



THE SINGING RIVER TRAIL: PLANNING FOR A REGIONAL GREENWAY

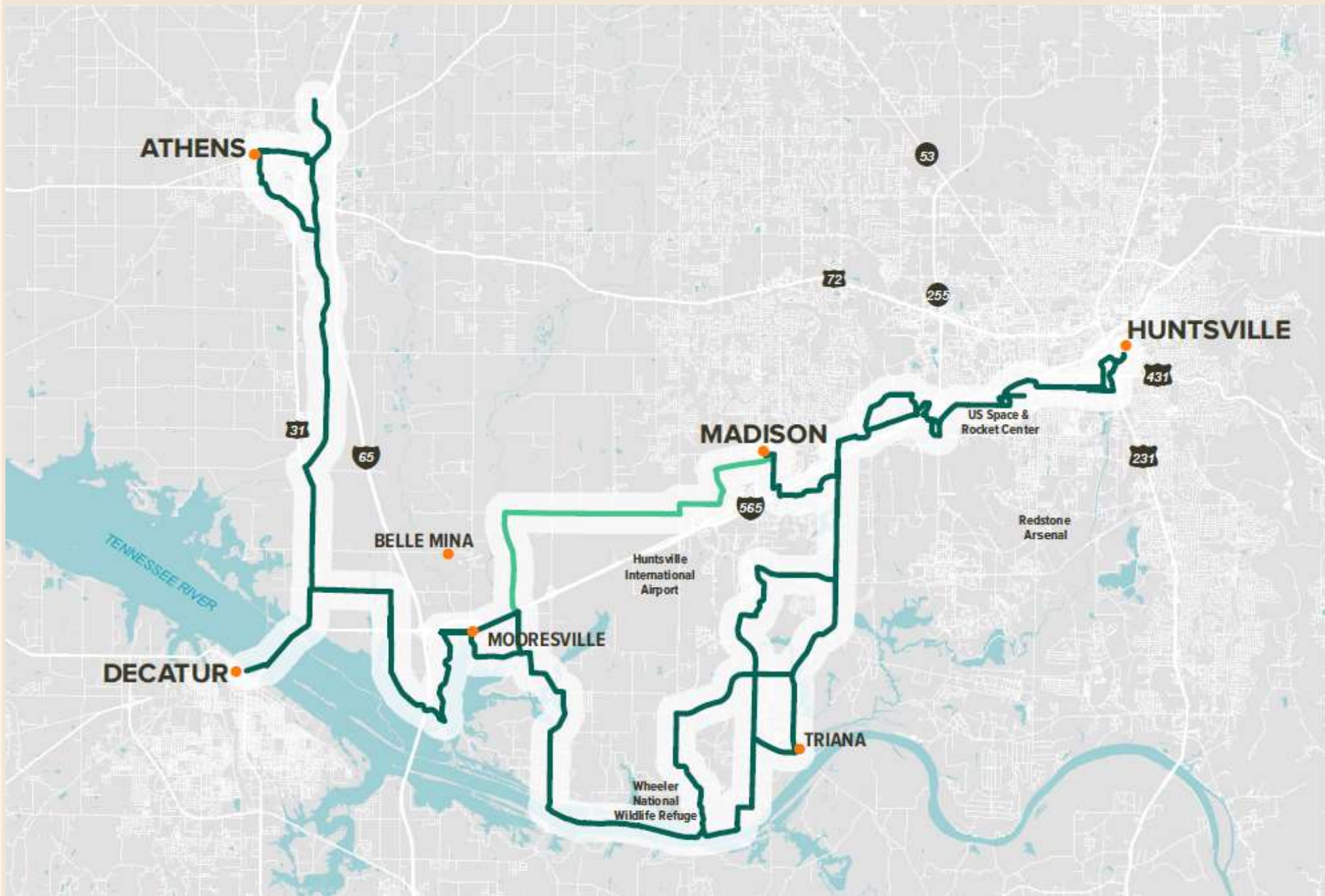
AL/MS APA CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 2019



Singing River Trail Presentation Outline

- 1 What is the Singing River Trail?
- 2 Benefits of Regional Trails
- 3 The Master Plan – How did we get here?
- 4 **What's next?**

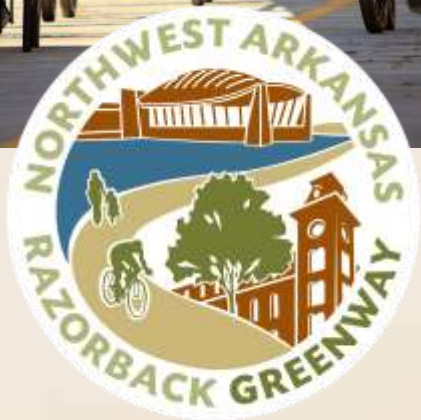








2 Benefits of Regional Trails





Swamp Rabbit Trail, SC



Virginia Creeper Trail

“...probably the single most important thing that’s happened to the city of Travelers Rest in years.”

Mayor Wayne McCall

Triana?

Mooreville?



Razorback Greenway, Fayetteville, AR



Razorback Greenway



Capital Crescent Trail, DC Area



Asheville, NC Greenway system



East Coast Greenway, Raleigh, NC



American Tobacco Trail, Durham, NC

Swamp Rabbit Trail



Swamp Rabbit Trail, Greenville, SC



Razorback Greenway, Fayetteville, AR



Durham, NC American Tobacco Trail



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Evaluating the **ECONOMIC IMPACT** of **SHARED USE PATHS** in North Carolina

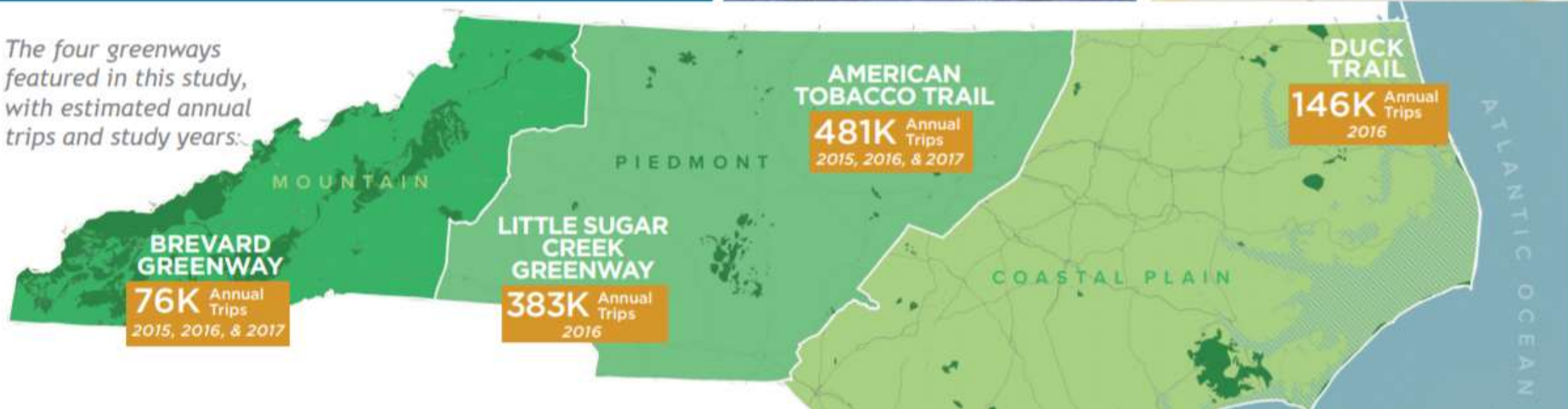
MARCH 2018



Shared use paths, also known as **GREENWAYS**, provide a shared space for bicycle and pedestrian travel outside of the roadway. This project's objective was to design and test an approach for measuring the economic contributions of greenways in North Carolina.



The four greenways featured in this study, with estimated annual trips and study years:





COMBINED STUDY RESULTS

A one-time **\$26.7M** capital investment in the four greenways supports:



\$19.4M

Estimated annual sales revenue at local businesses along the four greenways



\$684K

Estimated annual local and state sales tax revenue from businesses along the greenways



\$25.7M

Estimated annual savings due to more physical activity, less pollution and congestion, and fewer traffic injuries from use of the greenways



\$48.7M

Estimated business revenue from greenway construction



790 JOBS

Are supported annually through greenway construction

RETURN ON INVESTMENT: Every **\$1.00** of trail construction supports **\$1.72 annually** from local business revenue, sales tax revenue, and benefits related to health and transportation.

