



# SWFT

SWAMP FOX TRAILS

## SUMTER-FLORENCE RAIL TRAIL PRELIMINARY FEASIBILITY REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2024

*Report exploring the preliminary feasibility of a 32.1-mile bicycle and pedestrian greenway trail connecting the cities of Sumter and Florence in South Carolina*



# BOLTON & MENK

Real People. Real Solutions.

# PROJECT TEAM

## STAKEHOLDERS

Kyle Kelly, Sumter City-County  
Planning Department & SUATS  
MPO

Jason Stoddard, City of Sumter

Holly Beaumier, Florence CVB

Jade Perkins, Florence CVB

Clint Moore, City of Florence

Shawn Brashear, Florence County

Nathan Dawsey, Florence County

Alan Watkins, Lee County

Jeff Parkey, Santee-Lynches  
Regional Council of Governments

Lindsay Privette, Pee Dee  
Regional Council of Governments

## CONSULTANT

Bolton & Menk, Inc.

Chris Chockley, PLA, AICP

Dylan McKnight, AICP

Allen Davis, AICP, CNU-A

Sergio Cruz

# CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	1
Introduction .....	3
Inventory & Analysis .....	9
Trail Design .....	15
Getting It Done .....	81

# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sumter-Florence Rail Trail Preliminary Feasibility Report explores the potential for creating a 32.1-mile greenway trail connecting Sumter and Florence in South Carolina. This preliminary study assesses the feasibility of converting a disused section of the former CSX railroad into a bicycle and pedestrian path, enhancing connectivity, encouraging tourism, and promoting economic growth. The study concludes that the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail can significantly enhance regional connectivity, promote healthy lifestyles, and boost local economies through increased tourism and recreation opportunities.

The current condition of the 32.1 mile corridor has been categorized into one of four classifications, with the proportions for each category as follows:



10% ●●●●

PUBLICLY OWNED AND MAINTAINED



33% ●●●●●●●●●●

PRIVATELY OWNED AND MAINTAINED



46% ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

CORRIDOR NOT MAINTAINED



11% ●●●●●

TRAVERSES WATERWAYS



Typical Section - Rural Natural

A - SHARED USE PATH  
B - BUFFER

# KEY POINTS

- 1 FEASIBILITY**

The report encourages further in-depth analysis of the feasibility of developing the trail, highlighting opportunities for enhanced infrastructure and addressing potential challenges.
- 2 TRAIL DESIGN**

Four distinct trail segments are identified, each with unique opportunities and constraints. The design considers geographical features, and emphasizes sustainability and economic development.
- 3 ECONOMIC IMPACT**

The trail is expected to boost local economies by attracting tourists and promoting outdoor recreation, which can lead to increased spending in local businesses and potential job creation.
- 4 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The study evaluates environmental impacts, focusing on preserving natural habitats, ensuring minimal disruption to local ecosystems, and enhancing existing green spaces.
- 5 FUNDING**

Preliminary cost estimates and potential funding sources were identified, with an emphasis on leveraging local, state, and federal resources.

# OPINION OF PROBABLE COST

PHASE	OPINION OF PROBABLE COST	WITH 30% CONTINGENCY
<b>PHASE 1</b> Sumter to Mayesville	\$12,576,300	\$16,349,190
<b>PHASE 2</b> Mayesville to Lynchburg	\$13,945,000	\$18,128,500
<b>PHASE 3</b> Lynchburg to Timmonsville	\$12,553,900	\$16,320,070
<b>PHASE 4</b> Timmonsville to Florence	\$7,880,600	\$10,244,780
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$46,955,800</b>	<b>\$61,042,540</b>

# 2. INTRODUCTION

This preliminary report explored the feasibility of creating a rail-to-trail bicycle and pedestrian greenway along a disused section of the former CSX railroad, linking Sumter and Florence in South Carolina. This segment, once part of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad's Florence—Robbins Line, served as a secondary main route from Florence to Robbins, Georgia. Built in the late 1800s, it saw abandonment in the 1980s and '90s, leaving disconnected stretches from Robbins to Cope and outside Sumter to Florence.

