

Submitted By: Leisure Services
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Project Type: Greenway, Parks, Rails-to-Trails related projects - Leisure Services Department
General Program Goal: Social Well-Being

Previously Submitted and Rejected: No
Continuation Project: Yes - SPLOST IV, Project 17

Project Total Cost: \$ 1,728,000

Total Annual Operating Cost: \$ 1,000

Abbreviated - Project Description: This project provides funding for repaving the segment of the North Oconee River Greenway Trail (NORGT) from Sandy Creek Nature Center (SCNC) to Walker Hall. Repaved surfaces include the multi-use trail, access road, and small vehicular pull off/turnaround area near Walker Hall and to the bridge at Sandy Creek.

Project Location/Address: 205 Old Commerce Road 30607

Is the Site currently owned by the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County? Yes

Is the Site within State Highway Rights-of-Way? No

Site Specific Information: Parcel number 161 005

This project is a needed enhancement of the North Oconee River Greenway Trail that starts at Sandy Creek Nature Center and extends to the bridge over Sandy Creek. The trail is the pre-existing access road to the Walker Hall Educational Complex including the Fireside Classroom and is an accessible path for school children and groups of all abilities to these program locations. In addition, this is the entranceway to the North Oconee River Greenway Trail system.

Does this Project require the acquisition of any land rights, whether existing sites, new site, easements, or Rights-of-Way? No

Project/Program Description: This project is for the segment of the North Oconee River Greenway Trail (NORGT) that goes from Sandy Creek Nature Center (SCNC) to Walker Hall. This trail segment is in need of repaving. This almost half-mile section of the trail is the oldest paved surface of the NORGT, completed 38 years ago as the original access road to the Walker Hall Educational Complex at SCNC and later becoming share use as part of the Greenway Trail System. This section of trail also doubles as the path to the Walker Hall and Fireside Classrooms which are visited annually by thousands of school children. The original asphalt is cracking, breaking down, and creating hazards for walkers, runners, and cyclists. This project will bring this trail segment back to a safe standard for trail users by milling the asphalt and repaving the multi-use trail, access road, and small vehicular pull off/turnaround area near Walker Hall.

Project Mission Statement/Selection Criteria: The North Oconee River Greenway Trail is supportive of many parts of ACC from healthy living to non-motorized transportation corridors. This project will make the gateway to the trail system of ACC safe again. By rebuilding the over half mile of trail, the users of the trail will be able to ride with confidence and not have to avoid cracks and other integrity issues. The rebuilt trail will also include other safety improvements such as centerlines and better edges/shoulders which assist cyclists and families in navigating 2-way trail traffic.

How is this Project recommended/included in any approved ACCGov Land Use Plan, Master Plan, Corridor Study, or Service Delivery Plan? Greenway Network Plan - critical connection & Existing Infrastructure Central Services & Leisure Services Service Delivery Plan Athens In Motion - Existing Infrastructure Macorts - Existing Infrastructure

How is this Project included in the Madison Athens-Clarke County Oconee Regional Transportation Study (MACORTS) long-range Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)? Found cited as part of the Athens Greenway trail both in expansion in project R-11 and in foundational text of the document.

Attachments:

[Attachment 1 - SCNC Parking Improvements](#)

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

How will the Project meet one or more of the Selection Criteria?

Promotes the Goal of improving Equitability of capital improvements throughout the Community:

This section of the NORGT creates pedestrian access for every user from any economic background in ACC. This segment is used by over 25,000 users annually (counted from July 2020 thru June 2021.) Without improvements to this section, people will not be able to use the trail as they currently do and a lack of future funding has the probability to force this section to be closed. Without this start of the current trail system, access is removed for people using this stretch to commute or travel further into town since pedestrian access is restricted on HWY 441 and by the Loop 10 bypass. Continued deterioration of this section of trail will eliminate the SCNC as a starting point and a destination of the NORGT.

Protects the community's existing Transportation Infrastructure Investments: The NORGT started with this over half-mile long segment. When this section is lost due to disrepair, then the Greenway loses a key destination and access point to the trail system and SCNC. Protection of this system by rebuilding this segment of trail will rededicate ACC to its commitment of pedestrian travel free from motor vehicle traffic and this existing transportation infrastructure.

