



Albany - Sasser Rail Trail

Corridor Study, Branding, and Implementation Report

FINAL DRAFT

May 27, 2016

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Prepared for the City of Albany and the South Georgia Rails to Trails, Inc.

Prepared by the PATH Foundation and KAIZEN Collaborative



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1. Introduction

Americans young and old are flocking to the nearest greenway trail to exercise, socialize, and travel without using cars. Greenway trails are becoming a critical component of infrastructure in cities competing for employers and the educated millennial's they wish to employ. The health, recreation, and social benefits of greenways is also becoming more aparent as their usage increases. The City of Albany and the surrounding communities have recognized this, and have identified an extraordinary opportunity in their backyard: a 13.62 mile abandoned railroad corridor stretching from the urban core of Albany, through the open fields of Lee County, to the quaint storefronts of Sasser, Georgia.

South Georgia Rails to Trails, Inc. and the City of Albany staff recognize the need to establish a greenway trail network to promote a healthier, happier lifestyle for their citizens. In addition to providing amenities for the existing population, Albany and the surrounding region, , must provide greenway trail infrastructure to promote walking, biking, hiking, skateboarding, birding and other uses in order to compete for business and industry that will employ today's generation of workers. Greenway trails also entice the areas young people to stay home instead of moving away.

The *Albany-Sasser Rail Trail* master plan proposes a 12' wide asphalt greenway trail system from downtown Albany to Sasser, along a 100' wide 13.62 mile abandoned rail corridor. This trail will feature connections to neighborhoods, parks, shopping, and other public facilities. Citizens that previously looked to other destinations to get outside and be active, will now have a great trail system close to home to fill that desire.

This document details opportunities to enhance the 13.62 mile railroad corridor with trailhead access points, spur trail connections, and trail routes needed to connect the greenway trail to Albany's existing Riverfront Trail. With the branding and design standards established within this master plan, the City of Albany is well positioned to implement a successful greenway trail project that



The 200th mile of trail constructed by the PATH Foundation on April 10, 2014.

will promote a healthier community for its citizens, keep our young folks at home and attract new businesses, students and young professionals to the region.

2. Rail Trail Corridor Study

For years, the railroad corridor from Albany to Sasser was utilized to transport goods to the City of Albany, the Flint River, and across the Southeast. Since the abandonment of the rail, it has become an overgrown eyesore of little importance to the region. That's until now. South Georgia Rails to Trails, Inc. and the City of Albany commissioned the PATH Foundation and KAIZEN Collaborative to plan the resurrection of this once busy transportation corridor for a completely different purpose: a multi-use greenway trail for non motored travel. The rehabilitation of this old rail bed into a trail system for recreation will increase the overall health of the region, and will once again make this corridor a vibrant asset and economic generator for the community.

The route utilizes the abandoned railroad from Sasser, Georgia to the Jefferson Street overpass in the City of Albany, where the rail bed is integrated with the west side of the Norfolk Southern rail line. The goal is to make a connection to the existing Riverfront Trail along the Flint River. For a due of connection, a pedestrian bridge is proposed to span the rail line and allow trail users to access the Riverfront Trail on the other side.

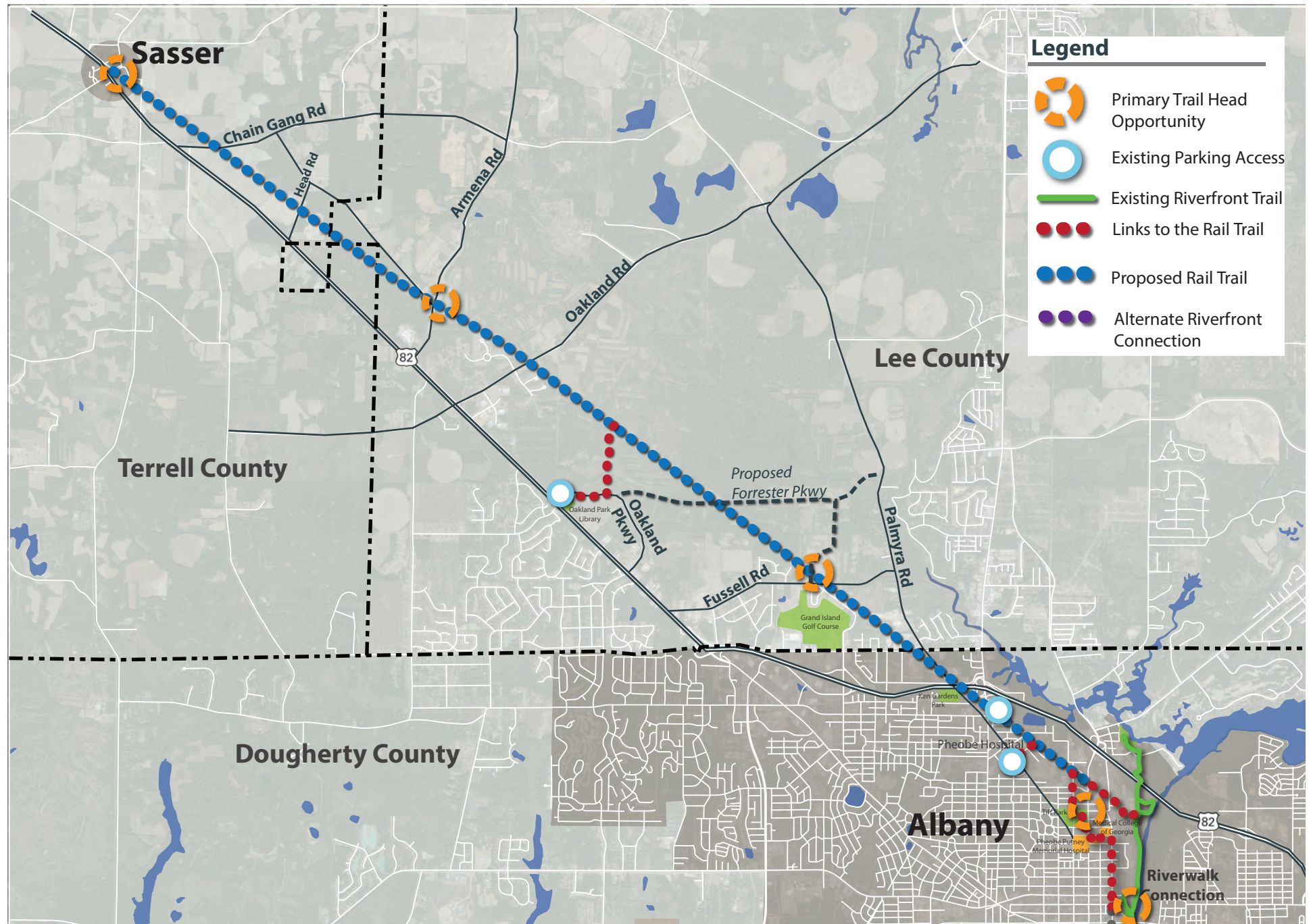
An alternative is to exit the abandoned rail corridor near N. Madison Street utilizing city greenspace, city right-of-way, easements across private property, and transition to a cycle track along North Jackson Street to downtown Albany. This alternative would make its final connection to the Riverfront Trail by way of Flint Avenue behind the Riverquarium parking lot, terminating at a trailhead leading directly into the Riverfront Trail. An alternative option is to end the trail at the train depot on W. Roosevelt Avenue. This is already a great community space that can be retrofitted into a bright and vibrant trailhead where the rail trail ends, and the Riverfront Trail begins.



