

SANDY SPRINGS TRAIL MASTER PLAN

An aerial photograph of a long, curved wooden boardwalk bridge spanning a wide river. The bridge has a wooden railing and is supported by wooden posts. Several people are walking on the bridge. The surrounding area is lush with green trees, and a paved path is visible on the right bank. The sky is blue with some clouds. On the left side of the image, there are decorative graphic elements: a large blue and white curved shape and a green curved shape at the bottom.

Adopted October 15, 2019
Prepared for: City of Sandy Springs and Sandy Springs Conservancy
Prepared by: PATH Foundation and KAIZEN Collaborative

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Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan and Implementation Strategy

Adopted October 15, 2019

Prepared for:



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EX

Executive Summary

Like most cities who are faced with retrofitting trails into a developed environment, there are an abundance of places where trails need to go and few vacant corridors to connect them together. Land left vacant is vacant for a reason: much of it is too steep or too wet for traditional development. Although topography and proximity to water adds to the cost of construction, they do not preclude assemblage to create linear parks with trails.

Many of the greenways proposed in this plan rely on the acquisition of corridors through the privately owned greenspace buffers that exist between large apartment and condominium projects all over the City. The plan also relies on use of the added stream buffer Sandy Springs requires above and beyond the twenty-five foot buffer required by the state.

This master plan identifies 31.4 miles of trails in Sandy Springs, connecting twelve schools, fifteen parks, three MARTA transit stations, and scores of employers and neighborhoods. The plan includes two pedestrian-scale bridges over the Chattahoochee River to connect with the National Recreation Area in Cobb County, the Roswell Riverwalk, as well as multiple connection points to the proposed PATH400 Trail along Georgia 400.

The authors estimate the 31.4 miles of new trail will cost \$122M to design and construct (in 2019 dollars). The City has requested a ten year implementation plan to complete seven miles of the plan to include the first phase of the trail paralleling Marsh Creek, a five-mile loop that connects the Morgan Falls Recreation Area to Roswell Road and surrounding neighborhoods, and a bridge over the Chattahoochee River at Morgan Falls. The implementation strategy suggests the City allocate approximately \$5 million each year to acquire needed parcels and to design and construct the trails included in the ten year implementation plan.

The implementation strategy suggests building the Marsh Creek Trail as the model mile while acquiring privately owned parcels around the six-mile loop. Demonstrating the popularity of the trail at Marsh Creek and the amenities associated with the trail will help with the acquisition process on the loop.

The citizens of Sandy Spring will likely demand more of the trail system than the city can afford to build each year. The trail system will likely become one of the more treasured features the city has to offer.

31.4 Miles

Greenway Trails, Side Paths, and Neighborhood Greenways

7.0 Miles to be implemented by 2030 with an estimated cost of **\$33M**

the complete trail system will connect neighborhoods to

City Springs

Abernathy Greenway

Roswell Greenway

PATH 400

Morgan Falls Park

Chattahoochee NRA

12 schools

15 parks & greenspace

14 trailhead & access points

3 transit stations

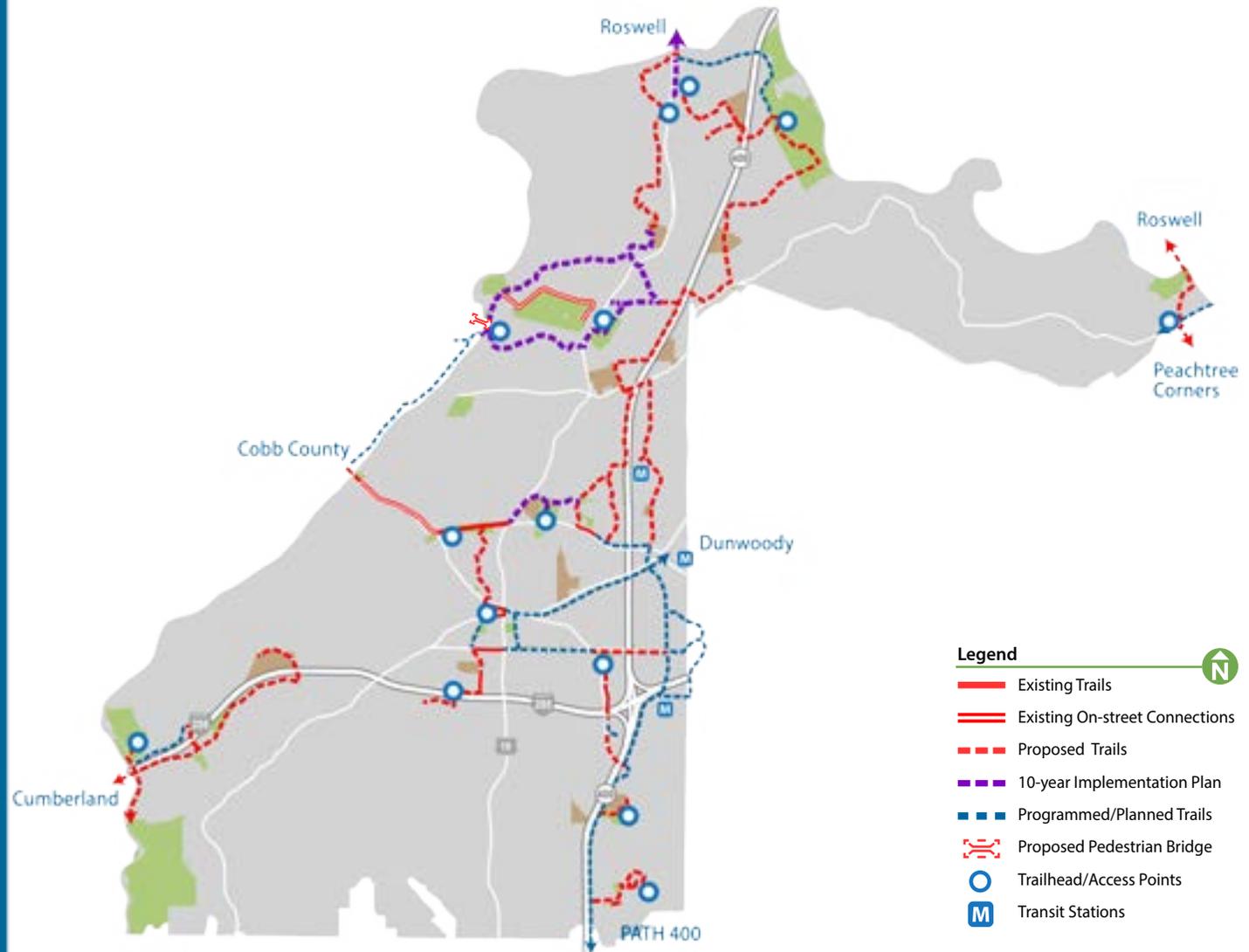




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1 Introduction

Atlanta and its edge communities were all developed to accommodate car travel with little consideration given to other modes of transportation, thus the area that is now Sandy Springs expanded with the age of the automobile. With its suburban sprawl along major roads like Roswell Road and its shopping centers designed to accommodate car travel with few side walks or bicycle infrastructure, we now have an outstanding opportunity to retrofit the city with a comprehensive, connected system of greenway trails.

The City of Sandy Springs has done much to enhance its community - specifically the addition of trails and sidewalks along Abernathy Road, Johnson Ferry and around the City Center. Also, the bicycle lanes from Roswell Road to Overlook help connectivity to the river and the bridge over GA400 was designed to accommodate pedestrians as well. With trails, bicycle lanes, and sidewalks called for in your Public Works documents, progress is being made.

A proven way to provide greater non automobile based connectivity utilizing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is to retrofit the City with a network of multi-use trails that connect schools, employment centers, parks, commercial areas and neighborhoods thereby encouraging muscle-powered transportation modes. The opportunity to make this happen exists in Sandy Springs.

One of the early *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan* goals established by the City and the steering committee was to connect regionally with Roswell's Riverwalk, Atlanta's PATH400, Cobb County's NRA trails, and Dunwoody's new trails. This document will serve as the guide for Sandy Springs to build an unique trail network of its own that connects with existing trails in neighboring communities thereby providing a wonderful regional trail network.

Through building the *Sandy Springs Trail* system, the City will attract and retain younger professionals, compete for employers, and offer an improved quality of life for its citizens. Young, educated citizens are drawn to cities where non-motorized travel is embraced. Sandy Springs needs a network of trails to sustain its growth and retain its reputation as a great place to live, work, and play.



Existing Abernathy Greenway Linear Park



PATH/KAIZEN Representatives participated in a city tour led by Sandy Springs Conservancy to gain knowledge of the desired destinations and potential opportunities for trails

02

**Planning
Considerations**

2 Planning Considerations

2.1 Planning Process

The PATH/KAIZEN Trail Planning and Design Team was approached by a group of individuals interested in pursuing greenway trail development in Sandy Springs, Georgia. It was agreed the City needed a trail master plan and an implementation strategy in order to kick start the process.

The PATH/KAIZEN team reviewed numerous research and planning documents developed over the years by the City of Sandy Springs (CoSS) and other organizations, performed extensive field research to determine potential routes to connect key destinations and vetted their findings with a Steering Committee organized by CoSS and Sandy Springs Conservancy (SSC).

The planning team met with the Steering Committee each month within the four month interactive planning process. In addition, meetings were held by the City and the planning team with identified key stakeholders to present the proposed trail routes and discuss opportunities and concerns.

The *Sandy Springs Master Plan* will serve as the blueprint for the City of Sandy Springs' multi-use trail development with an implementation goal to build approximately 7.0 miles of the *Sandy Springs Trail System* in the next ten years.

2.2 Steering Committee

The planning team advised the City on the formation of a steering committee. The role of the steering committee is to assist during the planning process by establishing overall goals for the trail system, approving branding and trail standards, monitoring the quality of the trail plan, and providing local input on changes to the trail plan as it develops.

The *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan* Steering Committee met monthly for four months. The Steering Committee included representatives from the following departments and organizations:



Representatives of KAIZEN/PATH facilitating a steering committee work session to identify opportunities for trails

- City Communications
- City Economic Department
- City GIS
- City Parks and Recreation
- City Planning & Zoning
- City Public Works
- Sandy Springs Conservancy

(A list of individual Steering Committee Members is included as the Appendix)

2.3 Data Collection and Field Work

Using the city and county’s GIS data, assessment of current and previous planning and development efforts, as well as feedback from the public, PATH/KAIZEN’s analysis of existing and proposed trail connections within City of Sandy Springs focused on the following criteria:

- Is the trail route feasible for construction?
- Is the trail route appealing to all users?
- Is the trail route perceived as safe?
- Does the trail route connect desirable destinations?
- Does the trail fulfill the connections to the existing trails as well as programmed trails within the City and the adjacent jurisdictions?

Over a four-month period, the planning team conducted field work and analyzed data to determine if the proposed trail routes were feasible, appealing, safe, and destination driven. The planning team recorded and transferred all information onto field maps and into ArcGIS and Google Earth Pro once validated by the Steering Committee.

2.4 Establishing Planning Goals

With many cities and counties jumping onto the ‘bicycling band wagon’, it is important to understand the behavior and use potential of existing and future trail users. A Portland, Oregon study¹ outlined a city’s population into four distinctive types of cyclists as listed below.

Four Types of Cyclist

<1%	Strong and Fearless
7%	Enthusied and Confident
60%	Interested but Concerned
33%	No Way, No How

¹ Dill, Jenifer, and Nathan McNeil. “Four Types of Cyclists.” *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board* 2387.1 (2013): 129-138

Understanding that the majority of the population in a bicycle-centric city such as Portland were not cycling on a roadway, the PATH/KAIZEN team discussed ideas about how to target the core 60% “Interested but Concerned” population of Sandy Springs, which offers the highest potential for increasing the number of people riding bicycles. *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan* will focus on encouraging this target group to use bicycles more by providing a higher quality bicycle infrastructure that is low stress and separated from vehicles.

This target led to the planning goal “*to provide a safe, enjoyable, convenient, and attractive trail system for everyone in the City of Sandy Springs*”. Achieving this goal will result in a successful return on the public/private investment, yielding a high number of trail users from the City of Sandy Springs’ population who all capture the benefits associated with multi-use trails.