Reduces Pavement Maintenance deficit: The NORGT system as a whole provides non-motorized travel and commute alternatives. This is cited in the Athens in Motion study conducted on how comfortable people are to travel on roads by bike or walk on roads that do not have a sidewalk. County-wide, there are many roads outside of the downtown area that people feel unsafe using unless in a car. When the NORGT or another trail system is accessible to a neighborhood or

community, people have the opportunity to not use a car to commute, thus reducing cars and wear on the existing roads throughout the county.

ACC Leisure Services is responsible for pavement maintenance within all parks and on trails. The ACC LS pavement maintenance program has been unfunded by capital money for 2 years running. This project would address the highest priority in need of capital paving reinvestment by ACC LS.

Promotes the Upgrade and Continued Use of Alternative Transportation Facilities: The NORGT system is an "Alternative Transportation Facility (ATF)." Failure to repair this segment of trail will result in our community losing more than half a mile of trail further limiting the possibilities of traveling beyond "inside the Loop (10)" by bike or foot safely and eliminating access to SCNC.

In order to continue the use of this ATF, this section needs to be revitalized through this TSPLOST project.

Promotes increased access to existing public facilities: This project as proposed will maintain access to existing public facilities and also provides the opportunity to increase public access by installing under-trail utilities. By installing telecommunications infrastructure between the main Visitor Center and Walker Hall, student visitors from CCSD or other schools can have more interactive programs. Also, the ability to include students that are remote learning or unable to travel from the schools would be far more equitable than it has been during the 2020 year of programming.

By connecting sewer infrastructure between both buildings, future growth is viable as more visitors come to SCNC, the nature playscape, and the trails on the grounds.

Promotes increased usage of the Transit System, including improving Pedestrian access to Transit Facilities: Under the current transit routes the NORGT is the most viable option for someone living on HWY 441 who needs access to transit services.

Based on other TSPLOST project proposals from Transit, this connection on the Greenway is also important as the trail system grows to allow people more access to bus stops. Without this section, people lose their access to ride to a bus stop via bike or walking. Revitalizing this trail section retains access for people to the multi-model center as well as other bus stops.

Increases capital for Transit Services or expands the Transit System: This section of trail is critical to a future possible Park & Ride proposed by Transit in this TSPLOST. Without fixing this trail section, the impacts of that project are reduced to transit riders and non-motorized commuters alike.

Maintains or Improves Air Quality: Since the NORGT is a non-motorized trail, the over 25,000 users of this section are not contributing to greenhouse gasses or pollution. Noted that some portion of these users are recreating and not commuting, there is still a value added for forms of recreation that are local and not making residents travel from ACC to other locations to ride bikes as families, run for fun, or roll on any manner of device from roller blades to skateboards. Additionally, the trail corridor is itself protected greenspace for trees and plants to grow and people to experience. The more trees and plants that can emit clean air, the better air quality is. Without a trail system, residents may not

understand the value of protecting greenspaces and voting to pass SPLOST type referendums protecting them.

Reduces vehicle miles traveled and traffic congestion: The NORGT is an Alternate Transportation Facility that provides an alternate to commuters and recreationists using vehicles on the roads of ACC. Similarly, more trails increase access and decrease travel to reach the system. This segment of the trail system is a critical connection as it is tied directly to access under the Loop 10. People can park and ride to work because of this section of trail and future growth only make it more valuable. Without rebuilding this over half-mile of trail, people will be forced to drive more and further to use the trail system.

Reduces time spent traveling in vehicles: By providing an alternate to driving and allowing park & bike/walk options, this section of trail reduces time spent traveling in vehicles. Also, should the infrastructure be installed providing internet access to the Walker Hall Complex, virtual field-study is a possibility.

Promotes Health and Safety: The NORG corridor and the trail through it provide safe and healthy opportunities for individuals and families to recreate away from vehicles and along a main river in Athens. Without this trail system and the corridor that accompanies it, the flood plains of Athens would not be retained for the use of all in the community. The trail also promotes active residents which are in-turn healthier. Without this section of trail, the community loses access to the anchor of Sandy Creek Nature Center which also provides acres of greenspace and safe places for children to experience nature.