13%

INCREASE IN
MINORITY USE

501,236

TRAIL USERS

20%

INCREASE IN
OVERALL USE



MOST POPULAR
TEMPERATURE FOR
TRAIL USE:

61-70

DEGREES



25% OF TRAIL USERS ARE
TOURISTS, BOOSTING OUR
ECONOMY BY:

\$6.7

MILLION



AVERAGE TIME
USERS SPEND ON
THE TRAIL:

1.5

HOURS



- Increases in sales/ revenue ranging from 10% to as high as 85%.
- 25% of users from out of town.
- 12% using for transportation.

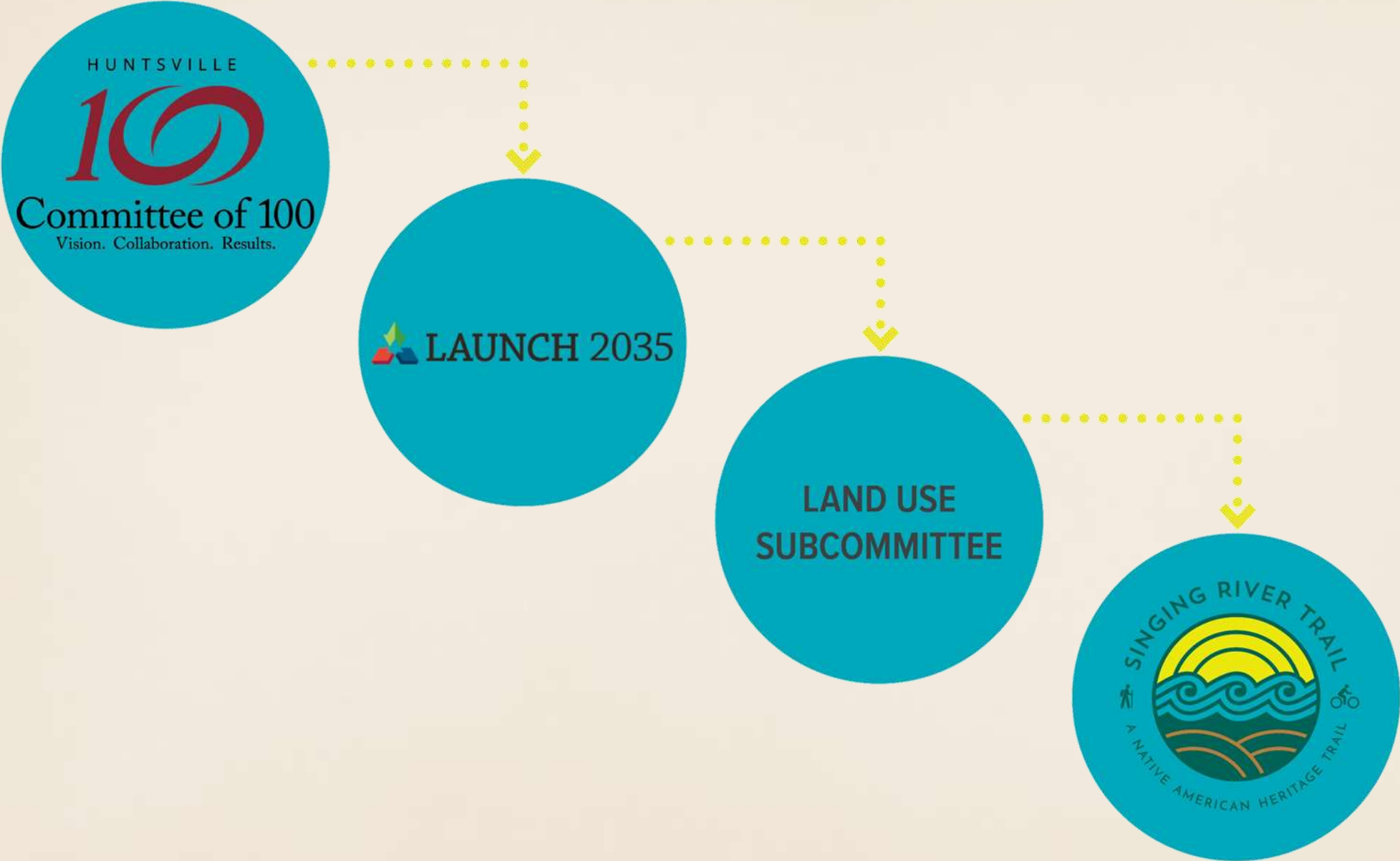
3 Singing River Trail Master Plan – How did we get here?



 LAUNCH 2035



How This All Started





HUNTSVILLE HOSPITAL SYSTEM



Commission Chairman
Dale W. Strong



ROBINS & MORTON



Senator
Slade
Blackwell



MORGAN COUNTY
COMMISSION



Senator
Arthur Orr



Speaker
Mac McCutcheon



Drs. Aruna and
Amit Arora

Greater
Limestone County
Chamber of Commerce

BAKER
DONELSON
Joe Campbell



Century
Automotive



Friends of Singing River Trail:

Clint Shelton, Decatur Daily; Mike Cole, Wilmer & Lee Attorneys; Steve Raby, Direct Communications; David Spillers, Huntsville Hospital; Health System; Mike Dalen, OMI, Inc.