2.5 Trail Types

Three types of trail facilities were identified from a multi-use trail perspective during the planning process to ensure the *Sandy Springs Trail system* met the goals of being safe, enjoyable, convenient, and attractive. The primary type of trail is a multi-use greenway trail. The secondary types of trails include a shared-use side path and a neighborhood greenway.

Greenway Trails:

Greenway trails often refer to trails used by all non-motorized travelers that are constructed in green areas such as parks, stream corridors, undeveloped land, etc. Greenway trails should be a minimum of ten feet wide, hard surfaced, with design and construction specifications following the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) regulations.



Greenway Trail Typical Section

Side Paths:

Within a built out environment, the City of Sandy Springs is retrofitting the road infrastructures in existing public right-of-way with side paths. The City's development code requires multi-use paths along with other streetscape improvements with new development. A 5 foot minimum landscaped buffer from the roadway should be required along with markings on the trail to heighten awareness that bicycles and other users are present.



Side Path Typical Section

Neighborhood Greenway:

Neighborhood Greenways are streets with low motorized traffic volume and slower speeds, designed and designated to give bicycle travel priority. Neighborhood Greenways use signs, pavement markings, and speed/volume management measures to discourage through-traffic by motor vehicles, as well as creating safe and convenient bicycle crossings of busy arterial streets.

Many local streets with low existing speeds and low volumes offer the basic components of a safe bicycling environment. These streets can be enhanced using a range of design treatments and tailored to existing conditions, creating bicycle boulevards. Design treatments are grouped into measures that provide the following benefits:

- **Route Planning:** Direct access to destinations
- **Signs and Pavement Markings:** Easy to find and to follow
- **Speed Management:** Slow motor vehicle speeds
- **Volume Management:** Low or reduced motor vehicle volumes
- **Minor Street Crossings:** Minimal bicyclist delay
- **Major Street Crossings:** Safe and convenient crossings
- **Offset Crossings:** Clear and safe navigation
- **Green Infrastructure:** Enhancing environments



Neighborhood Greenway Typical Section

2.6 Master Plan Development

The first steering committee meeting for developing the *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan* was structured as an introductory kick-off. The PATH/KAIZEN planning team presented the objectives of the master plan, proposed trail types, and discussed the initial fieldwork and preliminary planning for the proposed trail connections.

Through four months of additional field work and interactions with the steering committee, the planning team refined the proposed trail alignments within the master plan and outlined the implementation strategy for the *Sandy Springs Trail System*.

After two meetings with the steering committee and one public meeting, a draft master plan was presented to the Steering Committee, including a cost summary, a selected model project, and a 10-year implementation plan. Feedback and comments were collected from the Steering Committee to further vet the proposed trail routes and prioritization, resulting in final revisions to the *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan*. The City presented the document to the Mayor and City Council on October 15, 2019 for adoption prior to final printing.

2.7 Public Outreach

The planing team presented the preliminary *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan* during the public meeting on June 19, 2019 at City Springs. The meeting outlined the benefits of trails, introduced the proposed types of trails, and shared the master planning process for the *Sandy Springs Trail*. The second half of the meeting focused on gathering feedback from the community and discussed the details of the plan. Comment cards distributed to the attendees were collected, and compiled into a summary, and then presented back to the Steering Committee.



Approximately 100 attendees were at the public meeting.

While a majority of those attending the meeting supported the master plan, specific desires such as trail connectivity to North River Shopping Center, Marsh Creek, and City Springs were communicated. PATH/KAIZEN also received feedback for a trail along Northgreen Drive, where GDOT is currently acquiring properties for the GA400 express lane project. An online posting offered those residents unable to attend the meeting an opportunity to review the *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan* and share their input and ideas.

03

**Trail Master
Plan**

3 Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan

Overview

Based on the considerations from Chapter 2 and extensive field research, the planning team has identified 31.4 miles of multi-use trail and neighborhood connectivity opportunities that will help the City of Sandy Springs remain competitive in the region and will help develop a trail system that connects Sandy Springs' neighborhoods to schools, parks, existing trails, City Springs, and major employment/commercial hubs.

Within the overall master plan, the proposed trail system is divided into six (6) segments as listed below. The map on the right depicts the beginning and end of each segment.

The development of the **Sandy Springs Trail System** has taken into consideration of regional connections to the existing/planned trails within the neighboring jurisdictions. A map on page 12 depicts the regional connectivity.

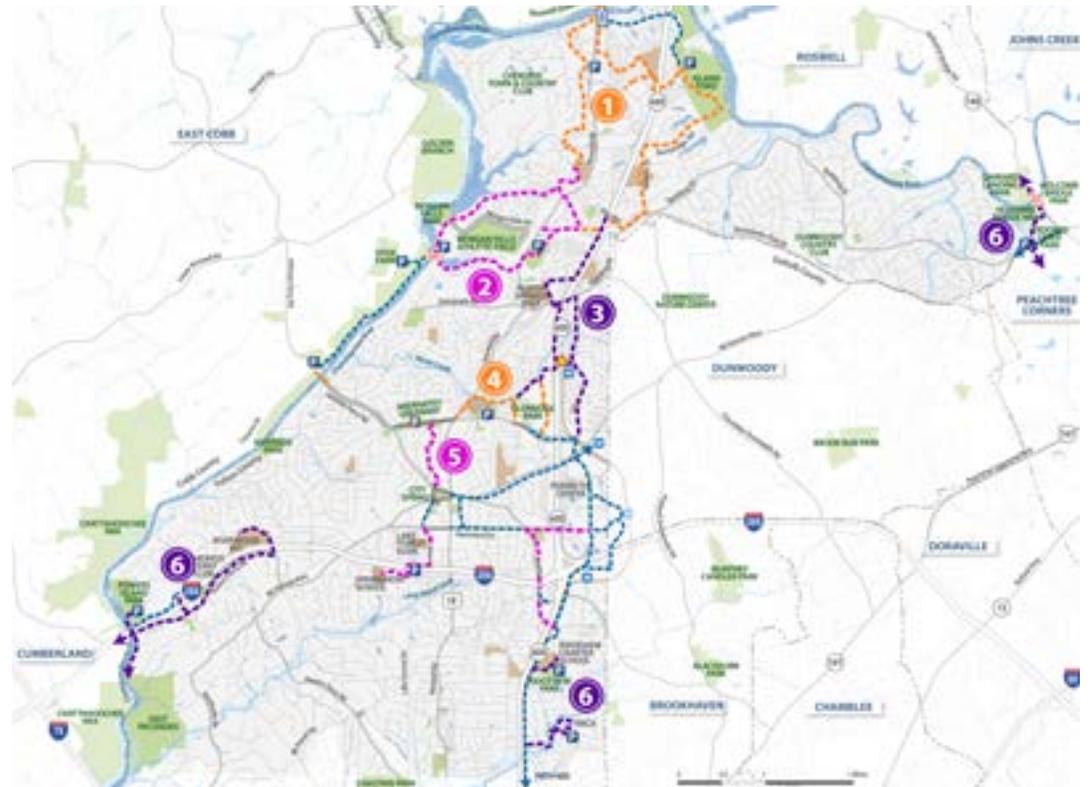
On page 13, a map was generated with an overlay of the existing/programmed sidewalk facilities throughout the City. The map intended to help analyze the gaps of sidewalk network within a quarter-mile of the proposed trail system.

The following pages present each trail segment in more detail, including opportunities as well as potential obstacles that will likely affect decisions regarding the order of implementation. A preliminary cost estimate to design and construct each segment is also presented, along with before and after graphics of selected locations along each proposed trail segment.

Estimated cost is based on material and labor pricing from Spring, 2019. For each segment the estimated cost is broken down to pre-construction engineering cost and construction cost. An estimated cost for easement and property acquisition is not included but should be considered prior to beginning implementation.

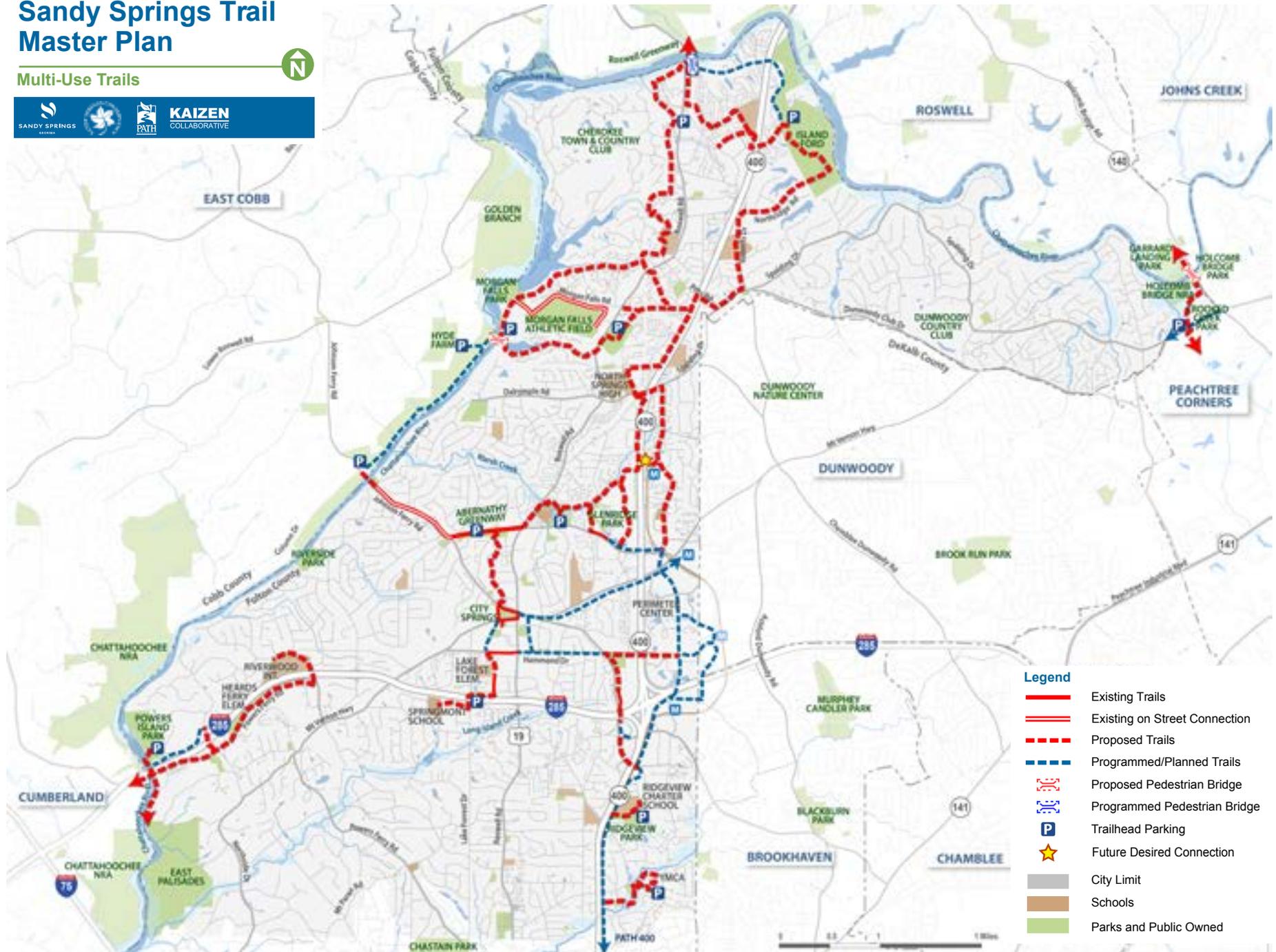
Sandy Springs Trail Segments:

1 North End Connector	14-19
2 Morgan Falls Park Connector	20-25
3 Colquitt Road to Glenridge Drive	26-28
4 Glenridge Drive to Johnson Ferry Road	29-32
5 City Springs/Perimeter Center Connectors	33-35
6 East/South Connectors	36-40