Implements components of an updated Greenway Network Plan: This section of the NORGT is the founding location for the paved, multi-use trail system in Athens. Losing this over half-mile section to unsafe conditions puts the rest of the GNP in peril as other sections of the trail age and will also need repair.

This project location is a keystone for the north part of the network plan and for other TSPLOST 2023 proposals.

Triple Bottom Line Impacts

Positive Benefits for the Economic Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County: This project will continue to provide access for residents to move into and away from the downtown area on modes of transportation other than personal vehicles. The North Oconee River Greenway Trail is also a flagship for Athens in the region, state, and beyond. The trail has been featured in many tourism materials (print and otherwise) and brings people to the area. A closure of the original section for paved Greenway Trail would have a negative impact on the economy. This section of trail is set to bridge the gap between downtown Athens and the TAD district on Newton Bridge Road according to the 2020 Greenway Network Maps. With this segment closed in the trail system, these two commercial areas stay segregated.

Detrimental Impacts to the Economic Prosperity of Athens-Clarke County: This project has no negative impacts on the economic prosperity of ACC.

Positive Benefits for the Social Well-Being of our Residents and visitors: The North Oconee River Greenway Trail is a linear park connecting places and people in a space where everyone is welcome. The connection of this specific trail segment connects two areas that are separated by the loop 10 bypass, without any sidewalks on the only main road, essentially creating a void in pedestrian access. When people are able to access their community and public resources, they live healthier lives. People from all walks of life can experience the riverside riparian corridor through the Greenway Trail. This experience and asset is not limited to the residents of the community, but any student, game day tourist, or other visitor can enjoy the positive, immersive experience of the Greenway Trail.

Detrimental Impacts for the Social Well-Being of our Residents and visitors: Completing this project has no detrimental impacts for the social well-being of our Residents and visitors.

Positive Impacts on the Environment: The North Oconee River Greenway Corridor is more than a trail, it is a protected riparian zone for the community. These greenspaces are made accessible by the trail through them, but they stand alone as environmental assets that allow trees to thrive, produce clean air, create wildlife habitat and ensure that development does not encroach on the rivers and major tributaries in ACC. These river systems are better for having flood zones protected by natural coverings and absorbent soil which help to keep river flooding, regardless of frequency, from endangering residents and other community assets.

Without this section of the trail in working order, the community also loses connection to the flagship nature education location within the region. Sandy Creek Nature Center is a high quality facility that is free to all visitors to enjoy. Every CCSD elementary school has students that either visit the nature center or are visited by its staff. Losing this connection via the trail will set the community's environmental education back by restricting access to those with a car.

*Staff Recommendation: include enhanced stormwater treatment such as bioswales, plunge pools, and features that slow and spread water before it enters the river/creek. Currently stormwater empties uncontrolled into the floodplain causing erosion. Constructing features needed to address stormwater will require removal of vegetation, including trees; rebuilding natural surface trail connections will require habitat restoration; As part of this project, a native habitat restoration plan should be developed that outlines specific habitat goals, objectives, meets educational needs, and guides restoration work. With the exception of the "roadside mow strip", plants should be native with the ACC native plant guide series used as a primary reference for suitability. (Recommend adding and additional \$30,000 to estimated native plant costs).

Detrimental Impacts on the Environment: There is no part of this project that has detrimental impacts on the environment when construction is executed in an appropriate manner.

If a native plant restoration plan is included in the concept, habitat loss would be mitigated.

Positive/Negative Impacts on ACCGov Departments, Agencies, or other Organizations, if not covered in one of the above questions: Completion of this project has positive impacts on the maintenance budgets of the Leisure Services Department by alleviating the over-extended operations budget.

With a TSPLOST investment into rehabilitating this trail and installing the needed utility connections within SCNC, the regular annual budgets will not be negatively impacted.

