBER	UNIT	COST/UNIT	TOTAL
RAIL TRAIL - UNG TO INDUSTRIAL PARK				
Concrete Sidewalk	37,800	SF	\$16.00	\$604,800.00
CIP Gravity Wall	1,100	SF	\$180.00	\$198,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$160,560.00
			Subtotal	\$963,360.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$240,840.00
			30 % Contingency	\$289,008.00
			Total	\$1,493,208.00
RAIL TRAIL - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO MAIN STREET				
Concrete Sidewalk	39,492	SF	\$16.00	\$631,872.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	5,892	SF	\$105.00	\$618,660.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$250,106.00
			Subtotal	\$1,500,638.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$375,160.00
			30 % Contingency	\$450,192.00
			Total	\$2,325,990.00
RAIL TRAIL - MAIN STREET TO CHAMBLEE ROAD				
Concrete Sidewalk	68,280	SF	\$16.00	\$1,092,480.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	3,720	SF	\$105.00	\$390,600.00
CIP Gravity Wall	1,500	SF	\$180.00	\$270,000.00
High-Visibility Crosswalk	20	LF	\$250.00	\$5,000.00
Static Sign	2	EA	\$600.00	\$1,200.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$351,856.00
			Subtotal	\$2,111,136.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$527,784.00
			30 % Contingency	\$633,341.00
			Total	\$3,272,261.00
RAIL TRAIL - CHAMBLEE ROAD TO HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY				
Concrete Sidewalk	66,528	SF	\$16.00	\$1,064,448.00
CIP Gravity Wall	885	SF	\$180.00	\$159,300.00
High-Visibility Crosswalk	21	LF	\$250.00	\$5,250.00
Static Sign	2	EA	\$600.00	\$1,200.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$246,040.00
			Subtotal	\$1,476,238.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$369,059.00
			30 % Contingency	\$442,871.00
			Total	\$2,288,168.00
RAIL TRAIL - HF REED INDUSTRIAL PARKWAY TO RADFORD ROAD				
Concrete Sidewalk	58,212	SF	\$16.00	\$931,392.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	1,464	SF	\$105.00	\$153,720.00
CIP Gravity Wall	735	SF	\$180.00	\$132,300.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$243,482.00
			Subtotal	\$1,460,894.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$365,224.00
			30 % Contingency	\$438,268.00
			Total	\$2,264,386.00
RAIL TRAIL - RADFORD ROAD TO SPRING STREET				
Concrete Sidewalk	57,720	SF	\$16.00	\$923,520.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	2,604	SF	\$105.00	\$273,420.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$239,388.00
			Subtotal	\$1,436,328.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$359,082.00
			30 % Contingency	\$430,898.00
			Total	\$2,226,308.00
TOTAL TRAIL COST				\$13,840,792.00

GREENWAY SEWER EASEMENT TRAIL ALIGNMENT COST ESTIMATE

ITEM	NUMBER	UNIT	COST/UNIT	TOTAL
GREENWAY - CAMPUS TRAIL CONNECTION				
Concrete Sidewalk	113,400	SF	\$16.00	\$1,479,360.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	6,000	SF	\$105.00	\$630,000.00
Creek Bridge		EA	\$140,000.00	\$140,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$516,880.00
			Subtotal	\$3,101,280.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$775,320.00
			30 % Contingency	\$930,384.00
			Total	\$4,806,984.00
GREENWAY - MILLSIDE PARKWAY TO MUNDY MILL ROAD				
Concrete Sidewalk	69,960	SF	\$16.00	\$1,119,360.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	1,260	SF	\$105.00	\$132,300.00
Creek Bridge		EA	\$140,000.00	\$140,000.00
Multi-Use Bridge over Roadway	5,000	SF	\$1,500.00	\$7,500,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$1,778,332.00
			Subtotal	\$10,669,992.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$2,667,498.00
			30 % Contingency	\$3,200,998.00
			Total	\$16,538,488.00
GREENWAY - MUNDY MILL ROAD TO BALUS CREEK				
Concrete Sidewalk	65,724	SF	\$16.00	\$1,051,584.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	2,400	SF	\$105.00	\$252,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$260,717.00
			Subtotal	\$1,564,301.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$391,075.00
			30 % Contingency	\$469,290.00
			Total	\$2,424,666.00
GREENWAY - BALUS CREEK TO MAIN STREET				
Concrete Sidewalk	67,500	SF	\$16.00	\$1,080,000.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	1,380	SF	\$105.00	\$144,900.00
High-Visibility Crosswalk	20	LF	\$250.00	\$5,000.00
Creek Bridge		EA	\$140,000.00	\$140,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$273,980.00
			Subtotal	\$1,643,880.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$35,000.00
			30 % Contingency	\$42,000.00
			Total	\$2,134,860.00
TOTAL TRAIL COST				\$25,904,998.00