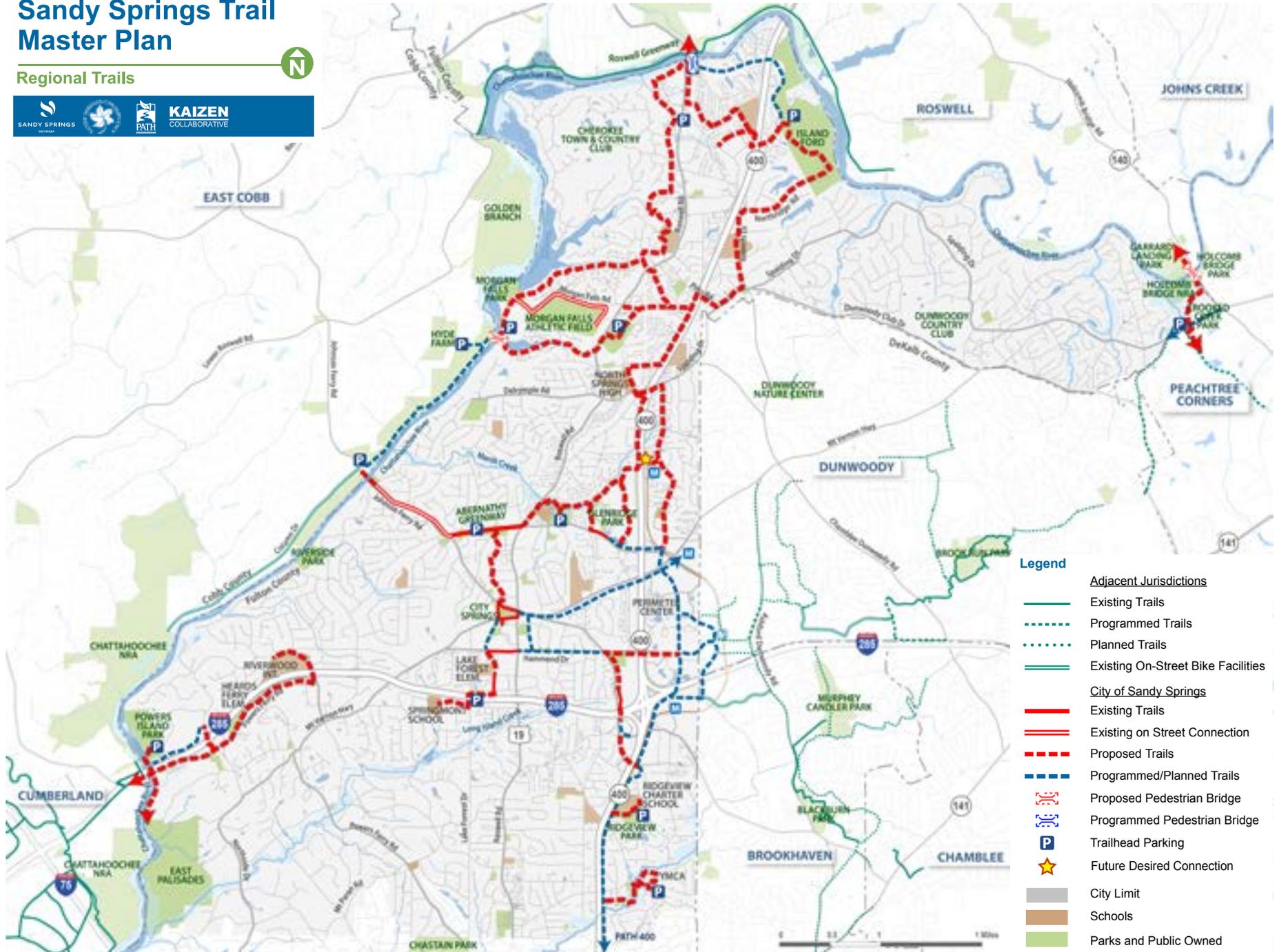
Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan

Multi-Use Trails



Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan

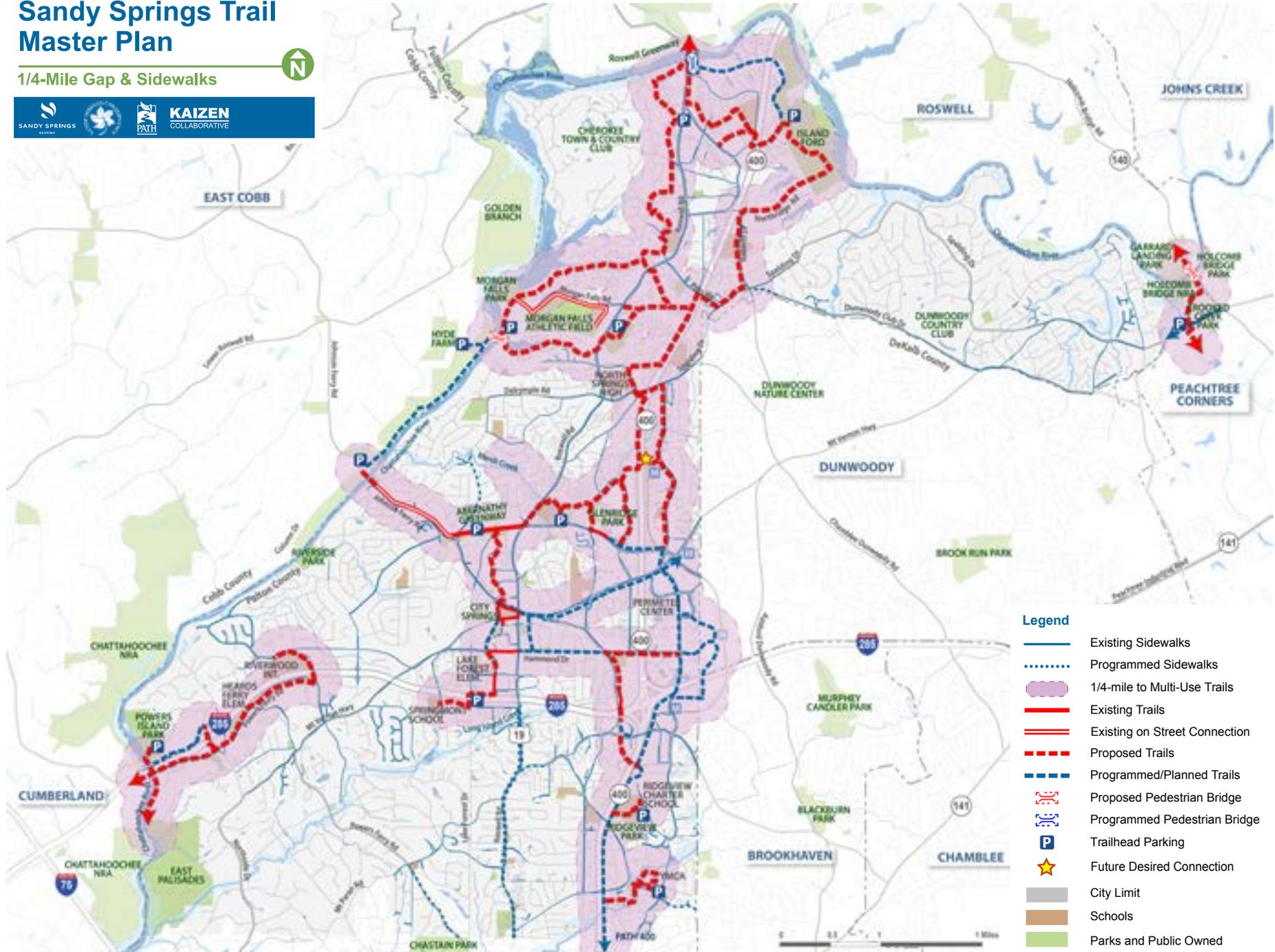
Regional Trails



- Legend**
- Adjacent Jurisdictions
 - Existing Trails
 - ⋯ Programmed Trails
 - ⋯ Planned Trails
 - Existing On-Street Bike Facilities
 - City of Sandy Springs**
 - Existing Trails
 - Existing on Street Connection
 - - - Proposed Trails
 - - - Programmed/Planned Trails
 - ⌈ ⌋ Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
 - ⌈ ⌋ Programmed Pedestrian Bridge
 - P Trailhead Parking
 - ★ Future Desired Connection
 - City Limit
 - Schools
 - Parks and Public Owned

Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan

1/4-Mile Gap & Sidewalks



- Legend**
- Existing Sidewalks
 - Programmed Sidewalks
 - 1/4-mile to Multi-Use Trails
 - Existing Trails
 - Existing on Street Connection
 - Proposed Trails
 - Programmed/Planned Trails
 - Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
 - Programmed Pedestrian Bridge
 - Trailhead Parking
 - Future Desired Connection
 - City Limit
 - Schools
 - Parks and Public Owned

Segment #1 | North End Connector

Description:

Trail Segment #1 is intended to become an amenity as part the future redevelopment in the North End of Sandy Springs. It is composed mostly of greenway trails, along with small sections of side path and neighborhood greenway to make the 9.4 miles loop trail. It is a critical segment to be implemented to accomplish the goals to provide connections among neighborhoods, commercial areas, parks, and schools.

Segment#1 begins on the east side of Roswell Road adjacent to the Chattahoochee River, where the trail will pass under the pedestrian bridge, which is programmed for construction in 2022 by the City of Roswell with the City of Sandy Springs committing 50% of the funding. Connection to this bridge will accomplish a critical goal to link Sandy Springs Trail System to the Roswell Greenway, which currently stretches for 6 miles along the northern riverbank. The proposed trail will continue west as a greenway and travel south within a preserved green space parcel between the multi-family residential/commercial areas and the single-family residential subdivisions. A trailhead is proposed for parking and trail access from Roswell Road near Huntcliff.

The trail will make an at-grade crossing at Huntcliff with a bicycle/pedestrian-activated signal and enhanced crosswalk striping. The greenway will continue south along the edge of multi-family/commercial properties to connect to Ison Spring Elementary School and the side path along Ison Road (segment#2d).

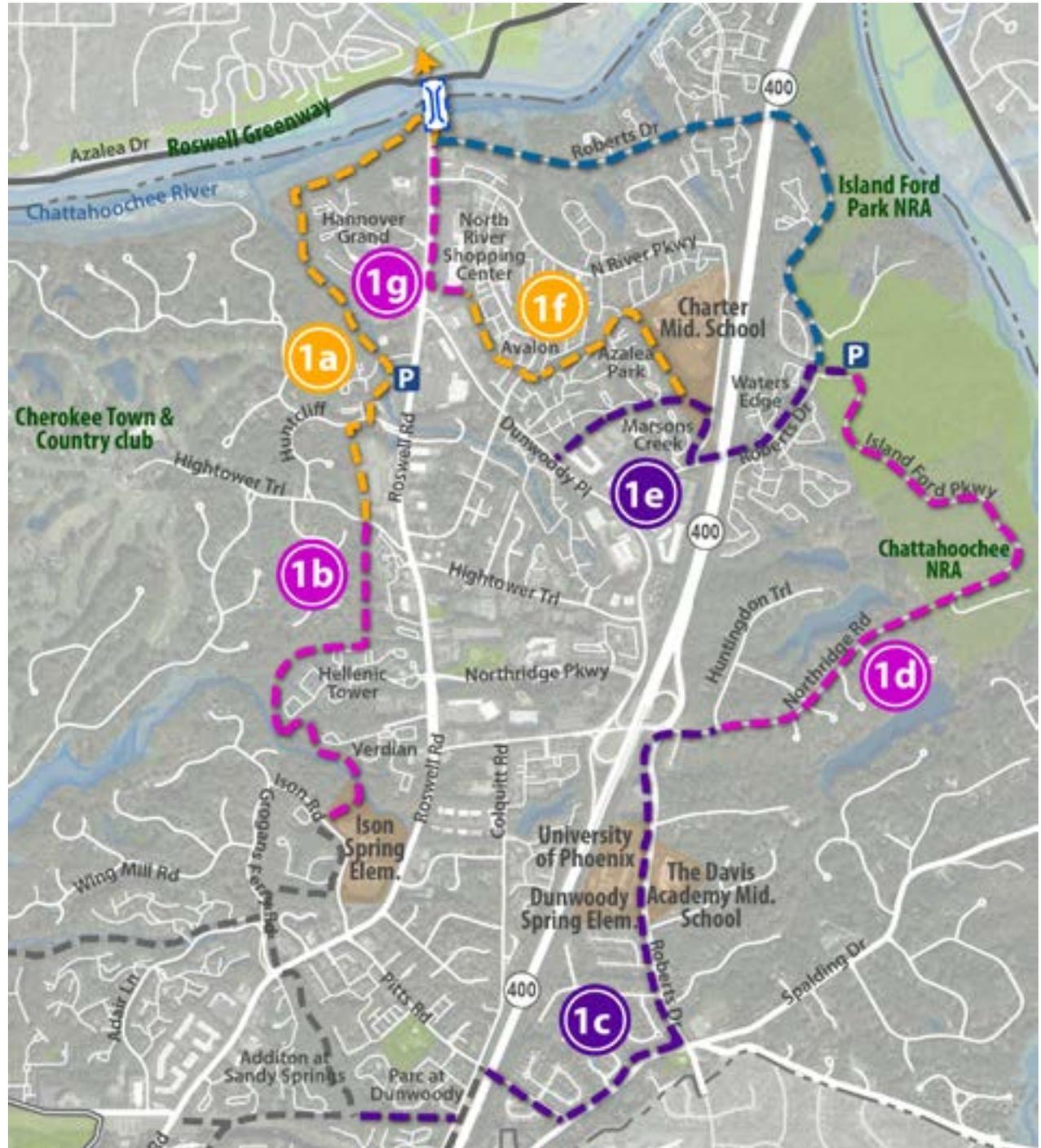
The Georgia DOT SR 400 Express Lanes project has slated three road bridge replacements within Sandy Springs' city limit. It is recommended for the City to work with GDOT on incorporating a multi-use side path with raised landscape buffer within the required right-of-way width on the new bridge construction. Trail segment #1 includes two of the bridge replacements – Pitts Road and Roberts Drive. A section drawing is presented to depict the recommended configuration with the multi-use path on each bridge.