Project Costs

Detailed project capital budget costs (to be funded from TSPLOST 2023 only):

Project Costs (round to thousand)	Amount
1. Land Acquisition / ROW / Easement:	\$ -
2. Design Fees: (Min.12% of New Const.; 14% of reno.; 16% for LEED proj.)	\$ 136,000
3. Miscellaneous Fees: (Min. Minimum of 3% of Construction Costs – used for permitting, etc. Utilize minimum of 10% if land acquisition if necessary.	\$ 34,000
4. Construction:	\$ 1,130,000
5. Construction Contingency: (10% of the Construction line item)	\$ 113,000
6. Acquisition of Capital Equipment:	\$ -
7. Testing:	\$ 57,000
8. Project Management: (4% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 59,000
9. Project Contingency: (10% of the total budget line items above)	\$ 153,000
10. Public Art: Calculated at 1% of the Construction line item.	\$ 12,000
11. Other 1:	\$
12. Other 2:	\$
Project Subtotal:	\$ 1,694,000
14. Program Management (2% of Project Subtotal):	\$ 34,000
TSPLOST 2023 Project Total:	\$ 1,728,000

Attachments:

[Attachment 2 - SCNC Greenway Conceptual Cost Estimate](#)

Operating Cost

Total Annual Net Operating Costs when Project is complete:

Only identify additional or net operating costs to be paid by ACCGov as a result of this Project. Identify the additional or net costs needed, above ACCGov's current operating budget, to operate the requested project; as well as any additional Project related revenues that would be generated. Provide budget costs for each identified category below.

Operating Costs (round to thousand)	Estimated Impact for Annual Operating Expenditures
TOTAL PROJECTED REVENUES FROM PROJECT	
PROJECTED EXPENDITURES	
1. Personnel Costs: from Appendix A	
2. Annual Utilities:	
• Natural Gas:	
• Electrical:	
• Water:	
• Sewer:	
• Phone:	
• Solid Waste Collection:	
• Other:	
3. Operating Supplies:	
4. Equipment Maintenance:	
5. Facility Maintenance:	
6. Other: Public Art Maintenance	1,000
7. Other:	
8. Other:	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	
NET OPERATING COSTS OF PROJECT:	\$ 1,000

Project Financing

Is the proposed Project to receive funding from source(s) other than TSPLOST 2023? No

Other Attachments:

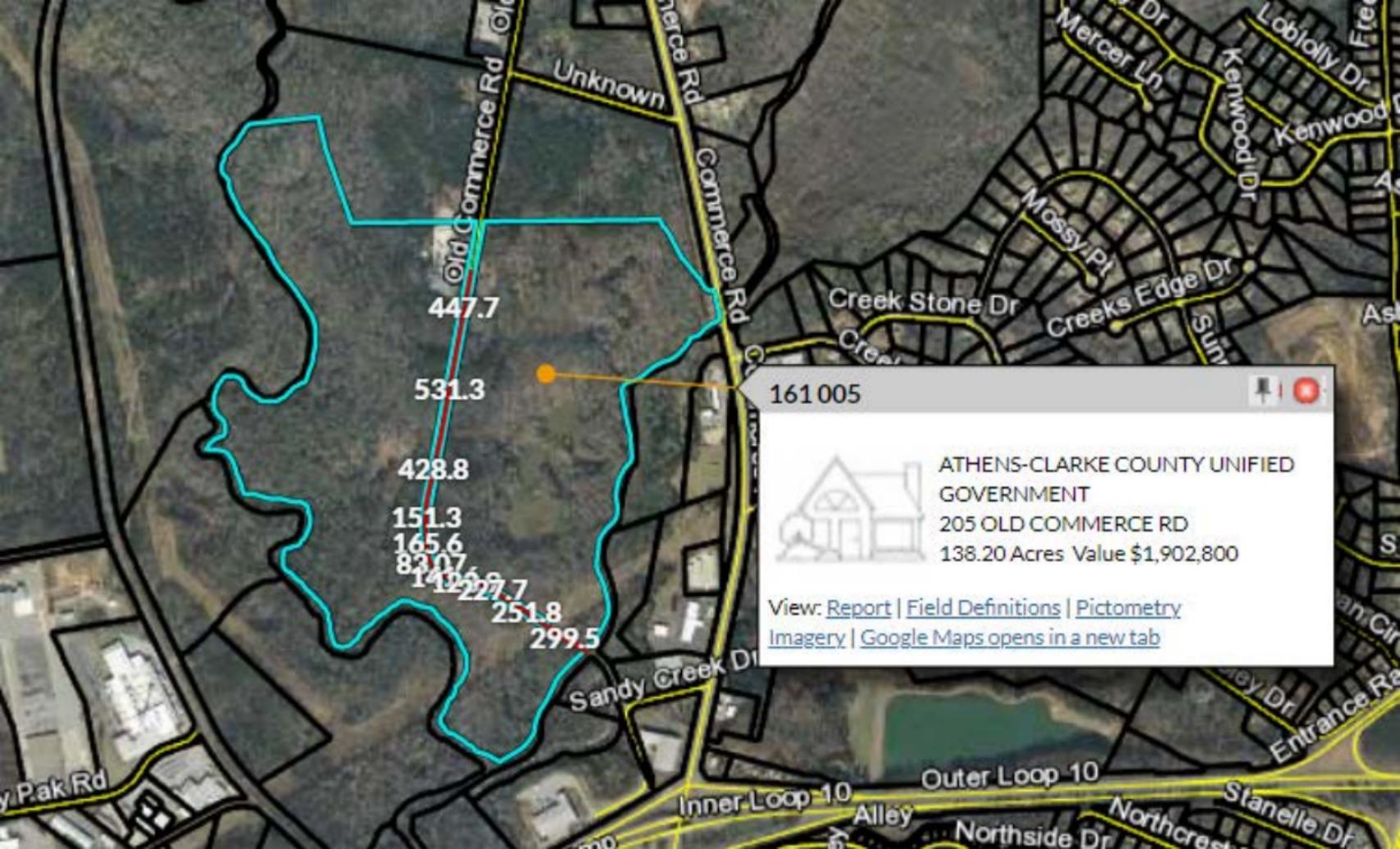
[Attachment 3 - ORGC Trail Tax Map](#)