Overgrown, abandoned railroad corridor at ...



A junk yard which has over taken the abandoned railroad corridor near the Flint River



Rail Trail Corridor Study - Sasser

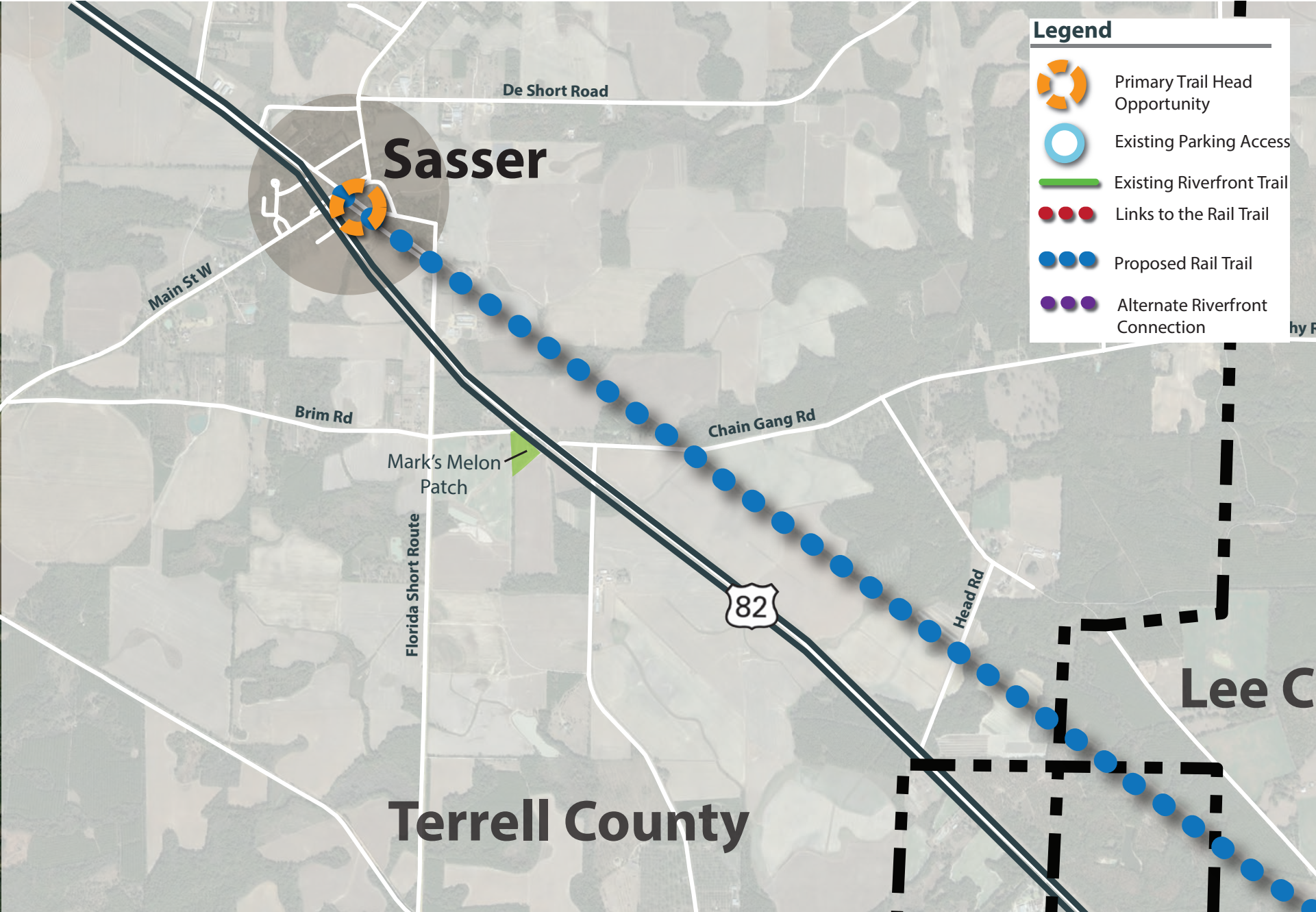
This abandoned rail corridor ends a few hundred feet short of Main Street in the very quaint town of Sasser, Georgia. Additional acquisition of the railbed is recommended in order to end the trail at the center of town where there are antique and craft shops and potential for new shops catering to trail users. Providing a trailhead for the Rail Trail will insure Sasser an opportunity to make an economic impact on this small community. It is envisioned the terminus of the trail in Sasser will have parking, benches, kiosk and identification signage, and a small restroom facility. The trail would end at Main Street where an at-grade crossing should be installed to connect the west side of the street and sidewalk to several store fronts.