Segment#1c, 1d, and 1e entail a series of side paths and neighborhood greenway from Pitts Road to Dunwoody Place. Implementing these segments will achieve the goal to connect to multiple schools and the Chattahoochee National Recreational Area (NRA) at Island Ford Park. With the topographic

challenges identified in the Charter Middle School area, it is anticipated that significant structures and boardwalks will be utilized within segment#1e to accommodate a quality connection. Besides, the trail spur that connects from the school property to Dunwoody Place will provide an access point and event space adjacent to the commercial plaza.

From the west end of the school property to the North River Shopping Center, segment 1f will traverse two multi-family residential complexes by utilizing green space and retrofitting the space between the apartment building and the commercial parking lot along Roswell Road. Timing for implementation of this segment will need to be synced with the future redevelopment in this area. Finally, segment#1g is proposed as a side path along Roswell Road by retrofitting the greenspace between Roswell Road and the parking lot at North River Shopping Center. This segment will essentially connect to the planned side path along Roberts Drive as well as the connection to the Roswell Pedestrian Bridge.

Segment #1 | North End Connector



- Legend**
- Existing Trails
 - Existing On-street Connections
 - Proposed Trail Segments
 - Programmed/Planned Trails
 - Programmed Pedestrian Bridge
 - Trailhead Parking

Segment #1 | North End Connector

Overview:

Connecting Destinations: Island Ford Park, North River Shopping Center, Ison Springs Elementary School, Roswell Greenway, Dunwoody Spring Elementary School, Dunwoody Place.

Begins/Ends: Roswell Road/Roberts Drive (Loop)

Distance: 43,575 LF (8.3 miles)

Opportunities and Benefits:

- Connects numerous the North End residents to commercial hubs, schools, major recreational area, and the existing Roswell Greenway over the Chattahoochee River
- Complements the North End redevelopment plan
- Leverages pedestrian/bicyclists connection over Hwy 400 with road bridge replacements
- Provides trailhead parking and access opportunity from Roswell Road

Potential Obstacles:

- Requires multiple easement and right-of-way acquisitions
- Timing with GDOT on completing the road bridge replacements

Estimated Cost for Implementation:

phase	length	estimated cost
1A	1.4 mi	\$9,195,000
1B	1.1 mi	\$7,215,000
1C*	1.7 mi	\$5,150,000
1D	1.7 mi	\$924,000
1E*	1.1 mi	\$5,008,000
1F	0.8 mi	\$6,837,000
1G	0.4 mi	\$1,261,000

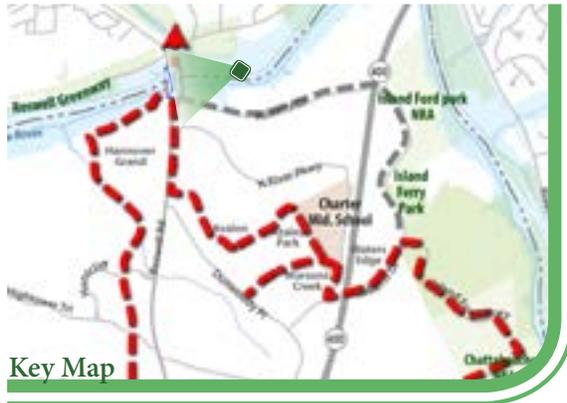
Segment 1 | North End Connector

\$35,590,000

An estimated cost for property acquisition is not included but should be considered prior to beginning implementation.

** The estimated implementation cost does not include the construction of side path on Pitts Road bridge and Roberts Road bridge over GA 400. Cost is assumed to be covered by GDOT with the replacement of the bridge for the SR 400 Express Lanes.*

Proposed Trail under Roswell Road Pedestrian Bridge



Key Map

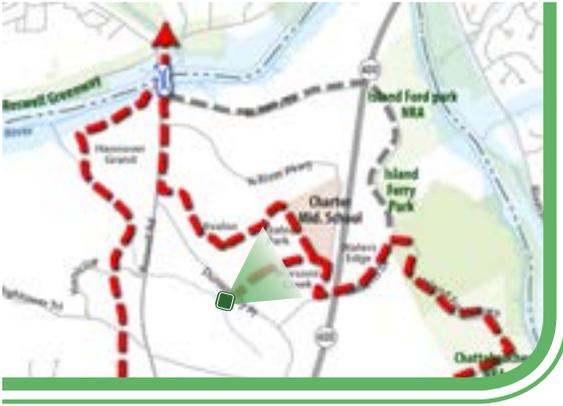
The image below illustrates the proposed greenway trail going under the proposed pedestrian bridge, which is parallel to the existing Roswell Road bridge over the Chattahoochee River. Retaining walls with safety railing will be proposed along the trail under the bridge.



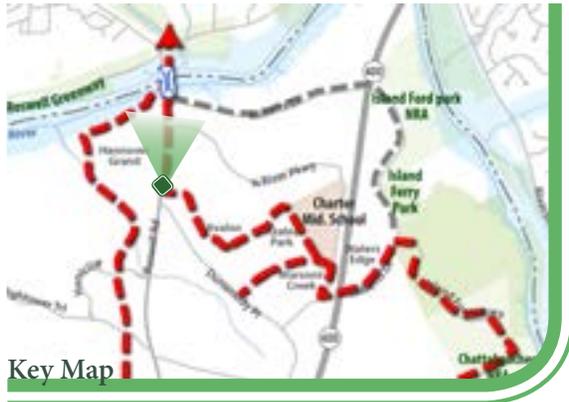
Proposed Spur Trail to Dunwoody Place



Below is an illustration of the spur trail connection to Dunwoody Place and the opportunity for the adjacent businesses to activate their outdoor space for dining and event hosting.



Proposed Side Path at North River Shopping Center



Key Map

The proposed side path will utilize the existing landscape buffer between Roswell Road and the commercial parking lot to get to Roswell Road bridge.

Note: The City may implement this segment as an area of the Next Ten Roswell Road Boulevard concept.



Segment #2 | Morgan Falls Park Connector

Description:

Trail segment #2 provides a five-mile loop trail that connects a variety of desired destinations west-east from Morgan Falls Overlook Park to the east side of Roswell Road. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is working with the City of Sandy Springs, Sandy Springs Conservancy, and Cobb County on preliminary plans to construct a bridge below Morgan Falls Dam. The bridge will connect Morgan Falls Park to the National Park Service land in Cobb County near Hyde Farm, as well as the future trail system along the river between Hyde Farm and Johnson Ferry Road. It is critical to implement segment #2 in a timely frame to establish a significant part of the overall trail connection and to set the standard and the brand of the Sandy Springs Trail System.

Beginning in Morgan Falls Park, the trail will follow Morgan Falls Road as a side path and transition to a shared-use street for bicycle/pedestrian and maintenance vehicles on the Georgia Power service road. The trail will split at the preliminary bridge location and connect east to Orkin Lake at the Edgewater Apartment Complex. A variety of opportunities should be considered at Orkin Lake, such as boardwalks and greenways around the lake to create an appealing destination and a sense of place. The trail will align from the community center and tennis court with Cimarron Pkwy to Roswell Road and become a side path on the west side of Roswell Road going north.

Preliminary study shows that a pedestrian crossing between the Fulton County service building and MARTA bus stop is warranted, however, any such crossing will need to be approved by the Georgia Department of transportation. A separate bicycle/pedestrian-activated “HAWK” signal (High Intensity Activated Crosswalk signal) is proposed for a safe crossing of the five-lane highway. Once across Roswell Road, the trail will enter the county-owned property and continue north as a greenway traversing through the Wesley St. James apartment complex and under-passing Jefferson Drive with the drainage corridor. The trail will then follow the Georgia Power easement area east and enter an undeveloped parcel to get back to Roswell Road.



Morgan Falls Overlook Park viewing the Chattahoochee River

The trail will cross Roswell Road at the intersection of Grogans Ferry Road with the programmed signal improvement. Segment #3c is proposed to capture a scenic greenway with boardwalk structures from Grogans Ferry Road to Morgan Falls Park. A spur trail will connect from Grogans Ferry Road to Ison Spring Elementary School.

Segment #2 | Morgan Falls Park Connector

Overview:

Connecting Destinations: Morgan Falls Overlook Park, Edgewater at Sandy Springs, Big Trees Forest Preserve, North Fulton Government Service Center, Ison Springs Elementary School

Begins: Morgan Falls Overlook Park

Ends: Segment#1 near the Addition of Sandy Springs

Distance: 29,022 LF (5.5 miles)

Opportunities and Benefits:

- Provides safe at-grade crossing on Roswell Road for pedestrians/ bicyclist
- Establishes the opportunity to connect directly to Cobb County's trail system along Chattahoochee River
- Achieves the goal to connect desired destinations
- Provides iconic view at Orkin Lake

Potential Obstacles:

- Requires critical acquisition from properties.
- Requires long-term coordination with Cobb County to realize the pedestrian bridge over the River at Morgan Falls