Sandy Creek Nature Center Greenway Paving Improvements

Conceptual Cost Estimate

7/21/2021

	Unit Price	Unit	Quantity	Sub-Total
Park Connector Drive				
Silt Fence	\$3.60	LF	6000	\$21,600.00
Silt Fence Maintenance	\$1.10	LF	6000	\$6,600.00
Tree Removal	\$5,000.00	LS	1	\$5,000.00
Tree Protection Fence	\$2.80	LF	6000	\$16,800.00
Grading Complete	\$35,000.00	LS	1	\$35,000.00
Asphalt Milling	\$17.50	SY	8000	\$140,000.00
Asphalt Paving	\$30.00	SY	8000	\$240,000.00
Crosswalk Striping - Thermoplastic	\$3.40	LF	128	\$435.20
Centerline Stripe. 6 IN	\$0.95	LF	2875	\$2,731.25
Parking Stripe, 6 IN	\$1.00	LF	275	\$275.00
Thermoplastic Pymt Marking, Handicap Symbol	\$325.00	EA	1	\$325.00
Speed Bumps	\$275.00	EA	3	\$825.00
Concrete Wheel Stops	\$100.00	EA	9	\$900.00
Signage Allowance - Wayfinding	\$3,500.00	LS	1	\$3,500.00
Signage Allowance - Regualtory	\$750.00	LS	1	\$750.00
Granite Entrance Column	\$3,000.00	EA	2	\$6,000.00
Permanent Grass (Shoulder of Greenway) - Native Seed Mix	\$0.85	SF	30000	\$25,500.00
8" DIP , Sewer Line	\$125.00	LF	3200	\$400,000.00
4" SCH 40 conduit with detection wire and pull wire	\$15.00	LF	3200	\$48,000.00
Communication line	\$0.50	LF	3200	\$1,600.00
Communication junction box	\$500.00	EA	4	\$2,000.00
Bollards	\$750.00	EA	5	\$3,750.00
Canopy Trees	\$532.00	EA	2	\$1,064.00
Understory Trees	\$364.00	EA	3	\$1,092.00
Shrubs and Perennials	\$39.20	EA	35	\$1,372.00
	Sub-Total			\$965,119.45
				Construction General Conditions (7%)
				\$67,558.36
				Construction Overhead and Profit (10%)
				\$96,511.95
				TOTAL
				\$1,129,189.76



447.7
 531.3
 428.8
 151.3
 165.6
 83.07
 142.59
 1227.7
 251.8
 299.5

161 005



ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY UNIFIED
 GOVERNMENT
 205 OLD COMMERCE RD
 138.20 Acres Value \$1,902,800

View: [Report](#) | [Field Definitions](#) | [Pictometry Imagery](#) | [Google Maps opens in a new tab](#)