CAMPUS SIDEPATH ALIGNMENT COST ESTIMATE

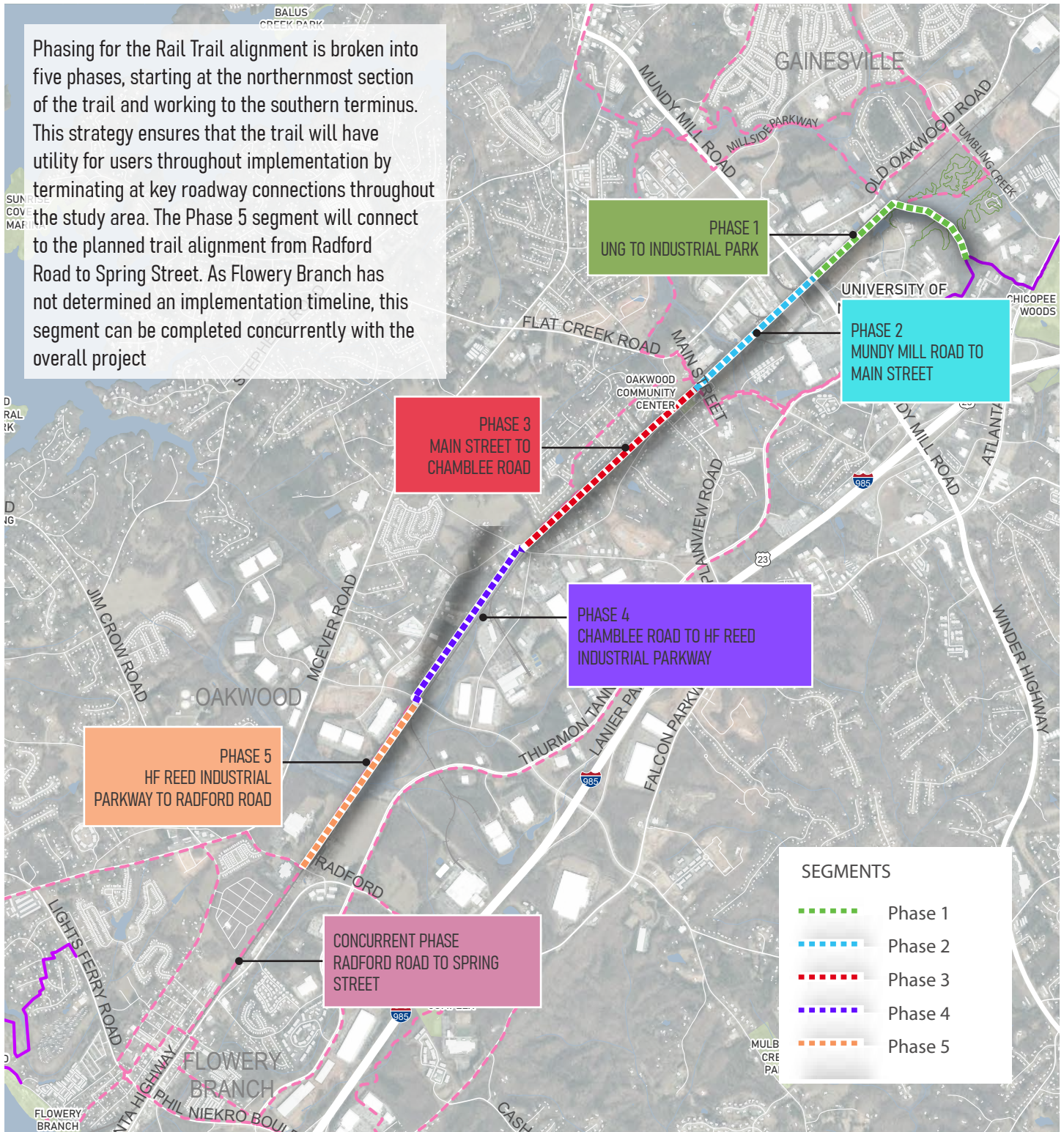
ITEM	NUMBER	UNIT	COST/UNIT	TOTAL
CAMPUS SIDEPATH - UNG CAMPUS TO OAKWOOD ROAD				
Concrete Sidewalk	80,000	SF	\$16.00	\$1,280,000.00
Concrete Boardwalk Superstructure and Pavement	1,260	SF	\$105.00	\$132,300.00
Multi-Use Bridge over Roadway	8,400	SF	\$1,500.00	\$12,600,000.00
20% Clearing, Grading, Erosion Control, Stormwater, Utilities				\$2,802,460.00
			Subtotal	\$16,814,760.00
			O&P/Proj Mgmt/Mobilization/Bonding & Insurance	\$4,203,690.00
			30 % Contingency	\$5,044,428.00
			Total	\$26,062,878.00
TOTAL TRAIL COST				\$26,062,878.00

HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL STUDY

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

PREFERRED ALIGNMENT PHASING MAP

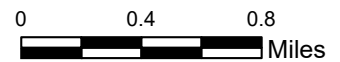
Phasing for the Rail Trail alignment is broken into five phases, starting at the northernmost section of the trail and working to the southern terminus. This strategy ensures that the trail will have utility for users throughout implementation by terminating at key roadway connections throughout the study area. The Phase 5 segment will connect to the planned trail alignment from Radford Road to Spring Street. As Flowery Branch has not determined an implementation timeline, this segment can be completed concurrently with the overall project



SEGMENTS	
	Phase 1
	Phase 2
	Phase 3
	Phase 4
	Phase 5

- UNPAVED TRAILS
- SEWER EASEMENT
- FLOODWAY

- HIGHLANDS TO ISLANDS TRAIL NETWORK Status
- Complete
 - Previously Planned



NEXT STEPS

The recommended next steps for project implementation are described below:



SCHEMATIC DESIGN THROUGH CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

Detailed design concepts can be developed for each phase of the projects in order to prepare trail segments for implementation. Design of later trail phases can be completed while earlier phases are under construction in order to expedite the implementation process.



PERMITTING

Due to the complex environmental systems along the alignment, permitting may be necessary for development within wetlands and near waterways. Organizations such as the Army Corps of Engineers and the Georgia Environmental Protection Division should be engaged early in the process to ensure that any required permits can be completed.



MUNICIPAL COORDINATION

As the trail alignment spans multiple jurisdictions, communication and coordination between municipalities and regional organizations is a vital step. This will ensure that trail development meets the needs and standards of each relevant jurisdiction and that support and progress is consistent.



LAND-OWNER ENGAGEMENT

Key land owners along the alignment should be engaged throughout the implementation progress to maintain support and facilitate coordination. Key land owners include Norfolk-Southern, who will require significant involvement for trail development.



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

GHMPO should explore the following opportunities as options for funding sources.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)

The program is a partnership between Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to provide funds to local governments for projects that improve the quality of life for citizens in communities, such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, pedestrian streetscape improvements, and other non-traditional transportation related activities. A typical match of 20% is required from local municipalities.

BETTER UTILIZING INVESTMENTS TO LEVERAGE DEVELOPMENT (BUILD-FORMERLY RAISE)

Better Utilizing Investments To Leverage Development (BUILD), formerly Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program provides grants for surface transportation infrastructure projects with significant local or regional impact. The awards under the program formerly known as RAISE represent a shift away from funding projects that are solely focused on making it safe to walk and bike. Instead, there is greater investment in increased capacity for motor vehicles, though active transportation is included as an element for a little more than one-third of the projects. Priority for funding will be given for projects that can begin construction in 18 months that meet criteria for safety, quality of life, mobility and community connectivity, and economic competitiveness.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM

This federal grant program is funded by the Federal Highway Administration and administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The program works to support recreational trails and trail-related facilities. Funds can be awarded to eligible applicants, including local governments, authorized commissions, and state and federal agencies.

GEORGIA OUTDOOR STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

This grant program, administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, provides dedicated funding to support parks and trails and protect and acquire lands critical to wildlife, clean water and outdoor recreation across the state. Eligible projects include those that support state parks and trails; support local parks and trails of state and regional significance; provide stewardship of conservation land; or acquire critical areas for the provision or protection of clean water, wildlife, hunting, fishing, military installation buffering, or for natural resource-based outdoor recreation.

TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (TSPLOST)

A Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) is a 1% sales tax collected for a specific program of transportation projects. For a TSPLOST to be enacted, it must be approved by voters in a referendum. 'Transportation special purpose' includes roads, bridges, streets, sidewalks, bicycle paths and all the infrastructure and services necessary to provide access to these facilities. This includes right of way acquisitions, construction, renovation and improvement, relocating utilities, stormwater improvements, and other repairs necessary.

SPECIAL PURPOSE LOCAL OPTION SALES TAX (SPLOST)

A Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) is a 1% sales tax collected that must be used for capital projects, like buildings, equipment, vehicles, roads and drainage projects. Projects financed via SPLOST are intended to benefit the county as a whole—either on their own or in combination with other funding sources.

RAILROAD CROSSING ELIMINATION GRANTS

Administered by the Federal Railway Administration (FRA), this program finances rail crossing improvements, with a focus on enhancing safety and freight mobility. Eligible projects encompass grade separated rail crossings, including planning, environmental review, and design components.

THANK YOU!