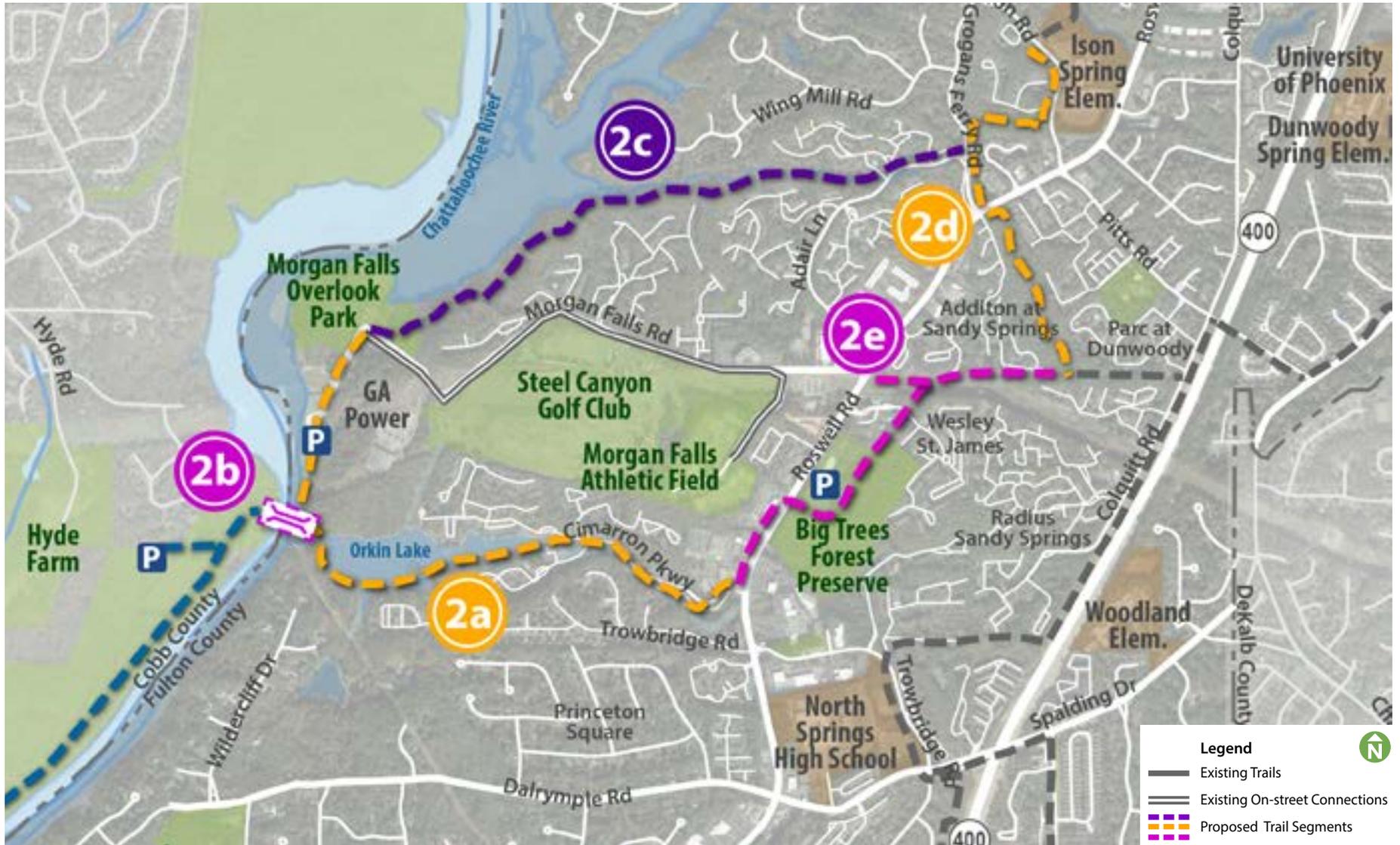
Estimated Cost for Implementation:

<u>phase</u>	<u>length</u>	<u>estimated cost</u>
2A	1.6 mi	\$5,730,000
2B	0.1 mi	\$4,746,000
2C	1.6 mi	\$10,563,000
2D	1.1 mi	\$4,488,000
2E	1.1 mi	\$3,051,000

Segment 2 | Morgan Falls Park Connector

An estimated cost for property acquisition is not included but should be considered prior to beginning implementation.

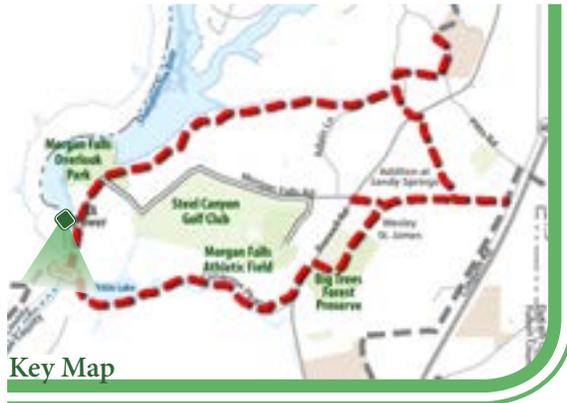
Segment #2 | Morgan Falls Park to Colquitt Road



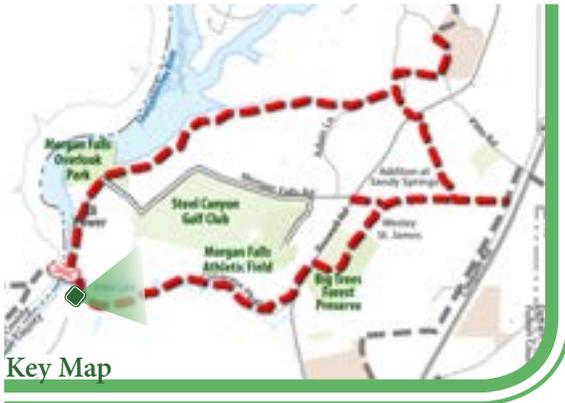
Proposed Trail Bridge over Chattahoochee River



The image below illustrates the proposed pedestrian bridge over Chattahoochee River at the Morgan Falls Park, connecting the future trail system on the west side of the river in Cobb County.



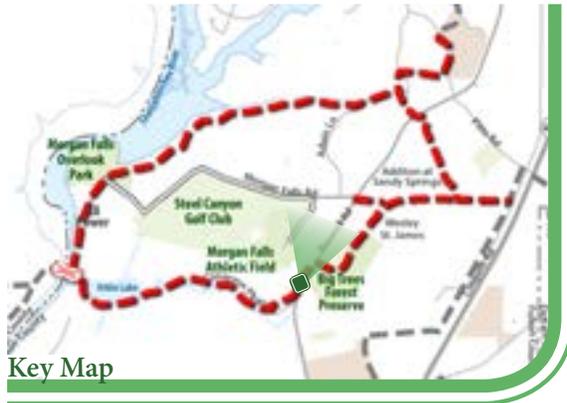
Proposed Boardwalk at Orkin Lake



The image below illustrates the proposed boardwalk around the Orkin Lake at the Edgewater Apartment Complex. It is predicted to become a well-used section and a iconic destination within the trail system.



Proposed At-grade Crossing at Roswell Road



Key Map

The illustration below shows the preliminary location for an at-grade crossing at Roswell Road with a pedestrian-activated signal device (HAWK) and a refuge median.



Segment #3 | Colquitt Road to Glenridge Drive

Description:

Trail segment #3 provides a north-south connection on the eastern part of Sandy Springs. Building this segment will accomplish the desired connections to the North Springs Station and schools. Adjacent residents on both sides of Hwy 400 can access the trail from neighborhood streets and sidewalks.

Beginning at Pitts Road, the trail will be a side path on the west side of Colquitt Road from Pitts Road to its cul-de-sac. The road modification will shift the traffic lane east to the spare lane close to Hwy 400 and accommodate a 10' side path with a 5' landscape buffer on the west side. The proposed alignment was confirmed to be feasible with the preliminary design of the GDOT Hwy 400 Express Lane project.

The trail will transition to become a greenway between Colquitt Road and Trowbridge Road following the southern property limit of the apartment complex. The trail will make an at-grade crossing at Trowbridge Road and become a side path along the west side. The trail will then cross Dalrymple Road at the signalized intersection, where it will split into two connections going south and east.

One trail segment will continue towards the east and cross over Hwy 400 with the Spalding Drive road bridge. Once across, the trail will turn south and become a side path along Peachtree Dunwoody Road, connecting the North Springs Station. The side path will end at Abernathy Road, where it ties into the programmed side path from Abernathy Road to Hammond Drive.

Another trail segment stays at-grade towards the east and transitions to a greenway trail to continue south. A side path will utilize the greenspace properties that are slated to be acquired/relocated by GDOT for the Express Lane project. This trail segment will provide a unique chance to create a linear park space between the expanded highway and the residential areas. The plan aims to show a future desired connection from this trail segment to connect over Hwy 400 to the North Springs Station.

The trail will leave the Hwy 400 corridor and enter the office park property as a greenway. The trail will make an at-grade crossing at Glenlake Parkway and follow the low-land abutting the ARIA housing development and the forthcoming new Glenridge Park as a creek-side greenway.

Overview:

Connecting Destinations: North Springs High School, Future Glenridge Park, North Springs Station,

Begins: Colquitt Road

Ends: Glenridge Drive and Abernathy Road

Distance: 26,337 LF (5.0 miles)

Opportunities and Benefits:

- Connects neighborhoods to schools and North Springs Station
- Provide safe connection over GA 400

Potential Obstacles:

- Inserting the side path design into GDOT's Spalding Drive bridge replacement project which is under concept design is critical and should be done in a timely frame.
- Requires multiple easement and right-of-way acquisitions

Estimated Cost for Implementation:

phase	length	estimated cost
3A	1.1 mi	\$5,389,000
3B	1.7 mi	\$4,279,000
3C*	2.1 mi	\$5,514,000

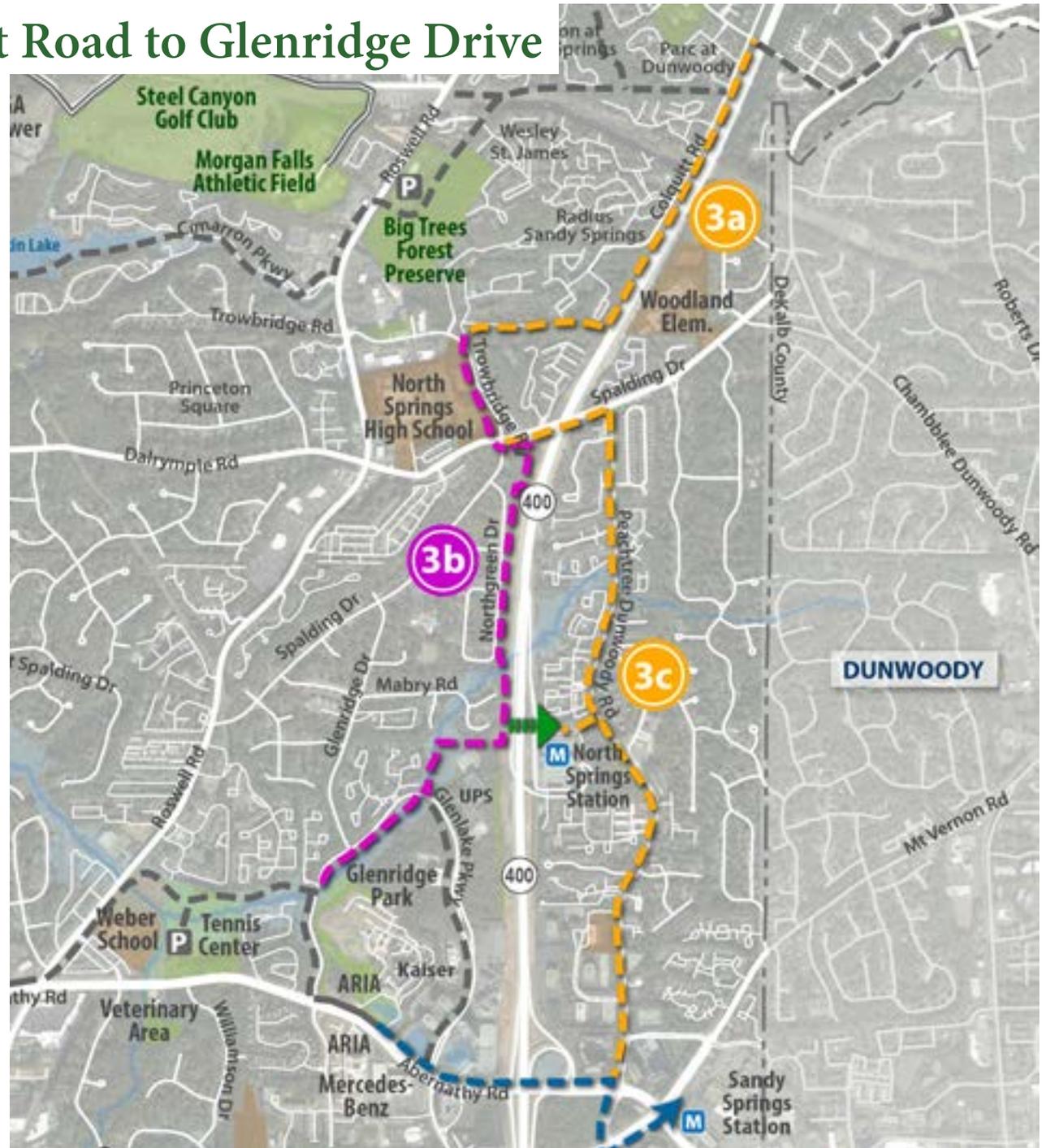
Segment 3 | Colquitt Road to Glenridge Drive

\$15,182,000

An estimated cost for easement and property acquisition is not included but should be considered prior to beginning implementation.