View south from Main Street Sasser showing abandoned railbed.



View east along Main Street in downtown Sasser.





Above: Existing condition of downtown Sasser at-grade crossing.

Right: Proposed at-grade crossing and trailhead including kiosk sign, benches, traffic calming landscape islands, and brick stripe thermoplastic crosswalk.





Rail Trail Corridor Study - Lee County

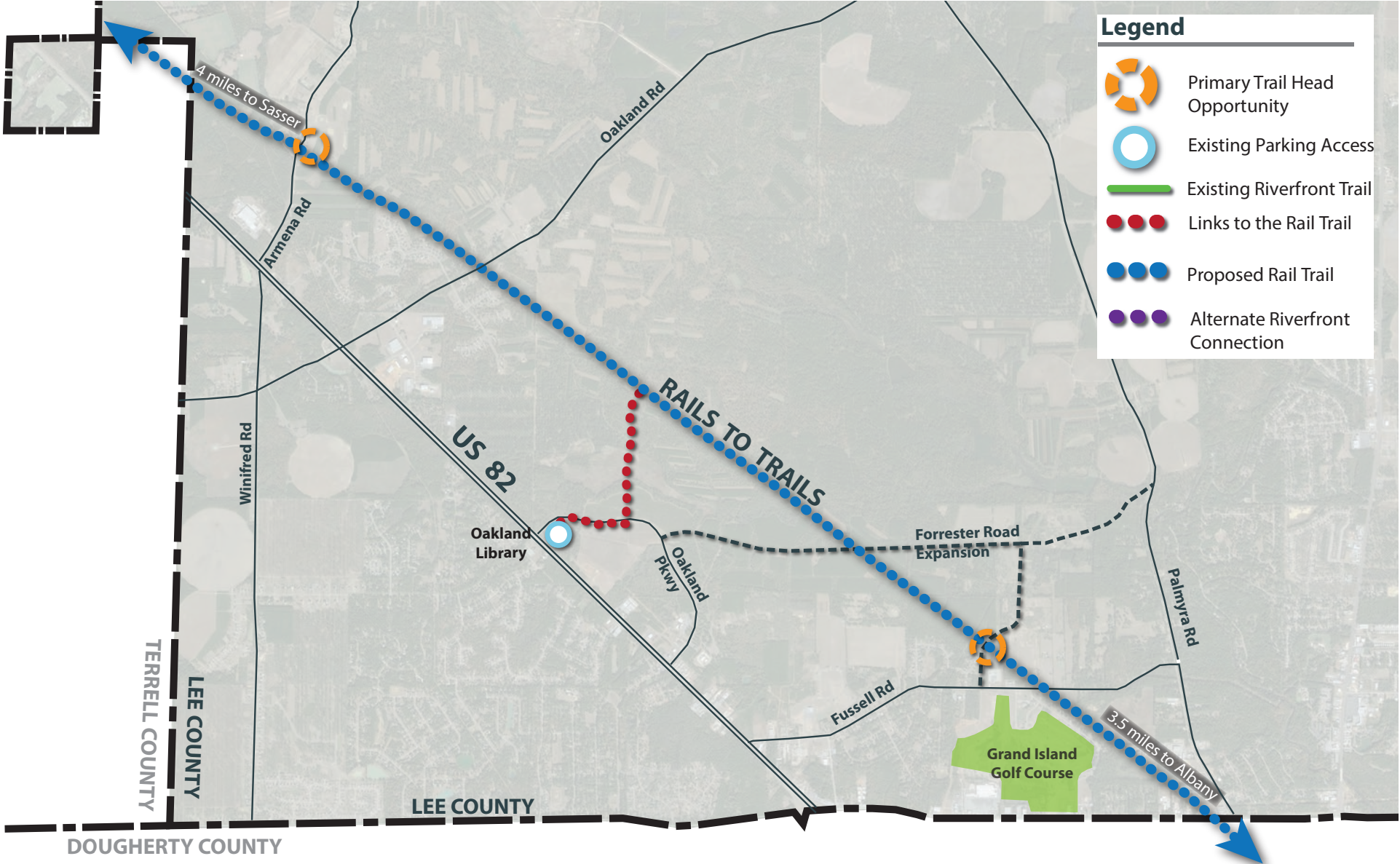
Between Albany and Sasser, the greenway trail would pass through Lee County where several neighborhoods have been developed near the rail corridor. With plans from developers to continue building future neighborhoods, it is important for both the existing and proposed residential developments to embrace and make connections available to the trail. Two trailheads are proposed in Lee County, one at Armena Road and the second at the proposed Forrester Road extension. A third smaller trailhead is proposed at the Oakland Library where there is existing parking and public facilities available. A spur should be made through the Oakland housing development, across an existing dam to Oakland Pkwy, where it will parallel the road to the library.



Armena Road trailhead location



Oakland Library - existing parking and public facilities





Left: Existing condition of the intersection at Armena Road and the abandoned railroad corridor.

Below: Proposed at-grade crossing and trailhead including benches, restroom facility, and informational signage.



Rail Trail Corridor Study - Albany

Once the rail trail enters Dougherty County and heads towards downtown Albany, it passes by a new Wal-Mart location at the intersection of Hwy 19. With an open parking lot directly adjacent to the trail. This is an excellent location for benches and signage directing users to the trail.

An additional parking area should be located behind Phoebe North Hospital at the 13th Street intersection with the greenway trail. The greenway trail borders the east side of the hospital property and can be easily extended from the hospital with a short connection. From there the trail continues south where it connects through Tift Park and the north side of Pheobe hospital. At this point, the trail would extend east at 4th Ave to Washington Street and creates connectivity opportunities for the Medical College and the new medical student housing project.