Partner



Prepared By





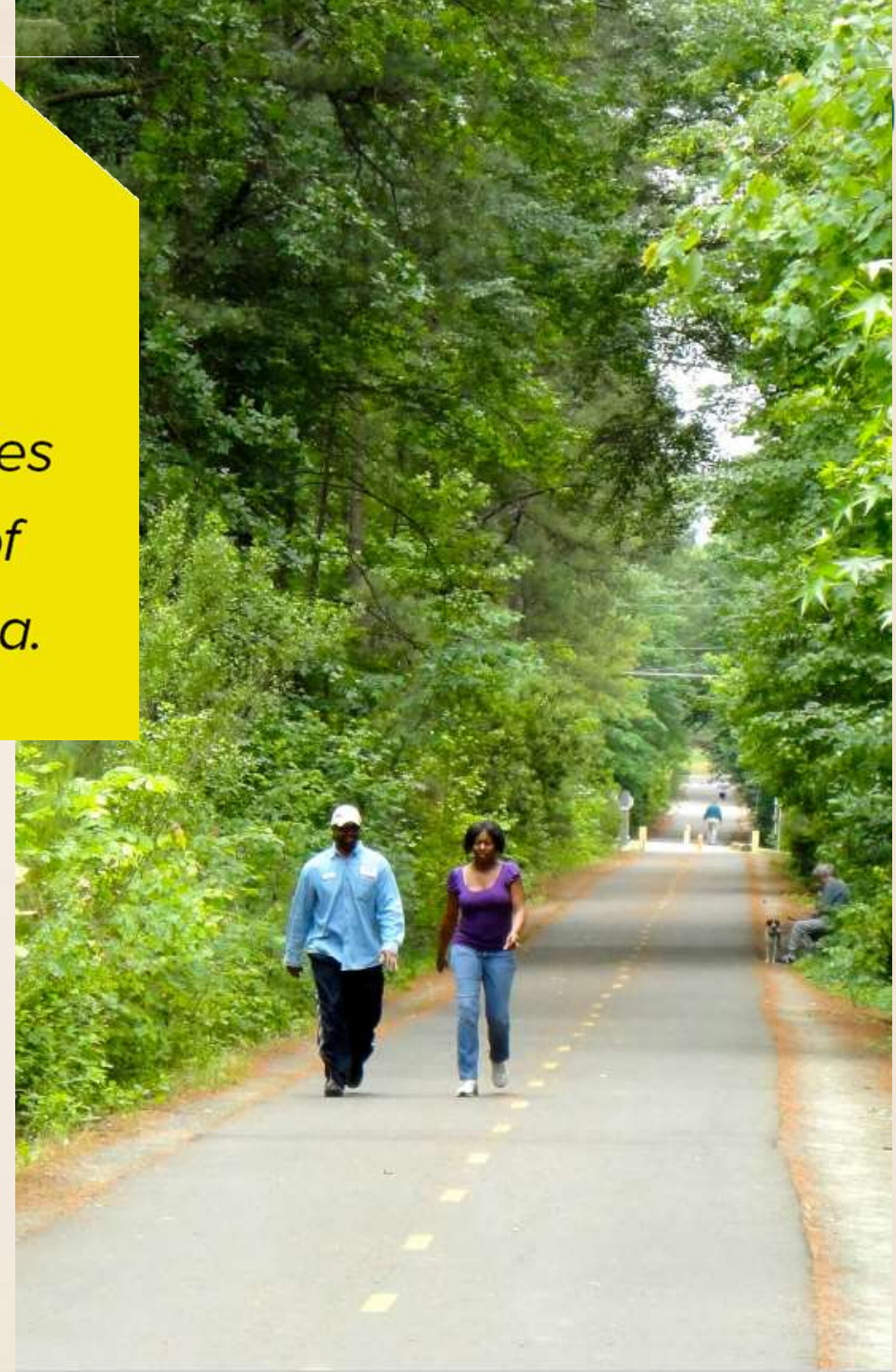
Singing River Trail Committee

Launch 2035 Land Use (Singing River Trail) Committee

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|------------------|---|-----------------|---|
| Nancy Robertson | TARCOG | Paige Colburn | City of Huntsville | Debbie Gibson | Dec/Morgan Co. CVB Pres/CEO |
| Joe Campbell | Huntsville Hospital System | Mike Dalen | Land Trust of North Alabama Board | Joey Hester | North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments |
| Marie Bostick | Land Trust of North Alabama | Scott McLain | Coldwell Banker Commercial | John Meredith | Meredith Advocacy |
| Mary Beth Broeren | City of Madison | Brandi Quick | Ditto Landing | Jeanne Payne | Cook Museum |
| Connie Graham | City of Huntsville | Rick Tucker | Huntsville International Airport | Sandra Buroughs | Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association |
| Dennis Madsen | City of Huntsville / Huntsville MPO | Jeff Pruitt | North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments | Joe Vallely | US Space and Rocket Center |
| Carol Rhea | Orion Planning & Design | Wally Terry | City of Decatur | Shannon Keith | Alabama Trail of Tears Association |
| Les Tillery | Planning Commission Member, City of Huntsville | Ben Payment | HSV Greenways Committee | John Allen | Committee of 100 |
| Lauren Vandiver | TVA | Bruce Weddendorf | Straight to Ale | Bill Sims | |
| Dewayne Hellums | Decatur MPO | Jenna Streeter | Madison Co Commission | Sarah Toth | Alabama A&M |
| Emery Hoyle | Wheeler Wildlife Refuge | Amy Golden | Athens Utilities | Richard Martin | |
| Ricky Ingram | Wheeler Wildlife Refuge | Gary Van Wagnen | Limestone Co United Way | Tom Cunningham | 4Site |
| Karen Smith | City of Decatur | James Vandiver | City of Huntsville | | |
| Erin Tidwell | City of Athens | Craig Beasley | | | |
| Falguni Patel | TARCOG | David Breland | AL Historic Commission | | |
| Rod Huffman | City of Athens | Kaylin Deal | Renta Urban Land Design | | |

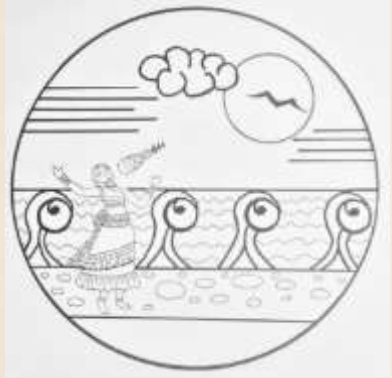
VISION

The Singing River Trail (SRT) is a world-class resource that connects the region, celebrates Native American heritage, provides educational opportunities, contributes to economic development, and enhances the quality of life for residents and visitors throughout North Alabama.





Logo Development





"The planned Singing River Trail is a key resource for the future of North Alabama, and will help us attract not only new customers visiting the area for the first time to enjoy it from a new perspective, but even more importantly the active people we need to keep our creative enterprise running and growing. We fully support the development of this beautiful public resource."

*Bruce Weddendorf,
Straight to Ale Brewery*

"The Singing River Trail will provide a quality of life enhancement for the citizens of Limestone, Madison and Morgan Counties and, as a consequence, foster future increased growth for years to come."

Alabama State Senator Arthur Orr

"The Singing River Trail helps accomplish the community's desire for improved connectivity in a manner that is fun, equitable, safe and beautiful. This landmark project also hits many of the goals outlined in Huntsville's BIG Picture Master plan to create a vibrant, sustainable and healthy community that is pedestrian and bike friendly."

Mayor Tommy Battle, City of Huntsville

"The Singing River Trail is a wonderful way to connect our communities and explore our beautiful and diverse areas. We are excited to have the trail come through Mooresville and connect people to our neighbor-Wheeler Wildlife Refuge. This trail will be such an asset to North Alabama."

Mayor Margaret Anne Crumlish, Town of Mooresville



"The Singing River Trail will be a great addition to the transportation system in the North Alabama Region by providing relief of traffic congestion, added health benefits and promoting tourism."

Dewayne Hellums, Director, Decatur Area MPO

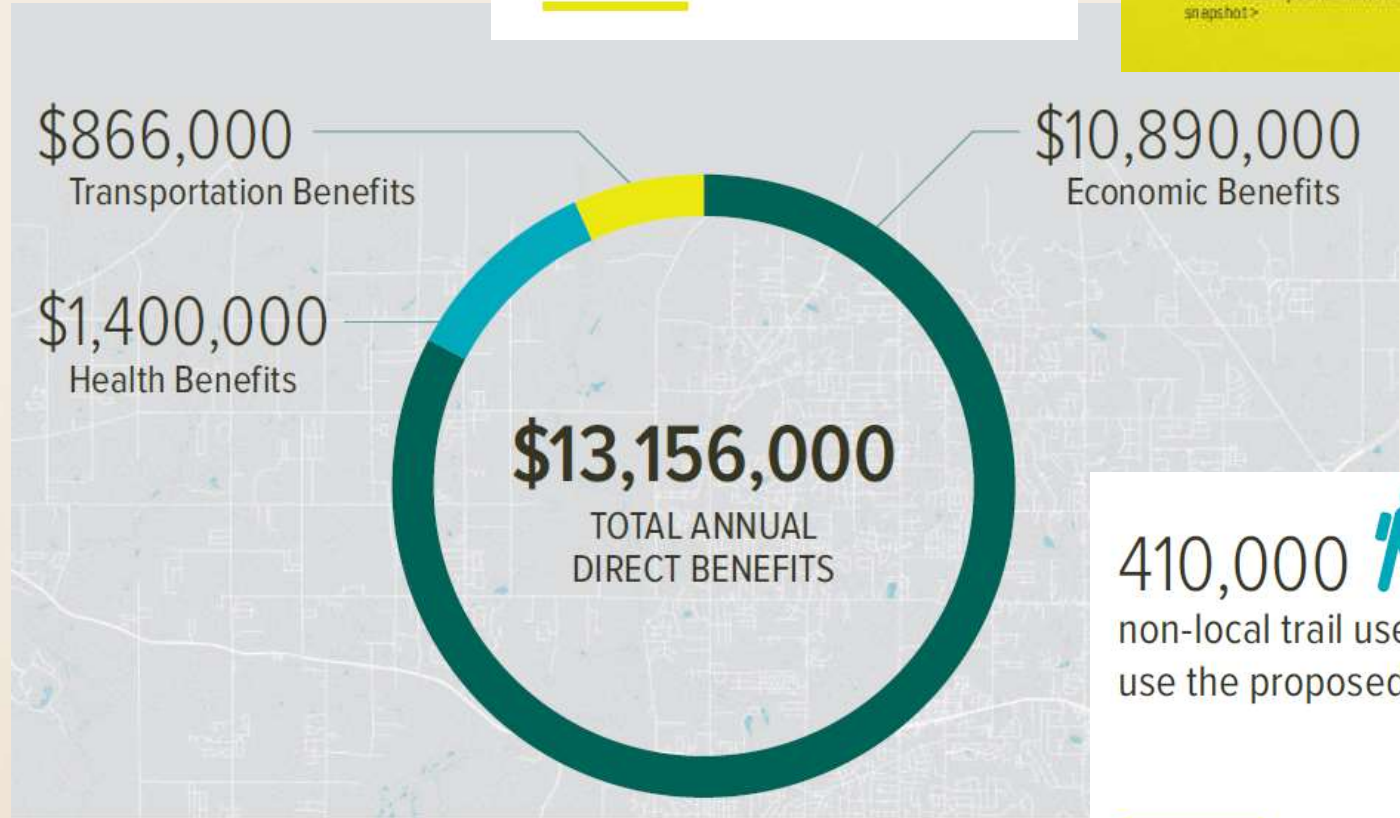
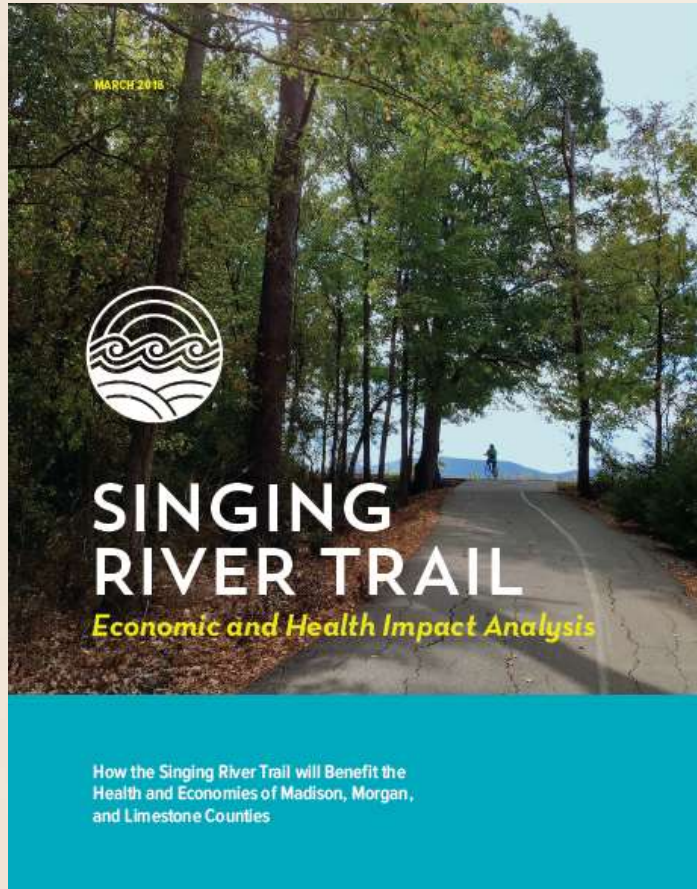
"Connecting the proposed new Athens Recreation Center, the expanded Athens Sportsplex and the Swan Creek Greenway National Recreation Trail will be vital asset to assist in the growth and development of the Athens Area. The Singing River Trail will connect our downtown communities and neighborhoods to the south and east!"