* The estimated implementation cost does not include the construction of side path on Spalding Drive bridge over GA 400. Cost is assumed to be covered by GDOT with the replacement of the bridge for the SR 400 Express Lanes.

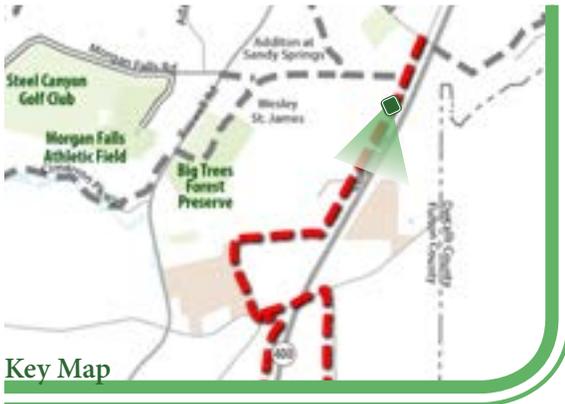
Segment #3 | Colquitt Road to Glenridge Drive



- Legend**
- Existing Trails
 - Existing On-street Connections
 - Proposed Trail Segments
 - Programmed/Planned Trails
 - Future Desired Connection

Proposed Side Path on Colquitt Road

The image below illustrates the proposed side path along Colquitt Road with a landscape buffer.



Segment #4 | Glenridge Drive to Johnson Ferry Road

Description:

The Abernathy Greenway linear park is a jewel that is centrally located within the City. The trail segment #4 will be a critical link to extend the existing Abernathy Greenway and connect it east to the Tennis Center and Glenridge Park, and west to the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area.

The eastern connection begins at the Northeast corner of Roswell/Abernathy Road intersection as a side path going north along Roswell Road. Additional right-of-way will be acquired from adjacent property to accommodate a 10' side path with a 3'-5' landscape buffer. The City will provide additional safe crossing improvements for bike/ped at Abernathy/Roswell Road. The trail will then enter the Weber School property and retrofit the northern edge of the parking lot to become an inviting side path with landscapes. It is critical to ensure that the implementation team coordinates with the Weber School to discuss security and safety of their campus and how the trail can provide an amenity to the school.

The trail will leave the Weber School parking lot by bridging over the tributary and become the Marsh Creek Greenway within the city-owned greenspace behind the Tennis Center. The planning team has reviewed the previous concept plan and concurred the proposed vision. The proposed Marsh Creek Greenway will stay on the north side of the creek to Glenridge Drive, including portions of greenways, small bridges, boardwalks, and overlook areas. A small section of greenway will spur off the mainline and connect to the Tennis Center parking lot. Two side path sections are proposed along Glenridge Drive and Glenlake Parkway. They will enclose a small loop around the Glenridge employment center and the future Glenridge Park.

West of the Abernathy Greenway Linear Park, it is recommended to remove the westbound bike lane and to improve the existing 8' sidewalk to a 10' side path with adequate buffer along Johnson Ferry Road. It will provide a cohesive standard of the trail system and enhance the connection along Johnson Ferry Road in long-term. Finally, at the Johnson Ferry Road bridge, it is proposed to expand the existing side path to be 10' wide with a raised landscape planter.

Overview:

Connecting Destinations: Sandy Springs Tennis Center, ARIA, Kaiser Permanente, Weber School, Abernathy Greenway, Abernathy Art Center, Sandy Springs Station

Begins: Glenlake Parkway

Ends: Johnson Ferry Road at Chattahoochee River

Distance: 16,952 LF (3.2 miles)

Opportunities and Benefits:

- Provides connectivity to major destinations
- Connects to major employment areas
- Achieves the goal to connect the existing greenway

Potential Obstacles:

- Requires critical easement and right-of-way acquisitions

Estimated Cost for Implementation:

phase	length	estimated cost
4A	1 mi	\$3,524,000
4B	1.2 mi	\$2,568,000
4C	1 mi	\$2,652,000

Segment 4 | Glenridge Drive to Johnson Ferry Road

\$8,744,000

An estimated cost for property acquisition is not included but should be considered prior to beginning implementation.

Segment #4 | Glenridge Drive to Chattahoochee River



Legend

- Existing Trails
- Existing On-street Connections
- Proposed Trail Segments
- Programmed/Planned Trails
- Trailhead Parking



Proposed Marsh Creek Greenway



The proposed Marsh Creek Greenway will feature a series of small bridges, boardwalks, and a pocket park at the access point at the Tennis Center as illustrated below.



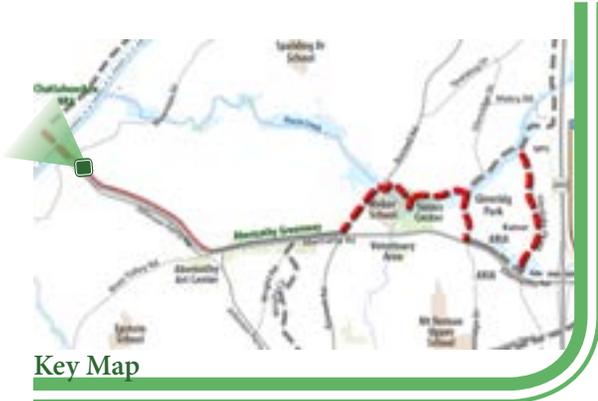
Key Map



Proposed Side Path on Johnson Ferry Road Bridge



The image below shows the proposed side path with a raised landscape planter on Johnson Ferry Road bridge.



Key Map



Segment #5 | City Springs / Perimeter Center Connectors

Description:

Trail segment #5 is proposed mostly on/within City right-of-way as side paths and neighborhood greenways. It will link a series of programmed trail segments and connecting neighborhoods to the City Springs and the Perimeter Center.

Segment #5A is a neighborhood greenway on the low-volume street - Wright Circle from Abernathy Road to Johnson Ferry Road. This connection will provide a delineated route for trail users to get from Abernathy Greenway to City Springs. The neighborhood greenway will end at the street cul-de-sac and become a greenway through the edge of a parking lot of the bank property to get to the existing side path on Johnson Ferry Road.

Segment #5B contains a side path along Sandy Springs Circle, connecting the current programmed side path at Hammond Drive to an existing side path at Lake Forest Elementary School. A section of greenway is proposed within Allen Park to improve the existing walk path and provide a trail access point at the parking lot at Lake Forest Drive. From the parking lot, the trail will make an at-grade crossing with the 3-way stop intersection on Lake Forest Drive and cross under I-285 with the road tunnel. The greenway will traverse through two properties and connect to the Springmont School. An at-grade crossing on Long Island Drive is proposed at the school's new entry/exit drive.

Segment #5C entails a series of side paths along Hammond Drive and Glenridge Drive. This segment will fill in the gaps among the existing and programmed side paths, connecting to Hammond Park, Dunwoody Station, and the PATH 400 trail corridor at the Glenridge Connector.

Overview:

Connecting Destinations: Abernathy Greenway, City Springs, Lake Forest Elementary school, Allen Park, Hammond Park, Dunwoody Station, Perimeter Center

Distance: 18,234 LF (3.5 miles)

Opportunities and Benefits:

- Provides connections to City Springs
- Complements the City's programmed multi-use path projects in the Perimeter Center area
- Establishes the opportunity to connect to the future PATH 400 Trail

Potential Obstacles:

- Requires acquiring additional right-of-way

Estimated Cost for Implementation:

phase	length	estimated cost
5A	0.8 mi	\$1,013,000
5B	1 mi	\$3,794,000
5C	1.6 mi	\$4,415,000

Segment 5 | City Springs/Perimeter Center Connectors

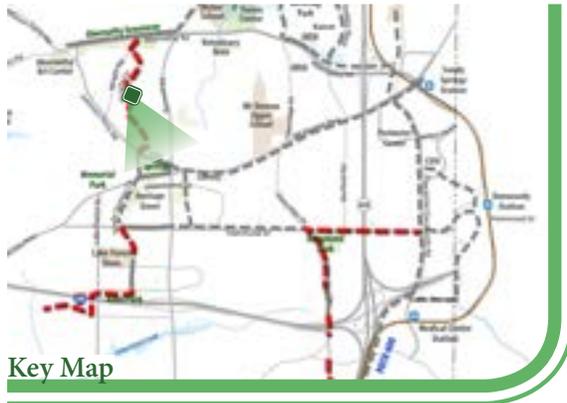
\$9,222,000

An estimated cost for property acquisition is not included but should be considered prior to beginning implementation.

Proposed Neighborhood Greenway on Wright Circle



The trail connection between Abernathy Road and Johnson Ferry Road is proposed to utilize a low-volume street and delineate it as a neighborhood greenway with pavement markings and signs.



Key Map



Segment #6 | East/South Connectors

Description:

Sandy Springs is challenged with its built-out urban pattern and limited public space along the river but is also ripe with opportunities from abutting jurisdictions, i.e., Roswell, Johns Creek, Peachtree Corners, Dunwoody, and Cobb County. To take advantage of the existing and planned trail network in the neighboring cities/county, trail segment #6 presents three sections that will establish a regional connection.

Segment #6A begins at the city's new Crooked Creek Park and follows Rivers Exchange Drive as a side path to Holcomb Bridge Road. The side path along Holcomb Bridge Road will utilize the space within the county-owned property adjacent to the river to transition to a greenway. A separate pedestrian bridge is proposed to launch from the county property over the river and land in the Garrard Landing Park. A potential spur connection could connect under Holcomb Bridge Road bridge to the park on the east side of the road. South of Crooked Creek Park, the trail can cross under Spalding Drive with a proposed box-culvert structure and link to the programmed Crooked Creek Trail in City of Peachtree Corners.

Segment #6B aims to connect the existing Cumberland CID trail system into the city. A side path is proposed along Powers Ferry Road from the river to the Riverwood International Charter School. The plan also identifies the desire to connect from Power Island Park to East Palisades Park with boardwalk structures under the highway viaducts. A portion of this segment is part of the I-285 Top End Express Lanes project. It is critical for the city to coordinate with GDOT on the incorporation of the proposed side paths along with the on-going project.

Segment #6C&D entail two neighborhood connections to the future PATH 400 trail. The one connecting from Ridgeview Charter School will capture the city-owned green space by creating a greenway and a trailhead parking. The other one connecting from YMCA sports field will feature a greenway loop within the wooded area. It will make an at-grade crossing on Windsor Pkwy and connect to the Windsor Meadow. The greenway will travel along Nancy Creek and connect to PATH 400. Property easement will be required to make these connections.