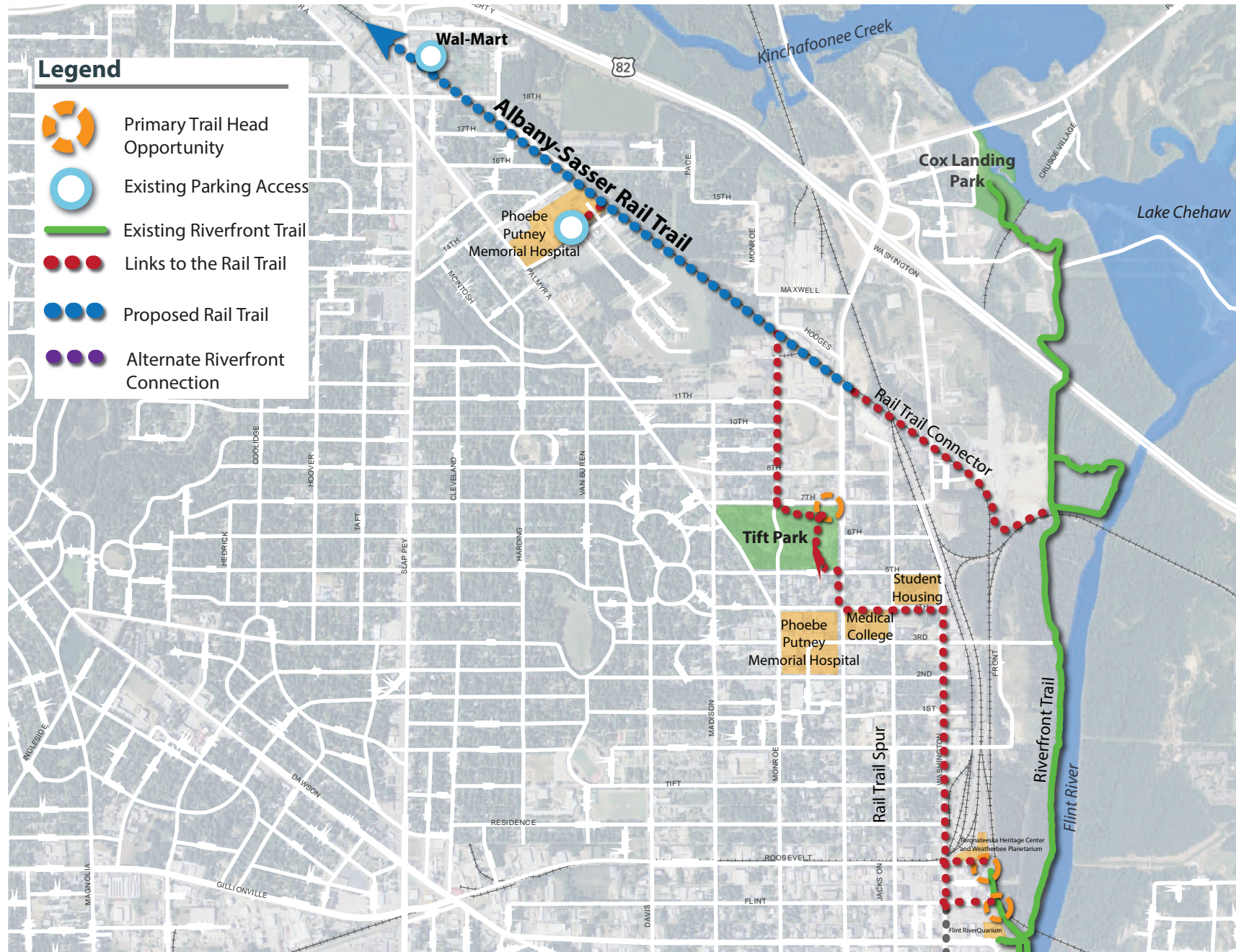
At Washington Street the trail is proposed to transition into a side-path heading south to two trailhead locations: Flint Ave and Roosevelt Ave in downtown Albany.



Existing active railroad trestle bridge across the Flint River.



View along Riverfront Trail under active railroad bridge.



Left: New intersection with pedestrian signalization at Palmyra Road and the rail trail provided a safe crossing for trail users.

Below: New Walmart Neighborhood Market location. The abandoned rail corridor runs along the south side of the parking lot (right side of picture) to the new intersection crossing at Palmyra Road (picture above left).





Left: Existing property condition at North Phoebe Hospital. This illustration is located at the north end of the property where the existing road terminates at the abandoned rail corridor.

Below: Proposed parking and trailhead with spur to the rail trail.



Left: Existing property condition after merging off of the greenway trail and heading toward the intersection of North Madison Street and 11th Ave before continuing toward downtown Albany.

Below: Proposed at-grade crossing and signage at the intersection of North Madison Avenue and 11th Avenue.





Left: Existing condition of abandoned railroad corridor beneath North Jefferson Street, heading east where it intersects with active Norfolk Southern railroad tracks.

Below: Proposed pedestrian bridge and trailhead over active railroad tracks and connect trail users safely onto the existing Riverfront Trail.



Right: Existing condition at National Guard property on North Monroe Street

Below: Proposed trail going along N Monroe St heading south towards Tift Park.





Existing condition on Washington St looking north from downtown.



Existing condition on Washington St.



Existing condition of right-of-way at intersection of Washington St. and 3rd Ave



Existing condition of 4th Ave and Jefferson St intersection



Right: Tift Park looking north across 7th Ave towards Monroe St.

Below: Proposed crossing of 7th Ave with rapid flashing beacon into Tift Park.





Left: Existing condition of train depot at Thronateeska Heritage Center and Museum.

Below: Proposal to open the gates and allow trail users to pass through the train depot. Simple modifications can be made to create a sense of excitement around the depot and make it a destination along the trail. Optional route is to use the current route through the alley on the south side of the building. We suggest improvements with lighting, widening the entry point by removing landscaping, and modifying the existing HVAC units to make this feel more inviting to trail users.



Right: Existing condition of West Roosevelt Ave. which terminates at the historic train depot and Thronateeska Heritage Center

Below: Proposed terminous of the downtown connector trail at the historic train depot building. Open greenspace allows for a bright and vibrant trailhead with benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, and pocket park. Possible opportunity for a fountain as a place for trail users to cool off. A proposed mural along the existing brick wall helps to create a sense of excitement to the space. The existing wide street allows for ample parking.