Mayor William "Ronnie" Marks, City of Athens

"Once the Singing River Trails get underway, and then brought to completion, Limestone County will benefit in ways we don't even yet understand. What we do know and understand is the increased recreational opportunities and healthy lifestyles for walkers and hikers and bicycle riders, young and old. Visitors will not only be impressed, they will come back and add dollars to our local economy, lots of them, I think. So, Limestone County will just become a more and more desirable place to live, work and play."

Rod Huffman, Athens Planning Commission

Economic and Health Impact



410,000   non-local trail users (estimated) would use the proposed trail each year.



01

HEART OF HUNTSVILLE

DOWNTOWN HUNTSVILLE TO
BOTANICAL GARDEN

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02

THE ROCKET CORRIDOR

BOTANICAL GARDEN TO
MADISON BASEBALL PARK

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03

MADISON-TRIANA LINK

MADISON BASEBALL PARK
TO TRIANA

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04

WHEELER WILDLIFE TOUR

TRIANA TO MOORESVILLE

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05

RIVER CITY CONNECTION

MOORESVILLE TO DECATUR

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06

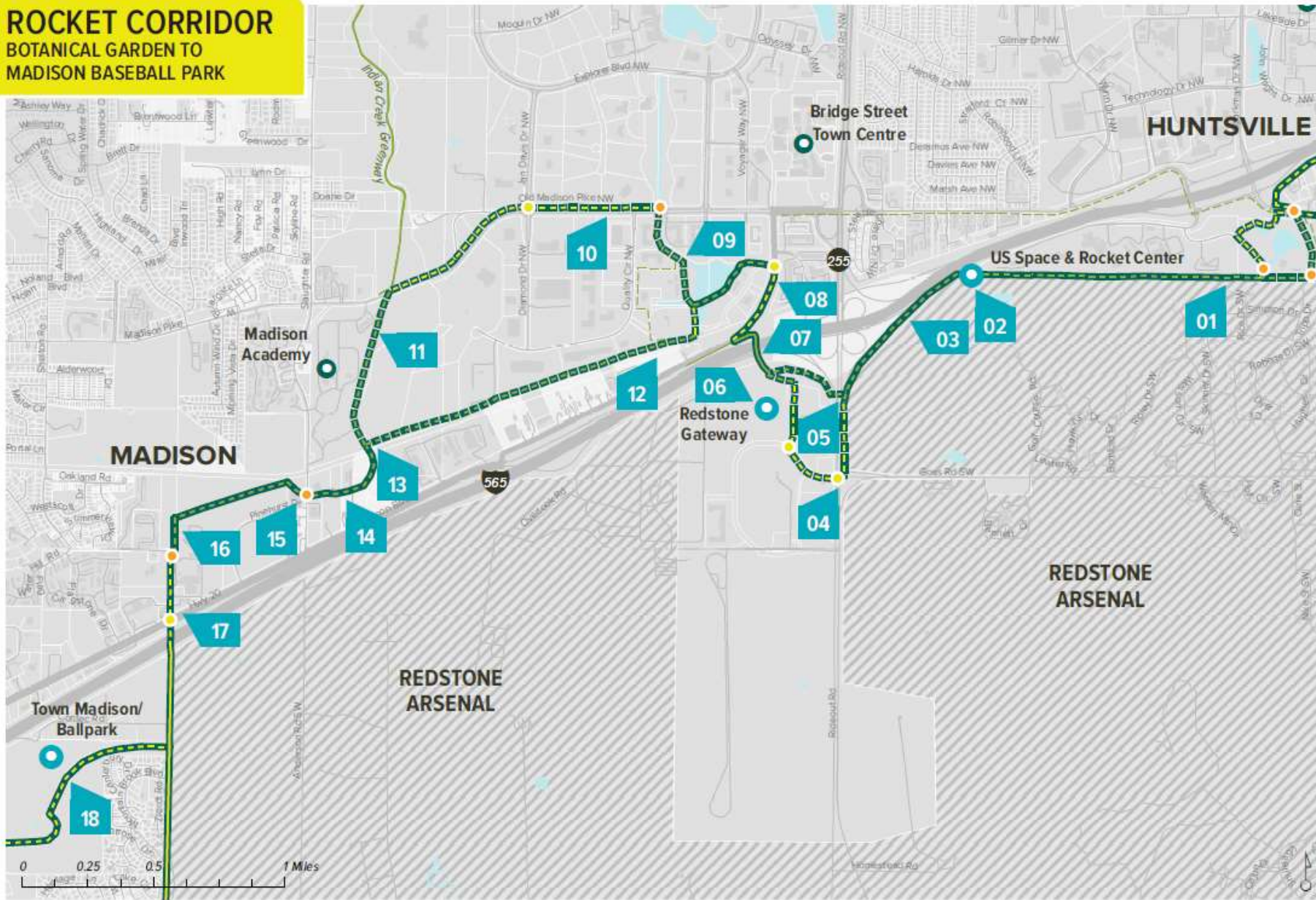
SWAN CREEK

CALHOUN COMMUNITY
COLLEGE TO ATHENS

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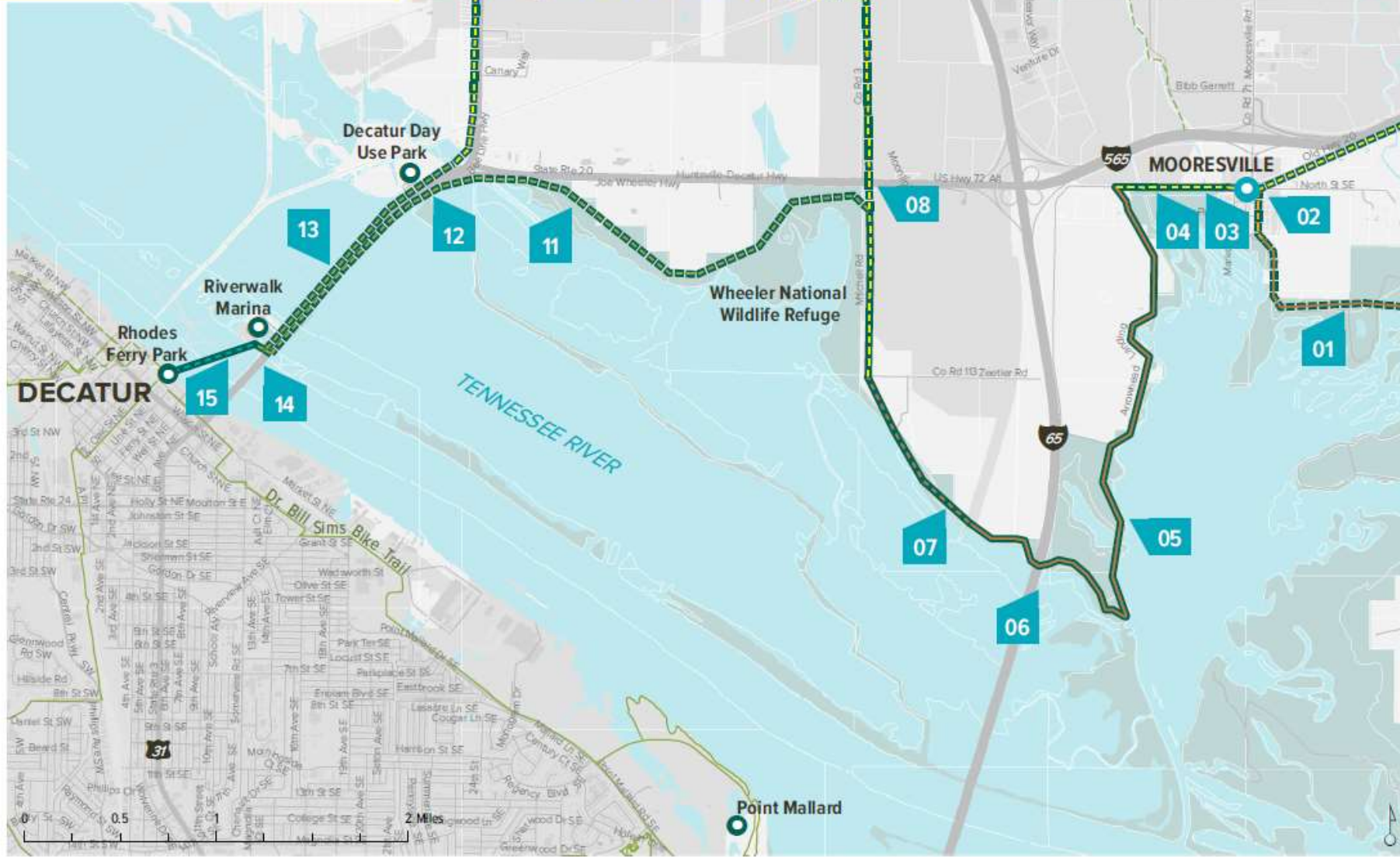
ROCKET CORRIDOR BOTANICAL GARDEN TO MADISON BASEBALL PARK



- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Proposed Alignment | Existing On-Street Bicycle Facility | Proposed On-Street Bicycle Facility | Proposed Trailhead | Interstate | Fish and Wildlife Service Land |
| Proposed Alternative Alignment | Existing Shared Use Path | Proposed Shared Use Path | Other Destination | US Highway | Redstone Arsenal |
| Proposed Commuter Route | Existing Sidepath | Proposed Side Path | Proposed Midblock Crossing | State Road | Municipality |
| Existing Unpaved Shared Use Path | Proposed Unpaved Shared Use Path | Proposed Ferry | Signalized Intersection | County or Local Road | Water |
| | | | | Railroads | |

RIVER CITY CONNECTION

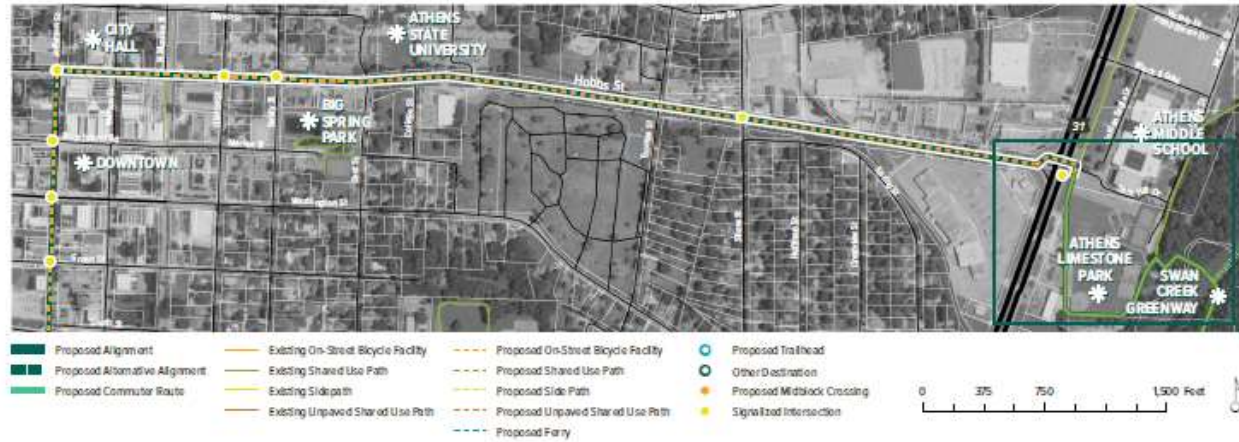
MOORESVILLE TO DECATUR



- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Proposed Alignment | Existing On-Street Bicycle Facility | Proposed On-Street Bicycle Facility | Proposed Trailhead | Interstate | Fish and Wildlife Service Land |
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| | | Proposed Ferry | | Railroads | |



HOBBS STREET SWAN CREEK SEGMENT (ATHENS)



HOBBS STREET – GATEWAY CONNECTION FROM SWAN CREEK GREENWAY TO ATHENS STATE COLLEGE AND DOWNTOWN ATHENS

The 2015 Athens Transportation Plan recommends a "Complete Street" road diet of Hobbs Street.

The current roadway has four lanes and is approximately 50 feet from curb-to-curb. 2011 ALDOT traffic counts are 9,710, decreasing to 6,720 closer to Downtown. This roadway should be converted to a 3-lane cross section (1T travel lanes) with buffer and north-side separated bikeway to complement the existing north-side sidewalk.

Existing sidewalk on Hobbs Street should be repaired where necessary, a few small gaps should be filled with sidewalk. Driveway crossings should be consolidated where possible.

The roadway improvement will improve quality of life, connect to multiple destinations, increase transportation options, and contribute to positive economic development for the City of Athens.

SEGMENT LENGTH
6,400 feet (1.2 mile)

FROM: US HWY 31

TO: CLINTON STREET

TRIP GENERATORS
Swan Creek Greenway
Athens-Limestone Park
Athens Middle School
Athens State University
Big Spring Park
City Hall
Downtown Athens

ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST

| Quantity | Item | Cost |
|----------|--------------------------|----------------|
| 6,400 LF | Complete Street Retrofit | \$1,749,526.88 |

See appendix for full engineer's estimate sheet. Estimate does not include acquisition costs or engineering/design/permitting costs.

POSSIBLE PUBLIC/GRANT FUNDING SOURCES: City of Athens, ALDOT, ARC



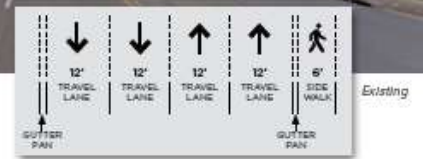
US 31 CROSSING DETAIL



US-31 southbound traffic timing west-bound on Hobbs Street should be in a stop or yield configuration.

The crosswalk should be upgraded to countdown signals and the center median refuge should be extended so that crosswalk cuts through the middle. The crosswalk should be widened to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians.

Utilize existing walking loop of the park, to the Hobbs Street/US 31 intersection.



Off-Street Trail Navigational Elements

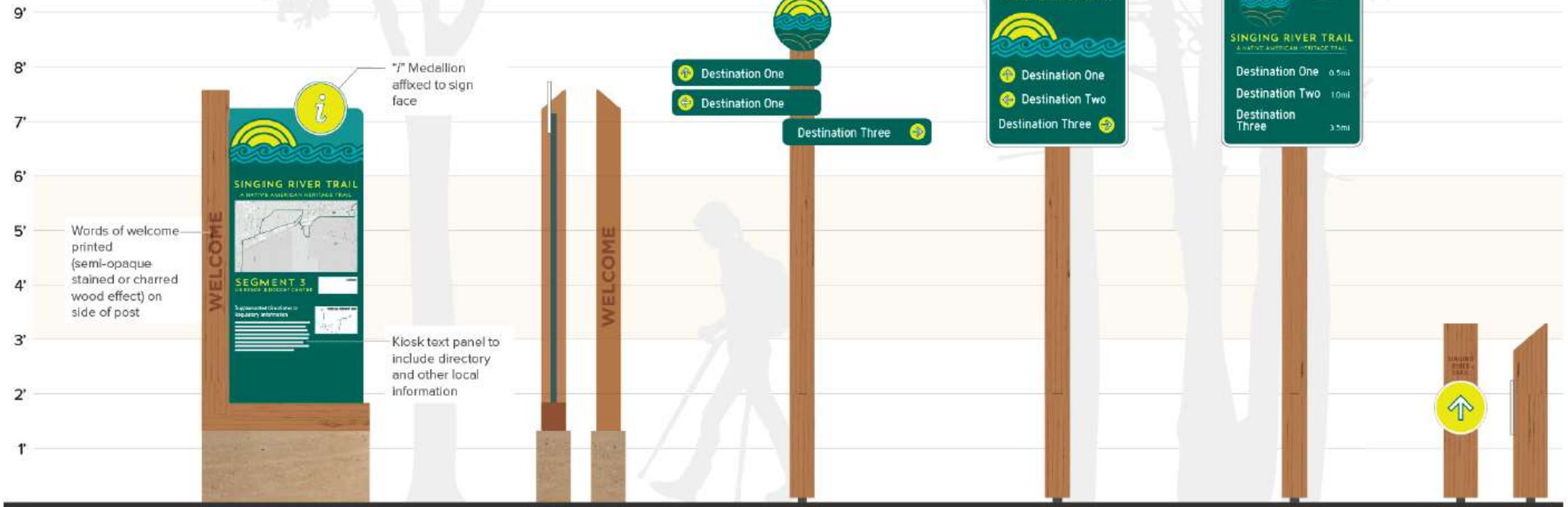


Pattern: Soft Curves

Materials: Stone, Wood, Painted Metal

Colour Palette Inspiration:

Warm earth, blue skies, and river streams



Map Kiosk

Sides

Pedestrian Turn

Ped Directional

Pedestrian Confirmation

Trail Marker (alt / small)



Full Traffic Signal Crossings

Signalized crossings provide the most protection for crossing path users through the use of a red-signal indication to stop conflicting motor vehicle traffic.