Cumberland CID trail under highway viaduct view south

Segment #6 | East/South Connectors

Overview:

Connecting Destinations: Abernathy Greenway, City Springs, Lake Forest Elementary school, Allen Park, Hammond Park, Dunwoody Station, Perimeter Center

Distance: 34,616 LF (6.6 miles)

Opportunities and Benefits:

- Establishes regional connections to neighboring jurisdictions
- Connects neighborhoods to future PATH 400

Potential Obstacles:

- Requires easement and right-of-way acquisitions
- Requires working with National Park Services for connections into the Chattahoochee NRA
- Incorporates the proposed side path on Powers Ferry Road over I-285 with the I-285 Top End Express Lanes project
- Partners with City of Roswell to realize the bridge at Holcomb Bridge Road

Estimated Cost for Implementation:

phase	length	estimated cost
6A	1.1 mi	\$5,373,000
6B*	3.7 mi	\$12,485,000
6C	0.4 mi	\$3,083,000
6D	1.3 mi	\$4,194,000

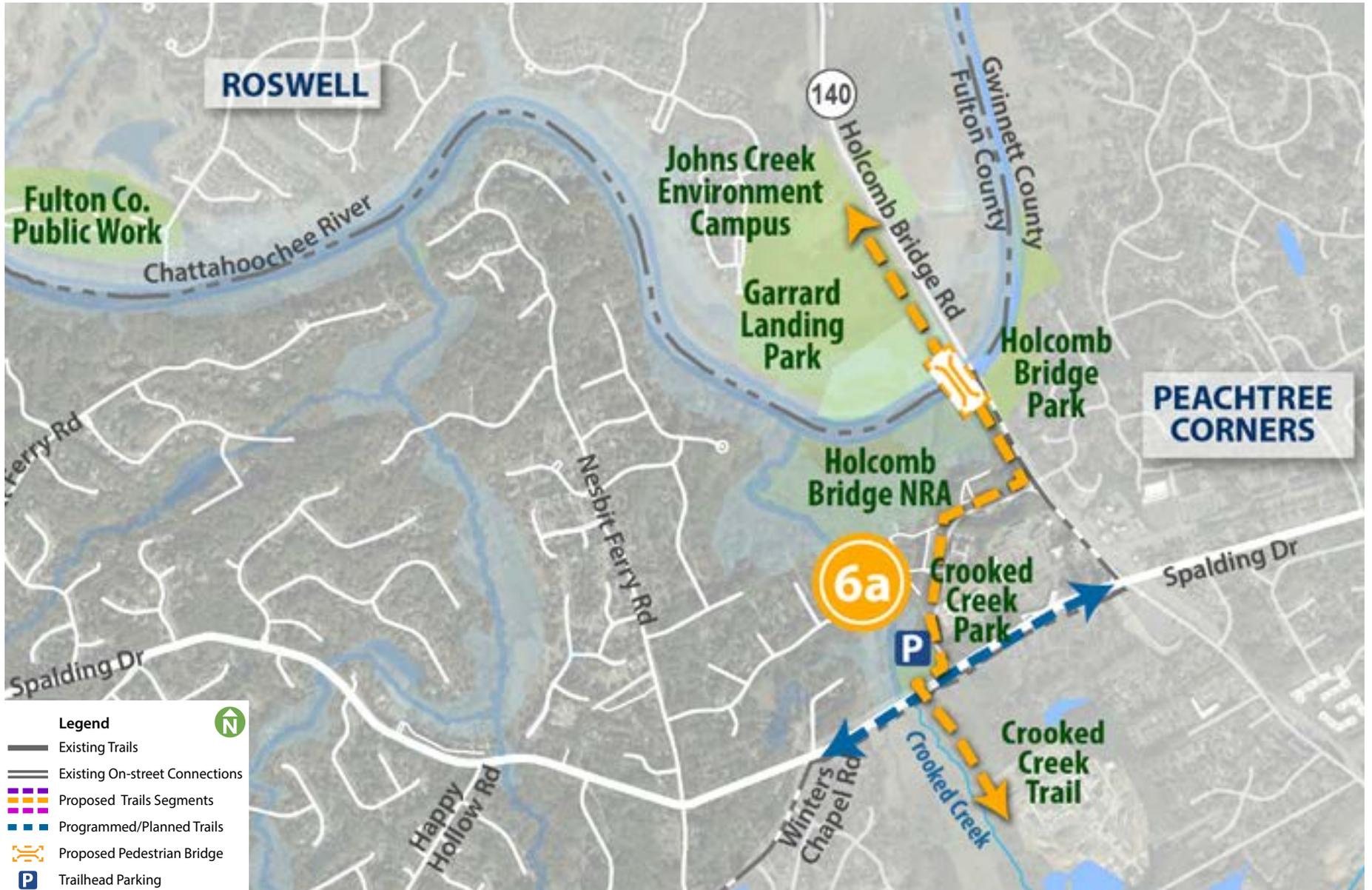
Segment 6 | East / South Connectors

\$25,135,000

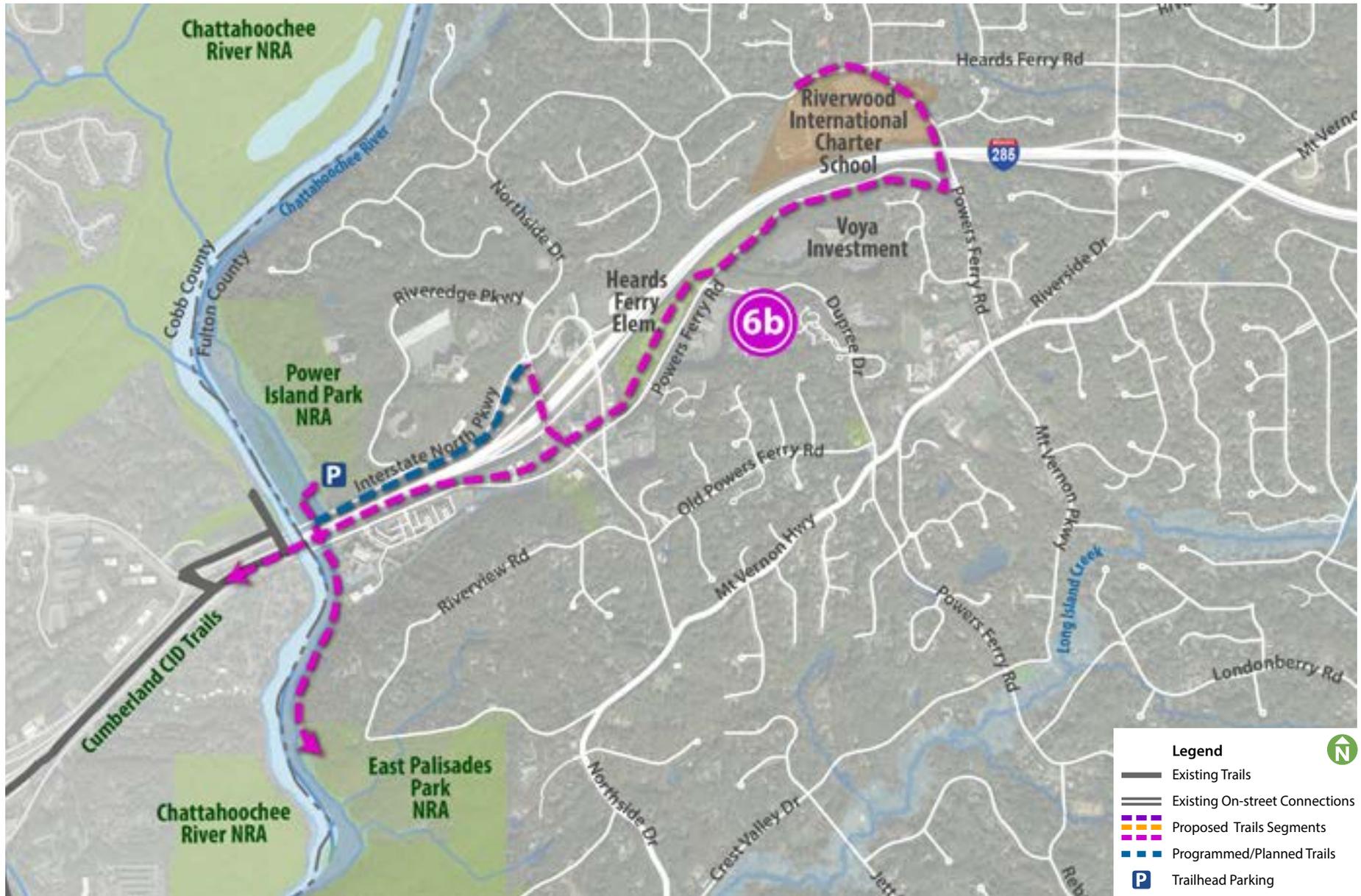
An estimated cost for property acquisition is not included but should be considered prior to beginning implementation.

** The estimated implementation cost does not include the construction of side path on Powers Ferry Road bridge over I-285. Cost is assumed to be covered by GDOT with the I-285 Top End Express Lanes project.*

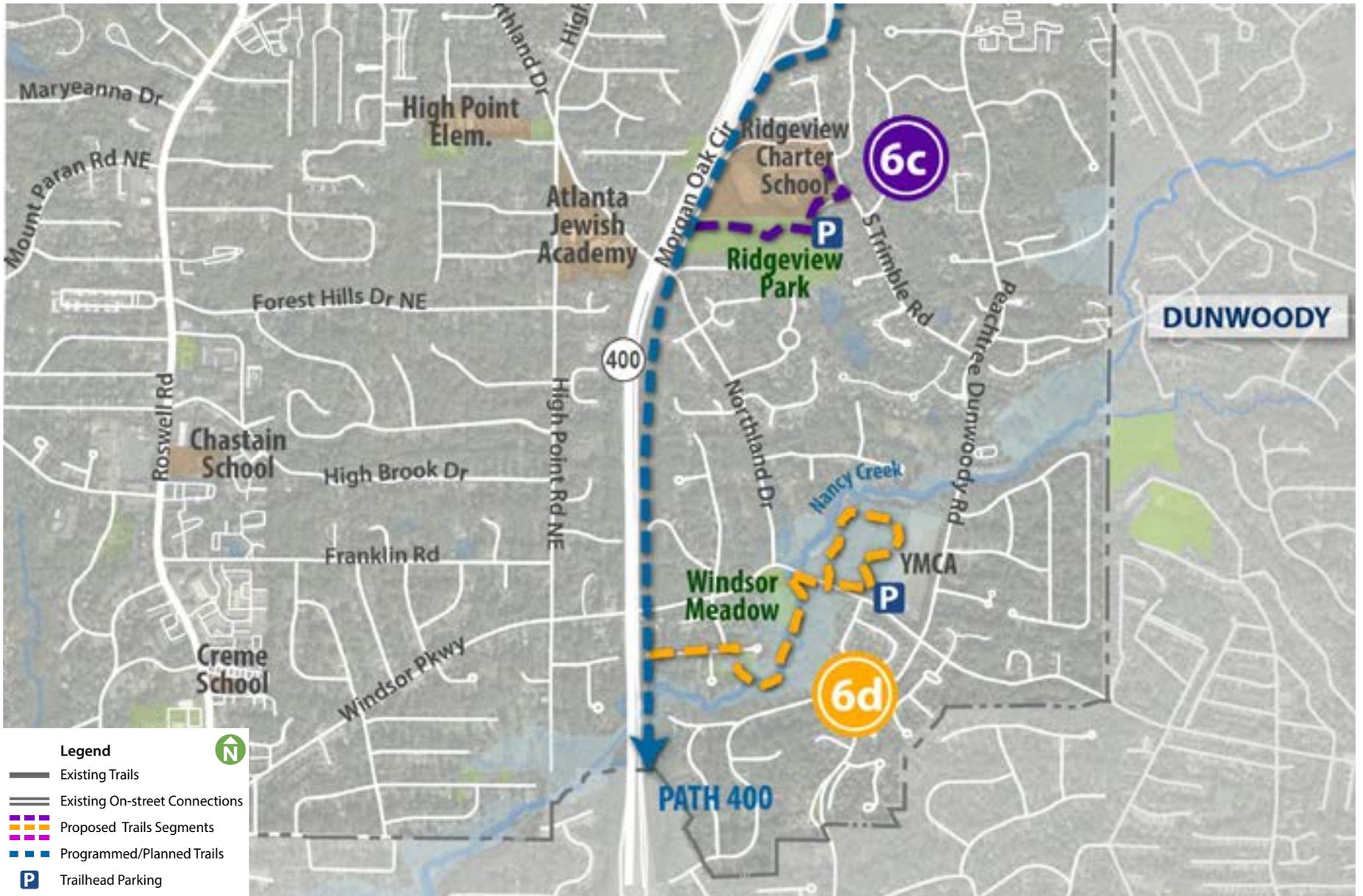
Segment #6a | Crooked Creek Park Connector



Segment #6b | Southwest Connector



Segment #6c&6d | PATH400 Connectors



04

**Implementation
Strategy**

4 Implementation Strategy

Chapter 4 presents a strategy with specific steps to ensure a timely, orderly implementation of this plan, keeping the momentum for the *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan* moving from a vision to action. The following items will be presented in this chapter:

- Trail Funding
- Model Project
- Implementation Prioritization
- 10-year Implementation Plan
- Cost Summary
- Implementation Timeline
- Formation of an Implementation Committee
- Next Steps

4.1 Trail Funding

As public sentiment turns more favorable toward trail development, the challenge of funding planning, design, and construction of trails becomes far less challenging than in previous years. Safe, inviting places to walk and bike are the favored amenity of most communities now. It is strongly recommended that every effort be made to identify funding locally for developing initial trail phases rather than relying on funding from Washington. The use of federal funding should be programmed several years in advance for extending the initial phases of the system. Every effort to build trails should be a public-private partnership. Philanthropic dollars can accelerate delivery of initial trail phases which helps breed success.