Left: Existing condition of Flint Avenue looking east towards the Riverfront Trail.

Below: Proposed terminous of the Albany-Sasser greenway trail and trailhead with kiosk, benches, bike racks, and existing parking. Existing access to the Riverfront Trail would be directly behind the proposed trailhead. There is opportunity for businesses to develop on the north side of street.



3. Branding and Design Standards

With the rail trail corridor spanning through three different counties, it is crucial to create a brand for the trail that is reflective of all areas the trail connects and the people it will serve. With the vast railroad history related to the rail line, and the surrounding area, options for a name and logo were presented to reflect the railroad history. One word also emerged through the planning of the rail trail which eludes itself to become part of a larger trail network: LINE. Emphasis on the railroad and other cultural, geological, and historical elements were considered as well. From this effort, the four names below were created. A final decision for the trail naming and branding is being postponed while the Dougherty County Trail Master Plan is currently being developed. Once the branding for the overall master plan is decided we suggest a logo and name that will compliment the overall trail network.



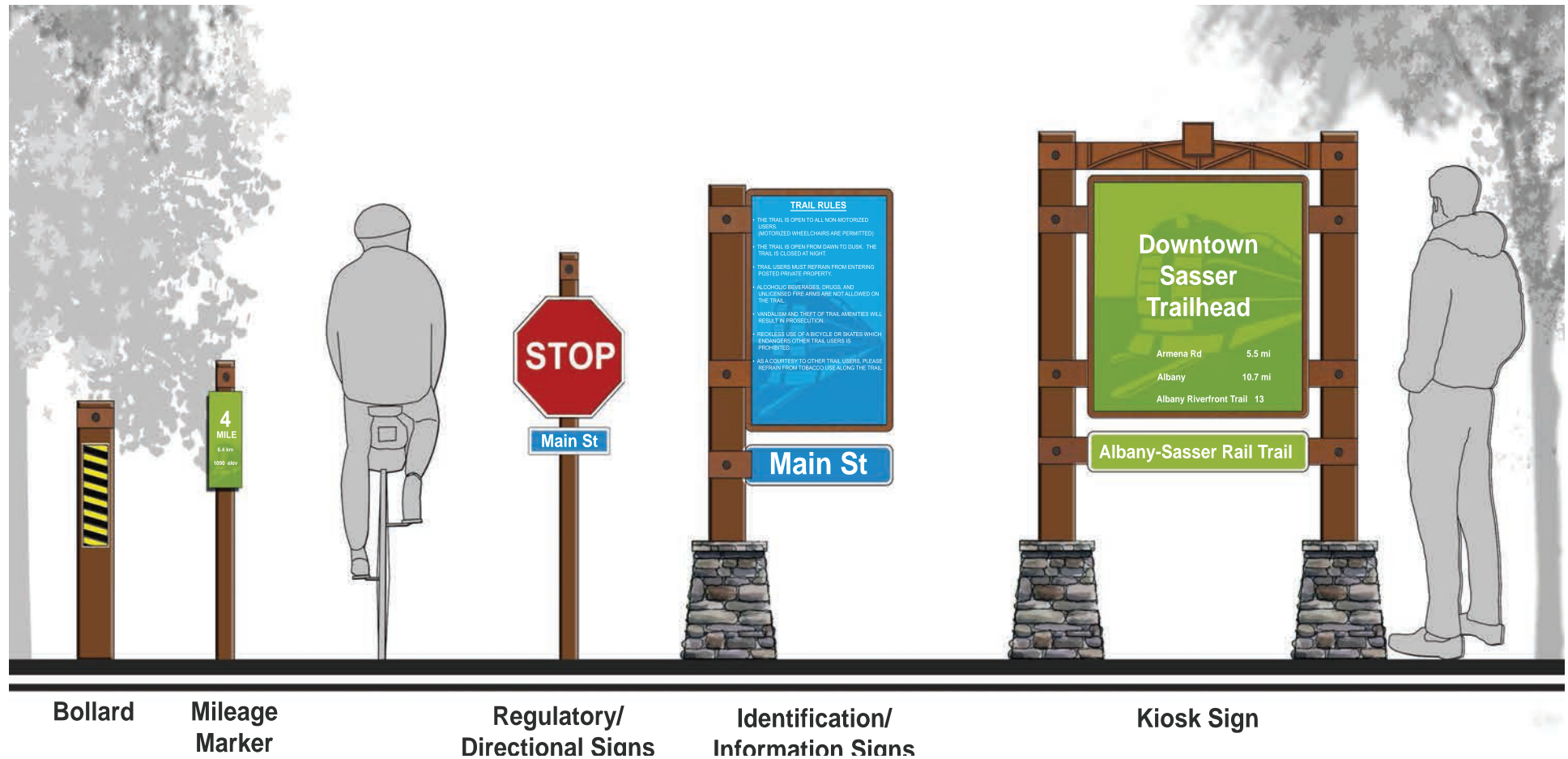
Signage Option #1

Signage Option #1 is a corten steel (weathered finish) sign with reclaimed wood slats and accent cut outs from the trail logo. The sign design is tall and narrow in order to allow the signs to fit adjacent to shared-use trails within narrow road rights-of-way. The kiosk and informational signs utilize bright blue and green colors that stand out against the weathered steel and wood back drop.



Signage Option #2

Signage Option #2 is a traditional post sign, and also utilizes weathered steel posts and custom corten steel brackets to accent the industrial character of the railroad. The posts and brackets are square, with the option of having a Flint River stone base on the kiosk and informational signs. This sign style takes into consideration the ease of construction, maintenance, and a more cost effective solution.



Trail Amenities - Option #1

As a complement to the trail signage, the trail amenities option #1 chosen for the Chug Line trail are made with a similar metal and wood combination. The metal selected is a powder coated bronze color and the wood as a walnut colored recycled plastic slat. The wood and bronze color are suggested along the rail corridor to blend with proposed signage and natural surroundings. We suggest transitioning to entirely black powder coated metal styles when entering the Albany city limits. The trail system's amenities include:



City Sites Collection by Victor Stanley

model #CBF-12
Description: Surface Mounted, 6-foot bench, Steel shotblasted, etched, powder-coated with TGIC polyester powder coatings.