A full traffic signal installation treats the path crossing as a conventional 4-way intersection and provides standard red-yellow-green traffic signal heads for all legs of the intersection.



TYPICAL APPLICATION

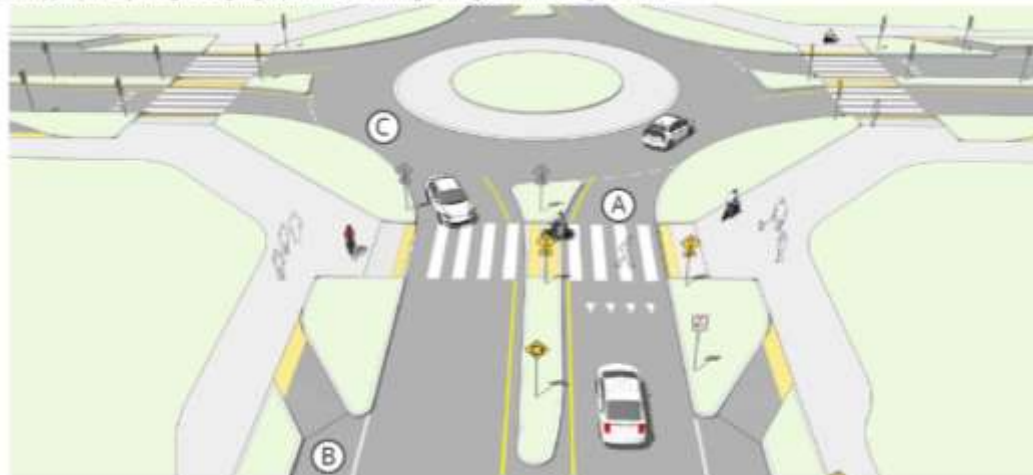
Full traffic signal installations must meet MUTCD pedestrian school or modified warrants. Additional guidance for signalized crossings:

- Located more than 300 feet from an existing signalized intersection
- Roadway travel speeds of 40 MPH and above
- Roadway ADT exceeds 15,000 vehicles

Design Guidelines

Shared-Use Path at Roundabouts

Single lane roundabouts can provide high intersection throughput and reduced delay while reducing points of conflict between people driving, walking, and riding bikes. Multilane roundabouts can offer similar benefits, but introduce more complexity to the intersection and require special design considerations. At roundabouts, it is important to provide clear right-of-way rules to all people traveling through and guidance through use of appropriately designed signage, pavement markings, and geometric design elements.





Rideout Road, near I-565





Wheeler Wildlife Refuge




SUNSHINE BIKES TRAIL
1.5 mi
1.5 mi
1.5 mi



Governors House, Huntsville





Bob Wallace Crossing







Tennessee River - Decatur





*Indian Creek Greenway Extension –
Huntsville/Madison*





Hobbs Street in Athens, AL





4 What's Next?

Action Steps upon Completion of Master Plan

1

WIDE COMMUNICATION AND PRESENTATION OF MASTER PLAN

to Local Governments, State government, organizations, business community, residents

2

DESIGNATION OF LEAD AGENCY – LAUNCH 2035

3

OPERATIONAL FUNDING FOR 5-YEAR PERIOD TO SUPPORT FULL TIME SINGING RIVER TRAIL DIRECTOR

4

SEEK DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION FUNDING

Private partners – Lead gifts, Grants, Municipal/County governments, MPOs/RPOs, State/Federal government

5

HIRE EXPERT CONSULTANT TO MANAGE TRAIL PROGRAM; TEAM OF EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS

6

ACQUISITION AND DESIGN (PHASE 1 PROJECT FIRST)



BUILD Grants

Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development
Transportation Discretionary Grants Program



TOWN
MADISON



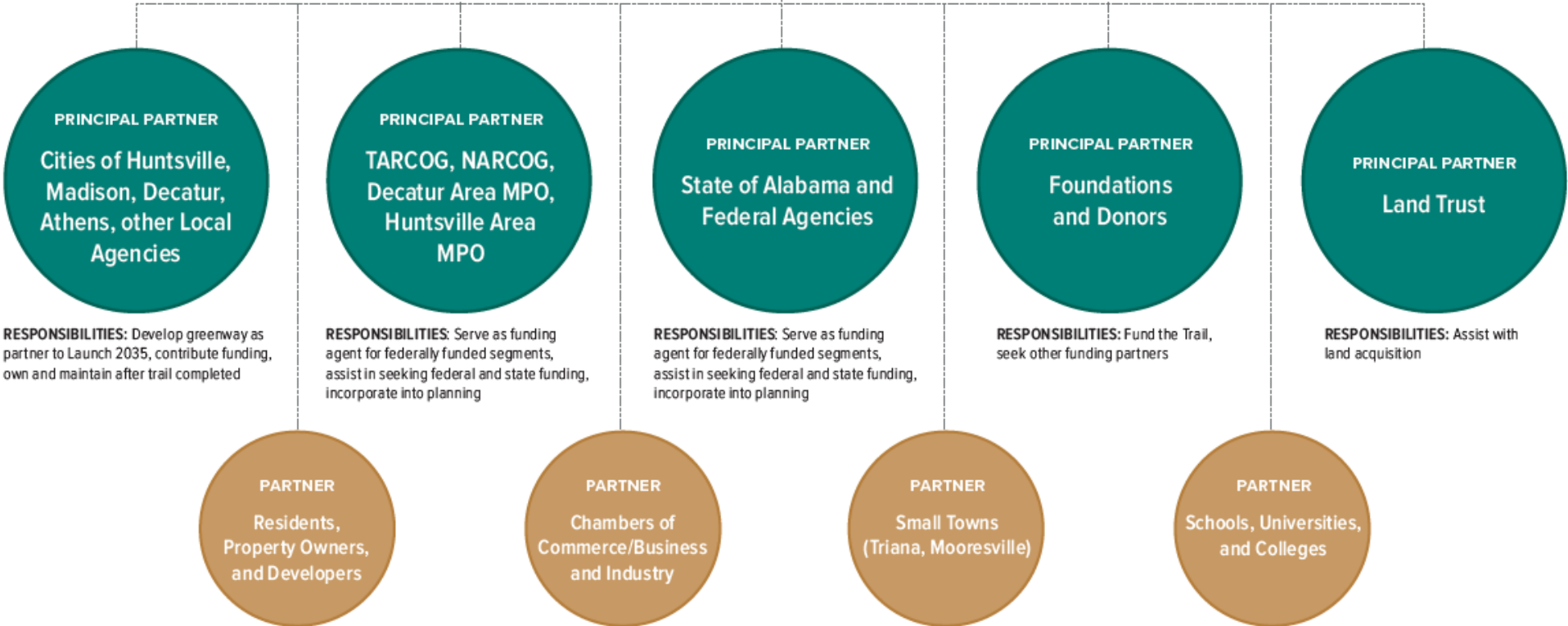
**Singing River Trail
Land Use Committee**

RESPONSIBILITIES: Serve as liaison between Launch 2035 and partnering agency, contribute to public and stakeholder engagement, assist in funding strategies

LAUNCH 2035

RESPONSIBILITIES: Champion trail, develop trail, ensure trail is "world class," seek funding, assist with land acquisition

Board of Directors



PRINCIPAL PARTNER
Cities of Huntsville,
Madison, Decatur,
Athens, other Local
Agencies

RESPONSIBILITIES: Develop greenway as partner to Launch 2035, contribute funding, own and maintain after trail completed

PARTNER
Residents,
Property Owners,
and Developers

PRINCIPAL PARTNER
TARCOG, NARCOG,
Decatur Area MPO,
Huntsville Area
MPO

RESPONSIBILITIES: Serve as funding agent for federally funded segments, assist in seeking federal and state funding, incorporate into planning