The resulting gaps in infrastructure hinder connectivity and access to biking, walking, and transit facilities. Despite ongoing efforts to tackle these challenges, development in the area persists. The Sumter-Florence Rail Trail initiative aims to bridge these gaps, potentially fostering a comprehensive trail and transit network that links the two cities along with the communities in between and encourages tourism and economic growth.



**FORMER FLORENCE RAILROAD DEPOT**

*Credit: Ann Helms*

*The Sumter-Florence Rail Trail presents an opportunity of establishing a bicycle and pedestrian spine, potentially stimulating the growth of a comprehensive trail and transit network*



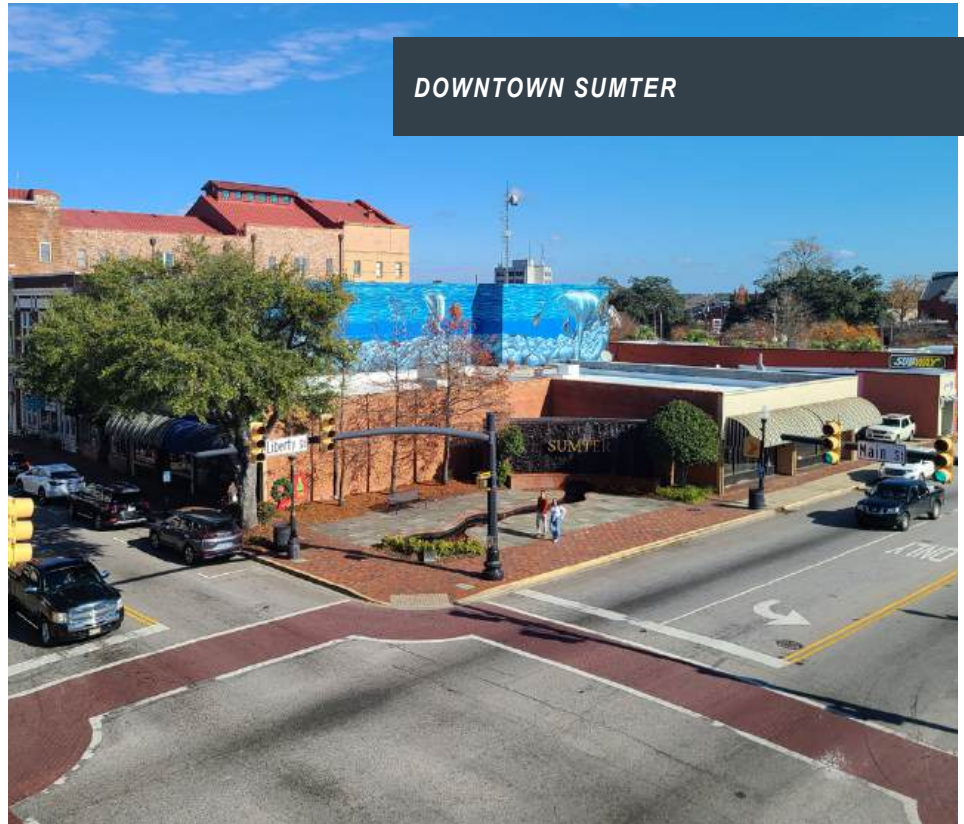
**OLD RAILROAD BED TRANSFORMED INTO GREEN SPACE IN DOWNTOWN MAYESVILLE**



**DOWNTOWN TIMMONSVILLE**

# STUDY AREA

This segment of the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail lies centrally within South Carolina, tracing the U.S. Route 76 corridor from Sumter to Florence, covering roughly 32.1 miles and tying to the existing 2-mile Florence Rail Trail. Encompassing jurisdictions within Sumter, Lee, and Florence counties, as well as the municipalities of Sumter, Mayesville, Lynchburg, Timmonsville, and Florence, the area presents a diverse landscape for examination. Additionally, the trail corridor crosses two significant rivers, the Black River and the Lynches River, adding geographical interest and potential challenges to the project.