Greensites Collection by Victor Stanley

model #CM-16
Description: 6-foot bench, walnut color recycled plastic slats, steel powder-coated black components



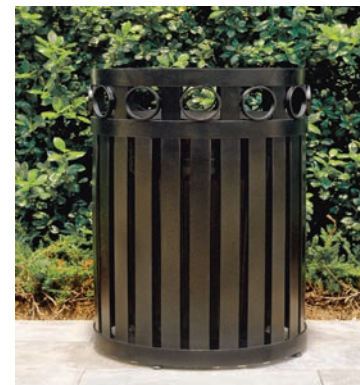
Cycle Sentry Series by Victor Stanley

model #BRNS-301
Description: standard u-shaped bike rack, in-ground mount, and steel powder coated black. Optional decal available with custom designed messages.



Concourse Collection by Victor Stanley

model #RS-12
Description: 36-gallon capacity trash receptacle, Vertical steel slats with lattice-work and circular detailing, powder coated bronze, black plastic liner, and surface mounted.



Greensites Series by Victor Stanley

model #RTH-36
Description: recycle lid decal and custom band decal to allow standard trash receptacle to be a recycle receptacle.

Trail Amenities - Option #2

Option #2 relates more to the existing amenities along the current Riverfront Trail. The style and materials entail a traditional powder coated metal finish. As the trail transitions away from Downtown Albany, incorporation of wood with the metal is suggested. This will allow for a more seamless connection between the two trail systems and help tie the Dougherty County trail system together as one.



Production
Collection
by Victor Stanley

model #PRS-127
Description: 6-foot bench, surface mounted, vertical steel scrolls, powder coated black



Production
Collection
by Victor Stanley

model #PRS-10
Description: 6-foot bench, walnut recycled plastic slat seat, surface mounted, powder coated black steel components



Cycle Sentry Series
by Victor Stanley

model #BRCS-105
Description: standard five loop bike rack, in-ground mount, and steel powder coated black.



GreenSites Series
by Victor Stanley

model #RTH-36
Description: 36-gallon capacity, solid vertical side slats, standard tapered form lid, black plastic liner, available with dome lid or convex lid with self-closing door



Fixit Service Station
by Dero

Powder coated black; includes all tools necessary to perform basic bike repairs and maintenance with air pump kit 3.

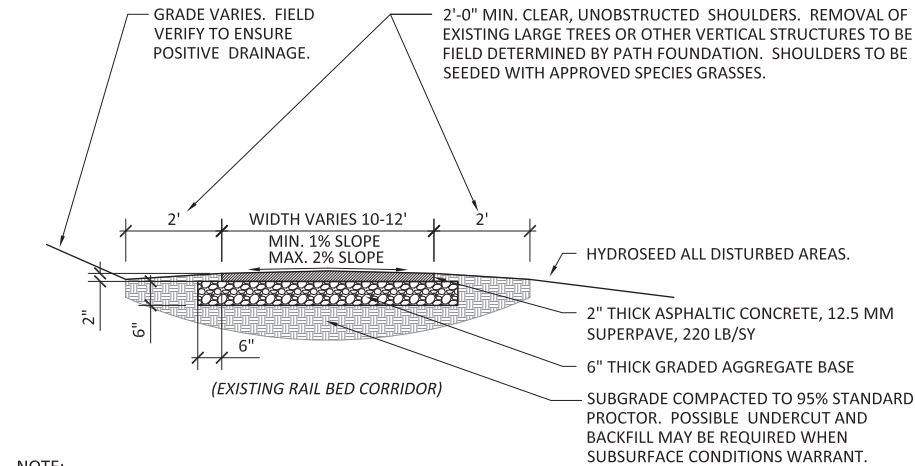


Construction Details and Standards

The Albany-Sasser greenway trail system is proposed as a 12-foot wide, asphalt paved, multi-use trail located along an abandoned railroad line from Sasser to Albany, Georgia. Standard details for the construction of the trail system are included within the following pages.



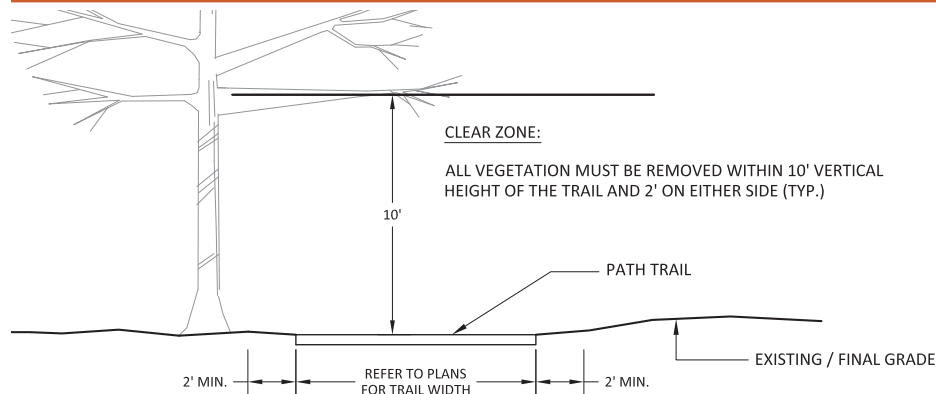
Multi-use trails with a 12-foot wide asphalt surface



NOTE:
CONTRACTOR SHALL PLACE FILTER FABRIC AND 12" LAYER OF GRANULAR EMBANKMENT PRIOR TO PLACING ANY FILL OR PAVEMENT.