Here are funding sources to consider when trails are built:

Local Funding

A variety of opportunities for local funding should be considered including:

- Allocations within city/county budget
- Bond referendums
- Special-purpose local-option sales tax (SPLOST)
- Development impact fees
- In-kind products and services

State of Georgia Funding

- Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP)
- Special project allocation

Federal Funding

Federal grants and funding program opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle projects include:

- Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) prioritizes and distributes federal transportation funding through the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Discretionary Grant Program (TIGER)
- Federal Transit Administration Capital Funds (FTA)
- Recreational Trails Program
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)
- Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLPP)
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
- Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (formerly Transportation Alternatives Program) (TA)

4.2 Model Project

The secret to advancing a trail system is to construct a model project while the ink is drying on the plan. The model project needs to meet a series of criteria informed by the purpose and objectives of the trail system to become highly-used by the public. It requires local support and dedication to make it happen. In the meetings with the Steering Committee, the PATH/KAIZEN team recommended identifying the model project of *Sandy Springs Trail System* for early implementation in 2020.

A discussion for the selection of the 'model project' was formed during the 3rd Steering Committee meeting. During the meeting, the PATH/KAIZEN team presented the criteria for selecting a successful model project along with two suggested model project options for the Steering Committee. The City followed an internal work session with the planning team to further assess the opportunities and potential obstacles for each model project option, as well as prioritization of all the proposed segments in the plan. Segment#4a – Marsh Creek Greenway– appears to be the low hanging fruit since it has previously been studied, an alignment has been determined, and little acquisition is required. Survey, engineering, and design should be initiated for segment 4a as soon as the plan is adopted.

4.3 Implementation Prioritization

The *Sandy Springs Trail Model Project and Implementation Prioritization Plan* is proposed based on the following criteria:

#1: Connects desired destinations

- Connects to existing trail segments to provide greater trail use and connectivity.
- Connects to established destinations such as City Springs, parks, schools, existing trails, public facilities, and commercial areas.
- Responds to public sentiment to determine the most desired trail connection within the district.
- Locates desired destinations at each end of the trail segments.

#2: Provides an inviting experience that will attract more than 60% of the city's population

The trail segment provides:

- Pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with limited interruption by traffic
- Separation from roadways as a greenway trail
- A variety of featured trail elements (i.e. bridges, boardwalks, trailheads, and other amenities)

#3: Offers an ease for implementation

Trail segment entails:

- Minimal acquisition
- Manageable level of complexity for construction
- Cost estimate within available local funding
- Local permitting only
- Timeline for beginning construction within 5 years
- Requirement of private developments located along a proposed trail segment to include construction of the trail segment within the developer's project.

4.4 10-year Implementation Plan

The following page shows the trail map for the *Sandy Springs Trail 10-year Implementation Plan*. With segment #4a being suggested as the model project, the steering committee and the planning team recommend the following trail segments for early implementation:

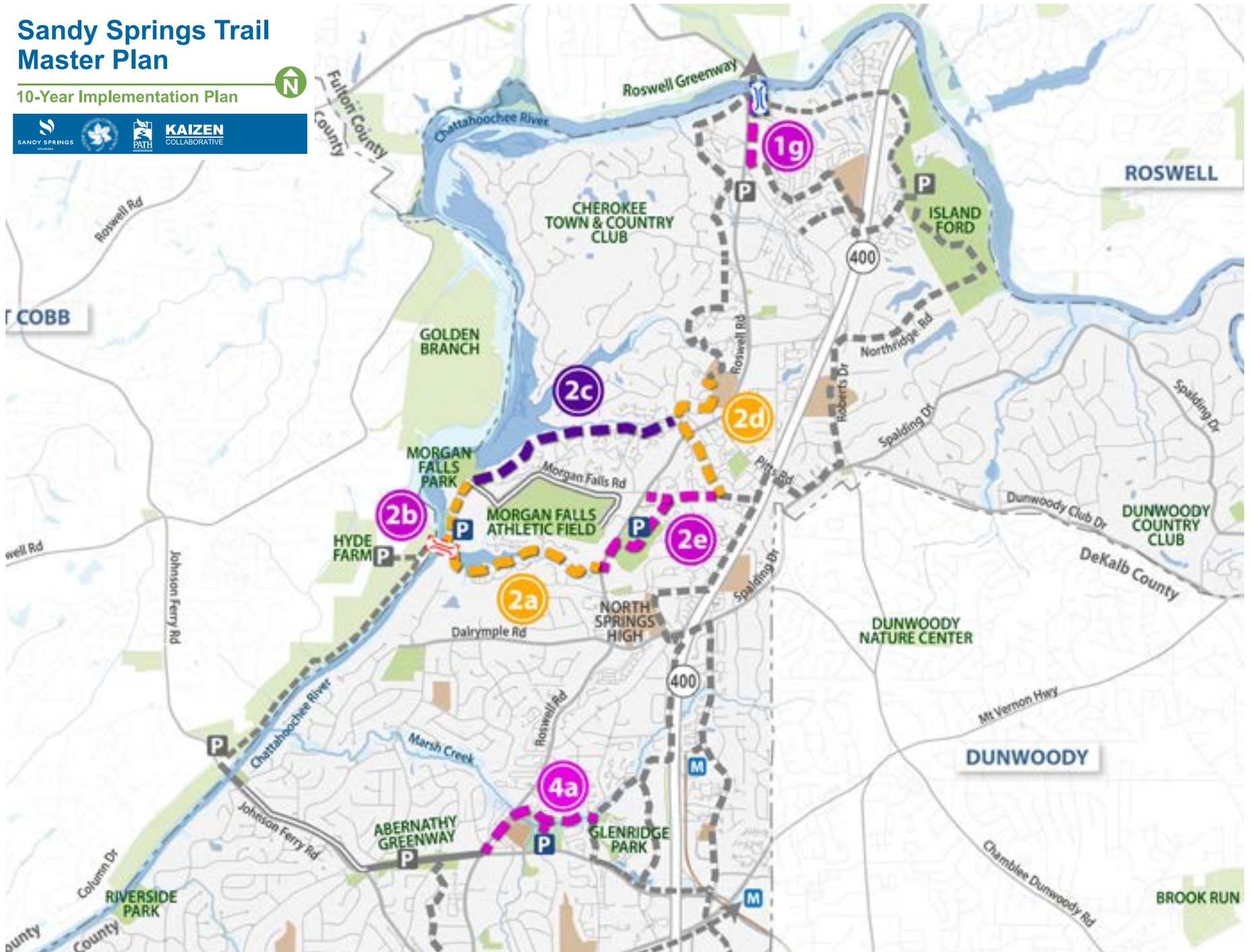
A comprehensive acquisition process to complete the loop trail identified as 2a-2e should be initiated as soon as possible. This requires some preliminary design to validate the alignment before property acquisition is negotiated. The acquisition process can also begin for segment 1g.

The property acquisition for 2a-2g and 1g will be easier and less expensive to obtain if property owners can view 4a as a model. It is important to begin work on 4a as soon as feasible.

This implementation plan relies on an early start of the initial trail segment and an on-going effort to secure right-of-way for future segments. The estimates presented in the charts below and the implementation timeline on page49 are consistent with a ten year build out of the fore-mentioned trails and a \$5 million allocation each year during the first ten years. (\$16+ million for acquisition). The acquisition costs may be substantially less if the public gets behind the effort and donations of easements prevail.

Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan

10-Year Implementation Plan



4.5 Cost Summary

The estimated cost for the 7.0 miles is approx. \$33.4 million dollars. *Acquisition is not included in the estimate.* The Implementation Committee should assess acquisition cost several months prior to the beginning of each trail segment. Below is a summary of the cost to implement the first 7 segments of the *Sandy Springs Trail system*.

Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan - 10-year Implementation Cost Summary

Priority	Mileage	Segment	Trail Name	P&E	Construction	TOTAL
1	1.0	4A	Segment 4A	\$218,794	\$3,304,895	\$3,524,000
2	1.6	2A	Segment 2A	\$258,208	\$5,470,936	\$5,730,000
3	0.4	1G	Segment 1G	\$173,275	\$1,086,954	\$1,261,000
4	1.6	2C	Segment 2C	\$284,210	\$10,278,000	\$10,563,000
5	1.1	2E	Segment 2E	\$247,309	\$2,803,481	\$3,051,000
6	1.1	2D	Segment 2D	\$224,428	\$4,262,902	\$4,488,000
7	0.1	2B	Segment 2B	\$245,661	\$4,500,000	\$4,746,000
	7.0		TOTAL	\$1,652,000	\$31,708,000	\$33,360,000

4.6 Implementation Timeline

Sandy Springs Trail - Implementation Timeline

Description	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
4A: Marsh Creek Greenway	Acquisition	P&E	Construction							
2A: Morgan Falls Park to Roswell Road		Acquisition	P&E	Construction						
1G: North River Shopping Center Sidepath			Acquisition	P&E	Construction*					
2C: Ison Road to Morgan Falls Park				Acquisition	P&E	Construction				
2E: Roswell Road to Undeveloped Parcel					Acquisition	P&E	Construction			
2D: Undeveloped Parcel to Ison Road						Acquisition	P&E	Construction		
2B: Morgan Falls Bridge over Chattahoochee								Acquisition	P&E	Construction
Ten Year - Fiscal Year Budget Summary										
	\$ 477,002	\$ 8,949,106	\$ 1,371,164	\$ 5,139,000	\$ 5,386,309	\$ 2,803,481	\$ 224,428	\$ 4,262,902	\$ 245,661	\$ 4,500,000

LEGEND

Acquisition Note: acquisition costs are not included in the fiscal year summary costs
P & E
Construction

* Projected construction of Roswell Pedestrian Bridge begins in 2022

4.7 Formation of an Implementation Committee

The steering committee, which guided the planning process, needs to evolve into a committee charged with implementation. The job of acquainting the PATH/KAIZEN team with local needs and wants, reviewing the selected routes, and choosing the trail branding has been completed upon adoption of *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan*. Next, a new committee tasked with encouraging and overseeing implementation must be formed.

The Implementation Committee needs to be a politically savvy group that can raise public and private funding allocated for the project. In addition, there needs to be adequate knowledge of the construction process among committee members to garner the respect and confidence from the City and the citizens at large. The committee would benefit from individuals filling the following roles:

- Key Steering Committee Members to ensure continuity
- City Manager/staffers from appropriate departments
- Pro bono real estate or right-of-way specialist
- Pro bono attorney
- Fundraising Specialist/Foundation Representative
- Police/Fire representatives
- Design/construction team member

The Implementation Committee should assume oversight of the project as soon as the City adopts the master plan.

4.8 Next Steps

- Acceptance of the *Sandy Springs Trail Master Plan* by the Steering Committee and recommendation to Mayor and City Council for adoption.
- Adoption by the City Council
- Establish Implementation Committee
- Allocate funding for Model Project
- Advance ordinances re: fines for motorized use of trails and land uses adjacent to trail.
- Identify funding for acquisition of key parcels in plan.
- Acquire key parcels.
- Advance Model Project to construction
- Review prioritization plan and advance 2nd segment toward implementation.

Appendix

Steering Committee Members

City of Sandy Springs

Andrea Worthy	Economic Department
Bridget Lawlor	GIS
Caitlin Shankle	Public Works
Catherine Mercier-Baggett	Planning & Zoning
Dan Coffey	Communications
Dan Nable	Police
Haleigh White	Communications
Kerry Missel	Public Works
Kristen Wescott	Public Works
Kristin Smith	City Manager's Office
Marla Shavin	Communications
Matt Gruba	Public Works
Michael Perry	Parks and Recreation

Sandy Springs Conservancy

Carolyn Axt
Jack Misiura
Melody Harclerode
Nancy Schisler