PARTNER
Chambers of
Commerce/Business
and Industry

PRINCIPAL PARTNER
State of Alabama and
Federal Agencies

RESPONSIBILITIES: Serve as funding agent for federally funded segments, assist in seeking federal and state funding, incorporate into planning

PARTNER
Small Towns
(Triana, Mooresville)

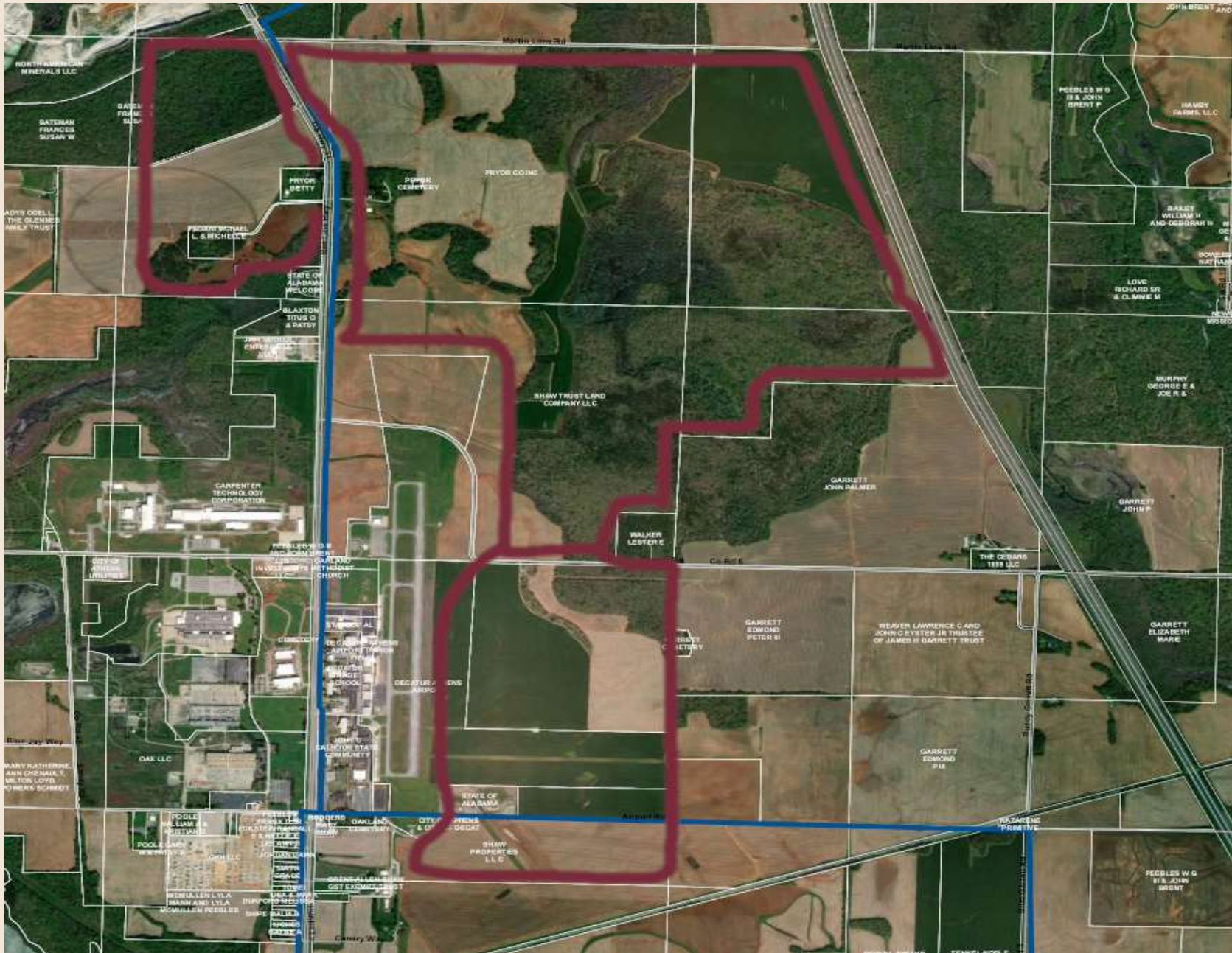
PRINCIPAL PARTNER
Foundations
and Donors

RESPONSIBILITIES: Fund the Trail, seek other funding partners

PARTNER
Schools, Universities,
and Colleges

PRINCIPAL PARTNER
Land Trust

RESPONSIBILITIES: Assist with land acquisition



Landowner Discussions



(Above Right) Patty Pryor escorted by Clyde Whitworth and being crowned Queen by David Breland.





Temporary Signage





Fundraising Campaign





Online Resources – singingrivertrail.com

- [ABOUT](#)
- [GET INVOLVED](#)
- [SINGING RIVER STORY](#)
- [NEWS](#)
- [EVENTS](#)
- [BLOG](#)
- [CONTACT](#)



Singing River Trail
OF NORTH ALABAMA

Photo by Steven Gordon

Storymap!



SINGING RIVER TRAIL

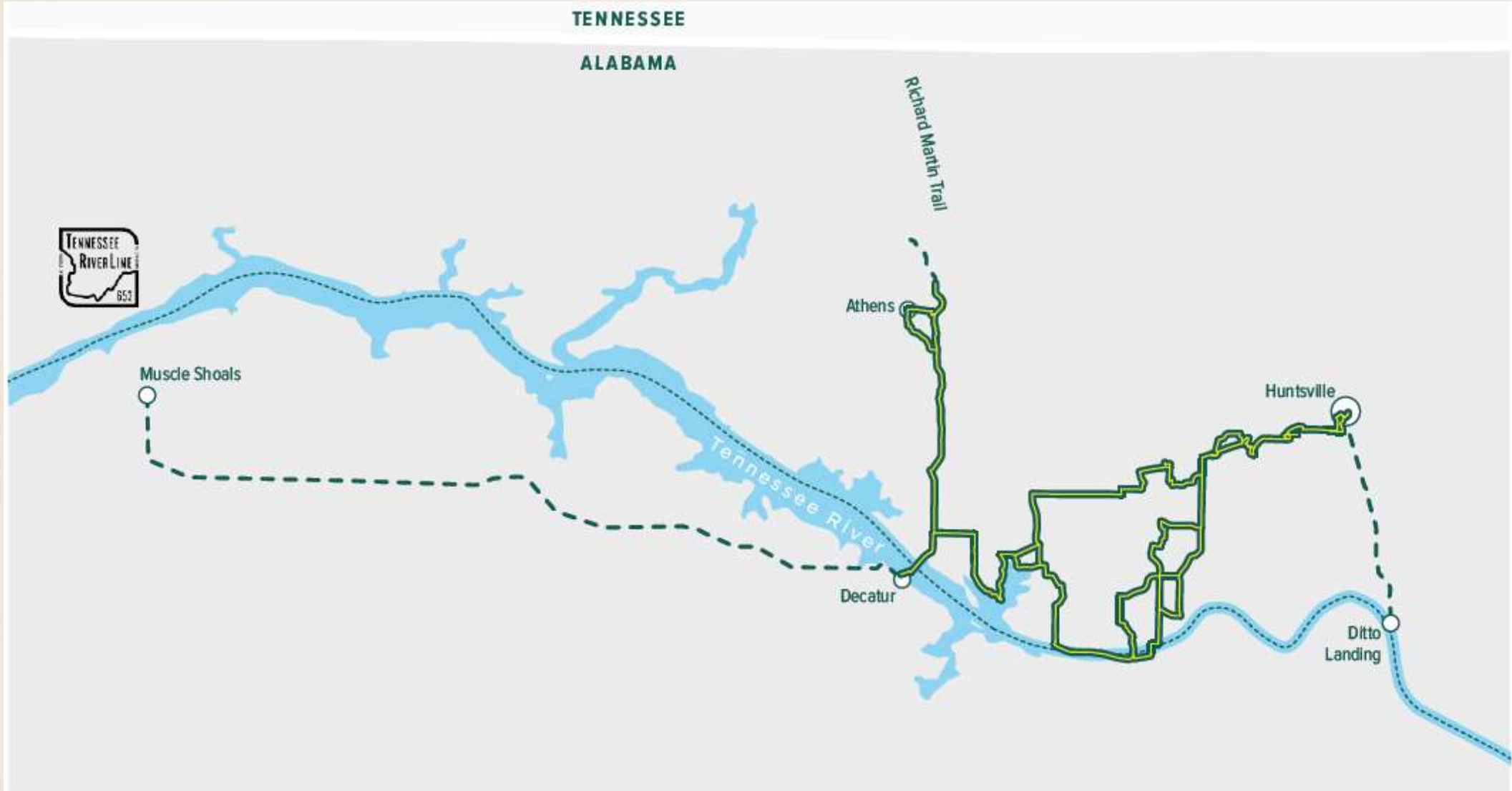
Connecting the past, present, and future of North Alabama