ASPHALT RAIL TRAIL TYPICAL SECTION

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

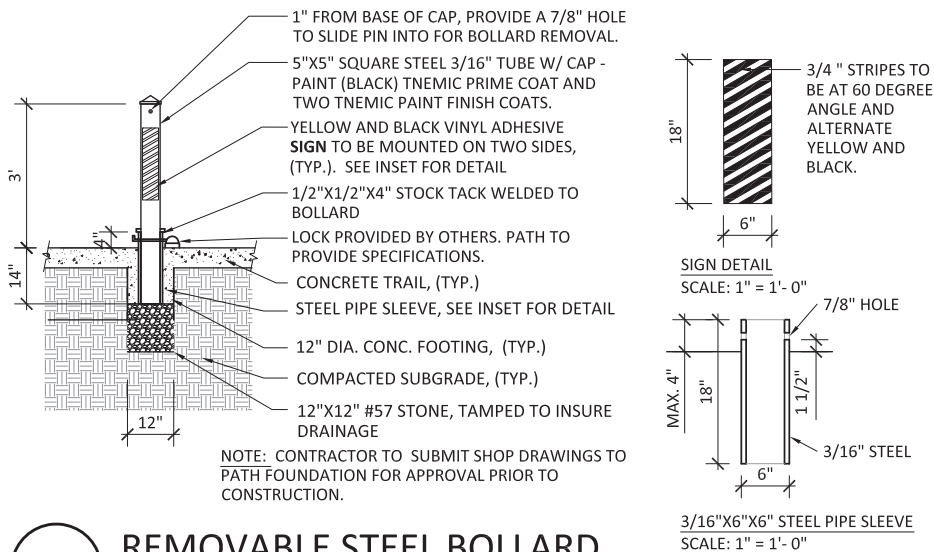


CLEAR ZONE

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



Multi-use trail through existing box culvert requires a 7'6" minimum vertical clearance.

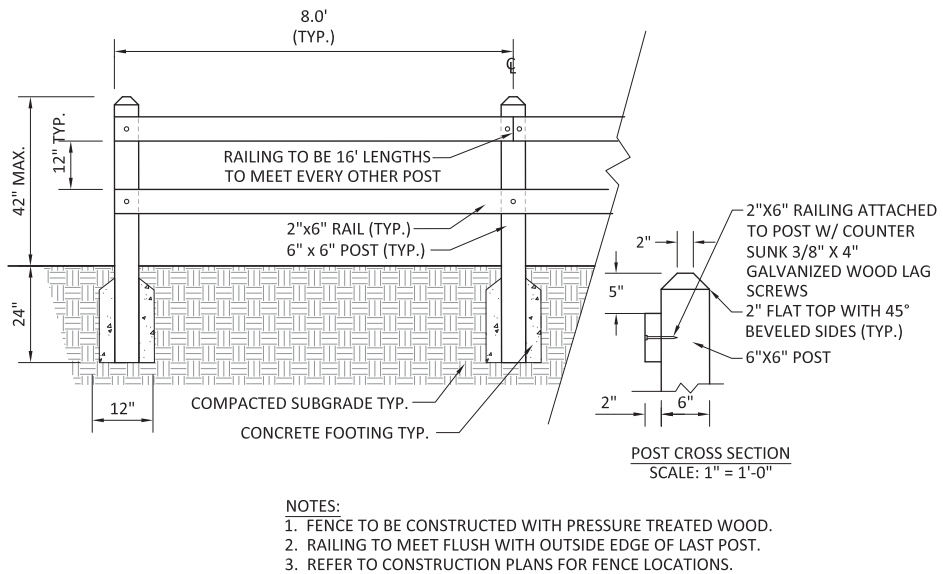


REMOVABLE STEEL BOLLARD
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

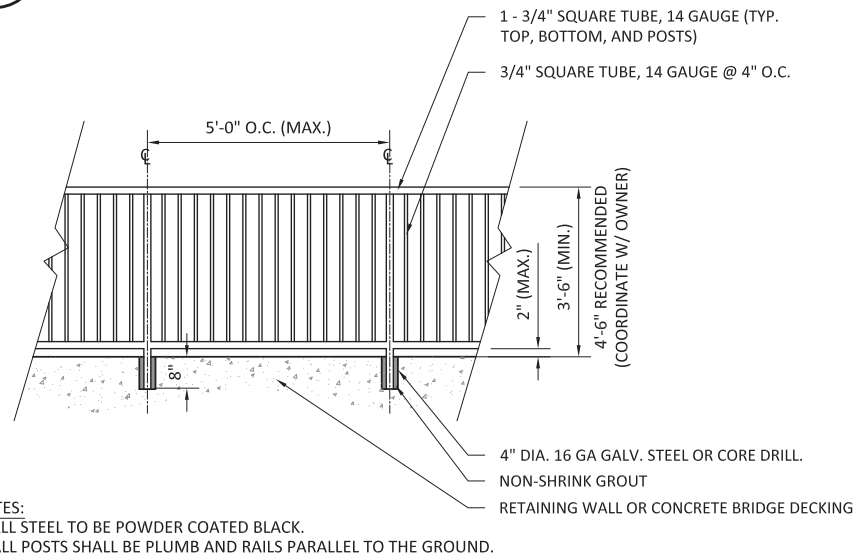


Water Fountain by Haws

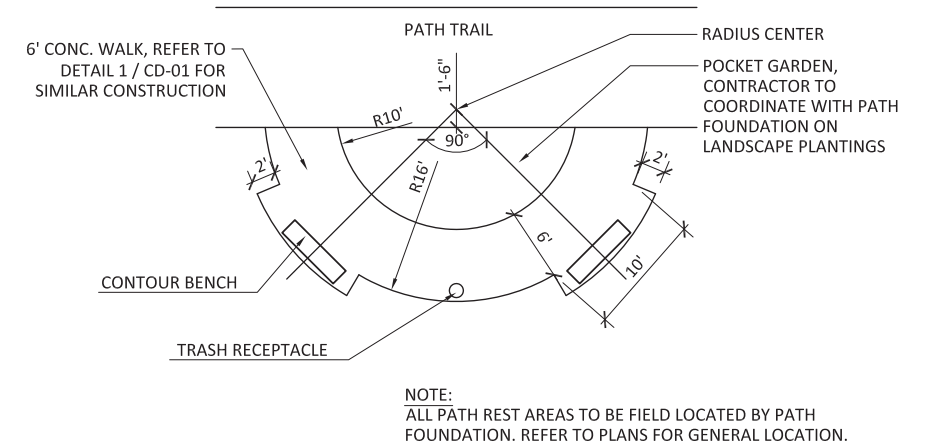
model #3500D
Description: vandal-resistant,
barrier-free, square pedestal
dual level drinking fountain,
powder coated black.