START EXPLORING





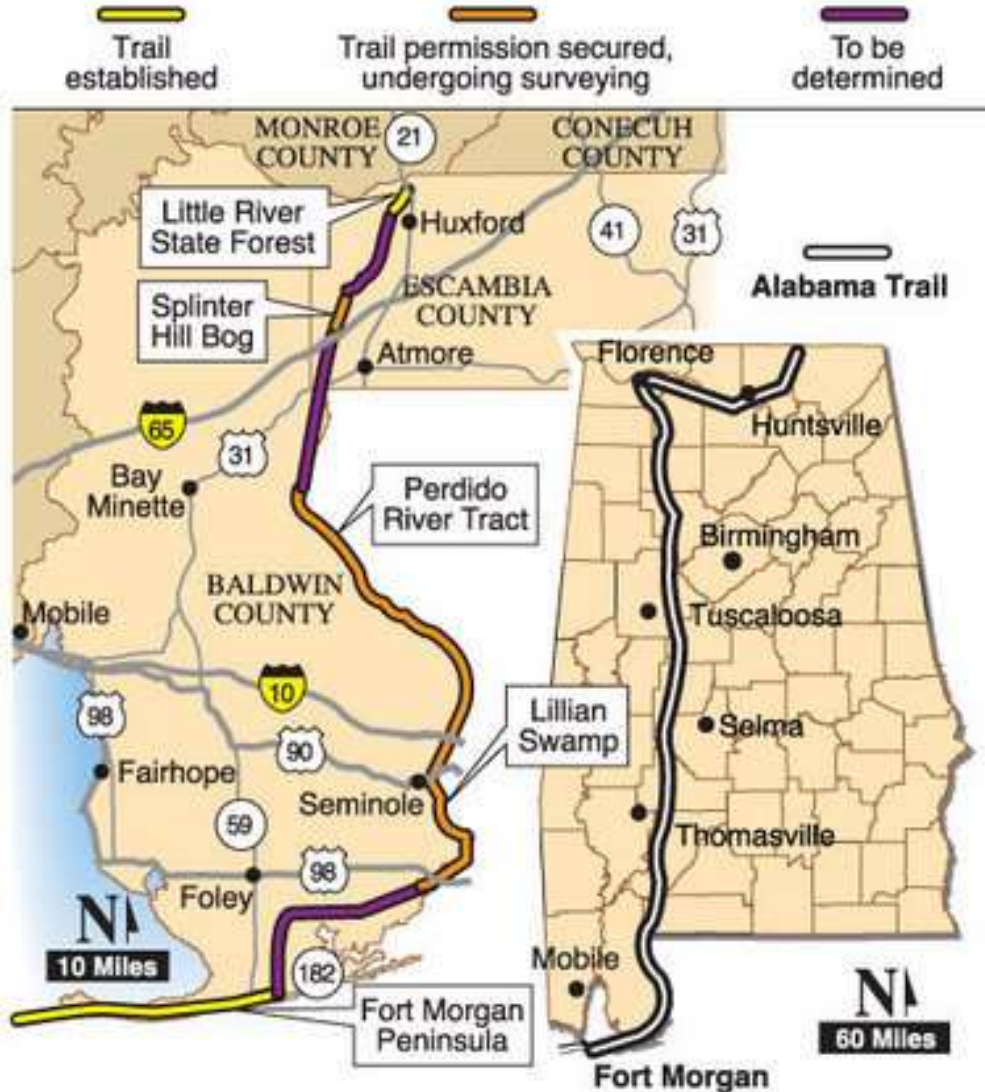
Who's Next in Alabama and Mississippi?





Alabama Trail

The Alabama Trail will be a 550-mile long wilderness footpath for hiking and backpacking that will stretch from Fort Morgan to the Alabama-Tennessee state line.



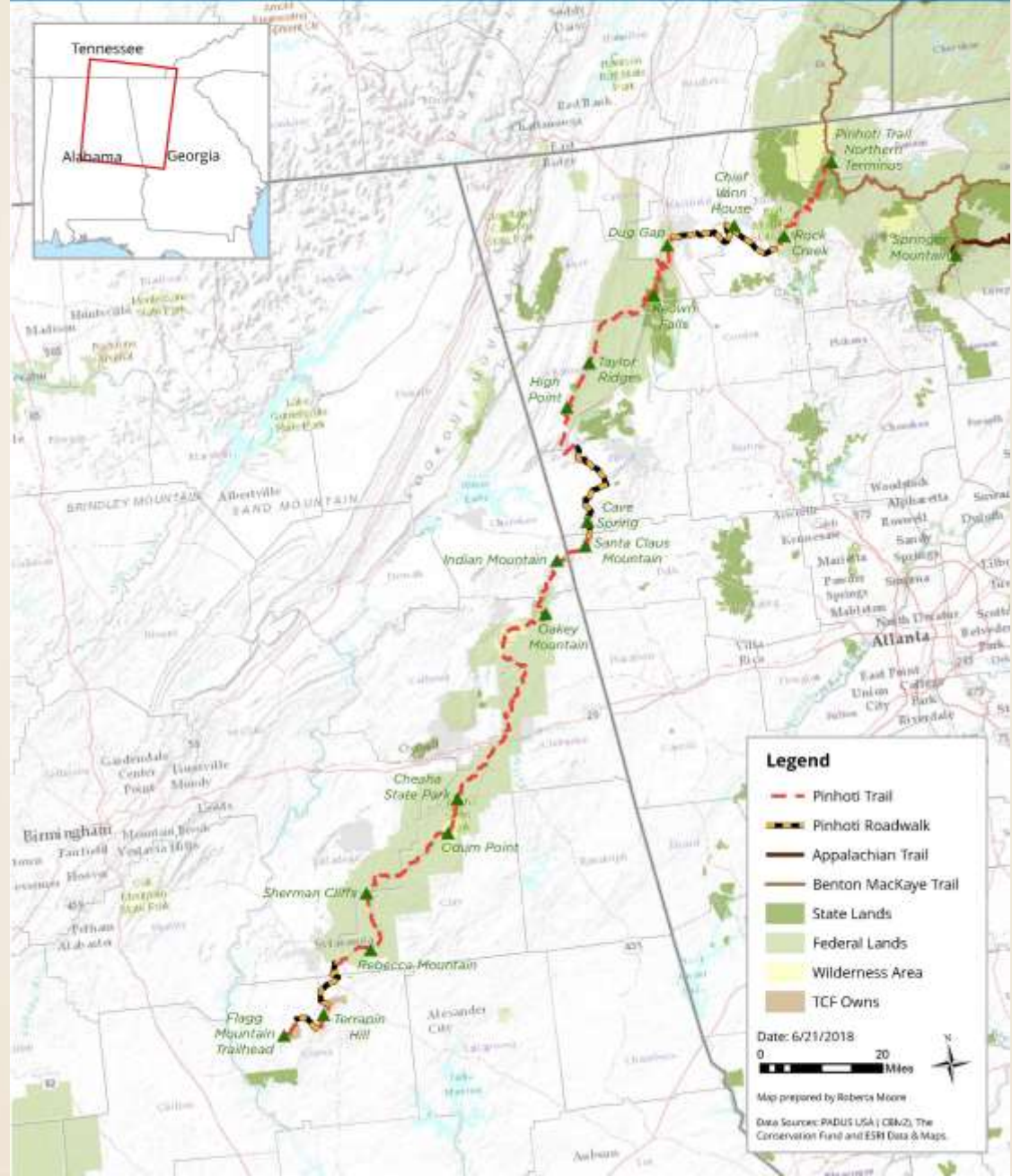
Source: Alabama Hiking Trail Society

Press-Register graphic



Alabama
HIKING TRAIL SOCIETY

Pinhoti Trail





TENNESSEE RIVERLINE

a vision for north america's next great regional trail system

652 miles

4,000 square watershed mile

31 counties touched by the tennessee river in

4 states

1.17 million acres

between on-river reservoirs + TVA undeveloped recreation lands + state and federally-protected lands immediately adjacent to the river

Paducah

Murray

Dover

Paris

New Johnsonville

Decaturville

Clifton

Savannah

Iuka

Florence

Muscle Shoals

Decatur

Guntersville

Huntsville

South Pittsburg

Stevenson

Spring City

Dayton

Soddy Daisy

Chattanooga

Farragut

Loudon

Lenoir City

Knoxville



THANK YOU!

AL/MS APA CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 2019