2 PANEL WOOD FENCE
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



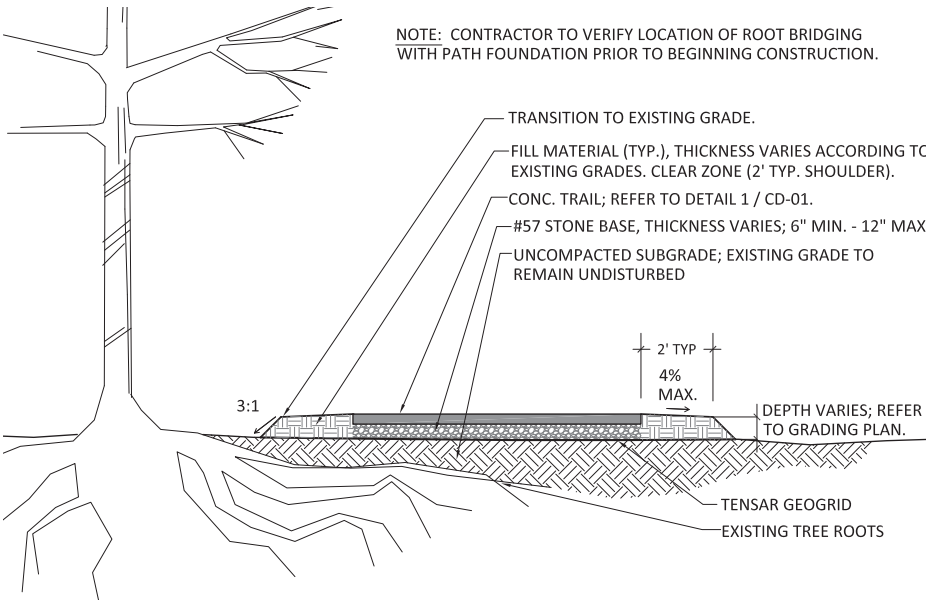
HANDRAIL DETAIL
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"



POCKET PARK
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



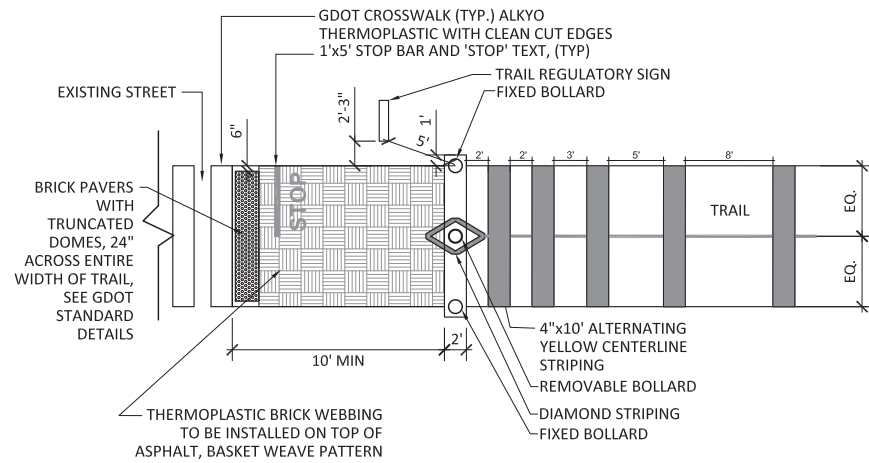
Pocket parks provide opportunities for trail users to enjoy time with friends and neighbors.



ROOT BRIDGING DETAIL
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



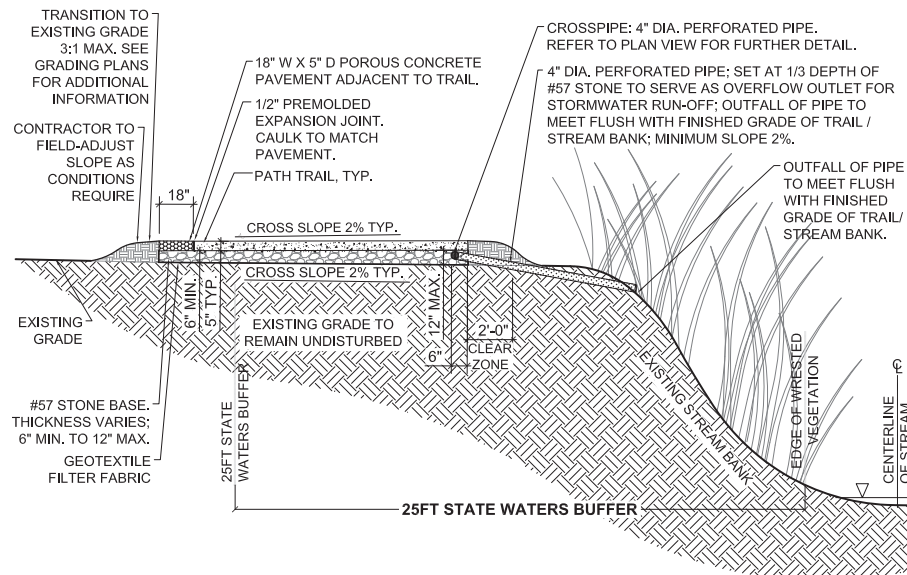
Root bridging insures protection of existing trees and allows the trail to blend into a wooded setting.



Typical trail intersection with signage, bollards, and pavement striping.

STANDARD INTERSECTION DETAIL

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



Sloping trail away from nearby creek into a gravel drain allows runoff to infiltrate under trail prior to entering creek.

INFILTRATION DETAIL

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"



Wooden Boardwalk structure for crossing lakes and wetlands.



Custom steel bridge structures allow the trail to naturally blend into wooded areas.



Within highly developed areas, shared lane striping 'sharrows' will be used for short connections.



Prefabricated steel bridges allow trail to cross above existing roadways.