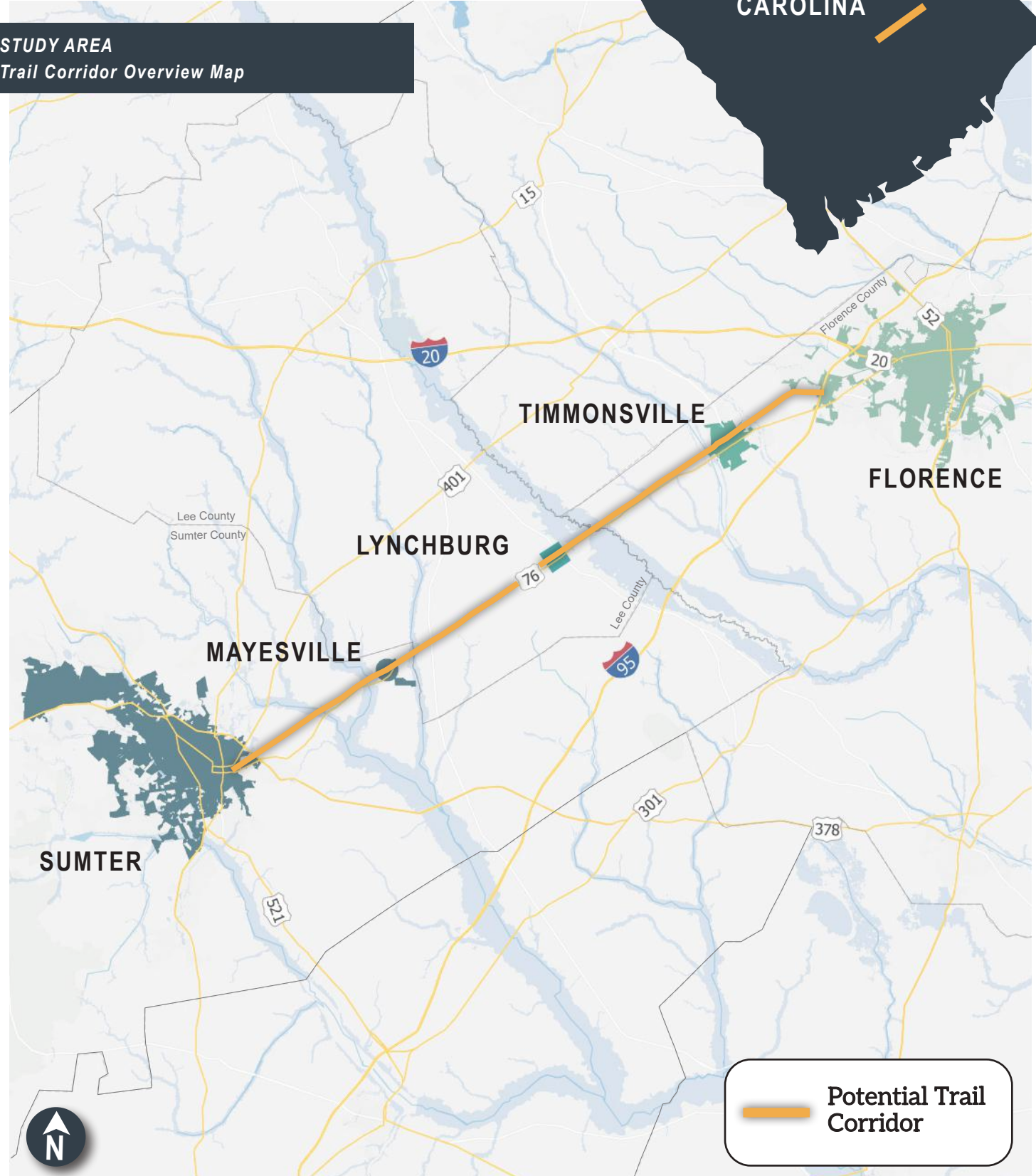


**DOWNTOWN SUMTER**



**CITY OF FLORENCE WATER TOWER**

**STUDY AREA**  
*Trail Corridor Overview Map*



# PROJECT GOALS



## INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

Conduct a comprehensive inventory and assessment of the corridor, consulting stakeholders to establish a clear vision and goals for the trail project. This process involves collecting input on various issues, concerns, and opportunities related to the development of the trail.



## STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Collaborate with stakeholders in the exploration of trail route options and design alternatives. By soliciting feedback from the relevant parties, it will ensure that the chosen route and design align with the needs and preferences of potential trail users.



## FEASIBILITY

Identify the preferred trail route and alternative routes, as well as major opportunities for trail enhancement and constraints to trail implementation along the corridor. Stakeholders will have an understanding of the preliminary feasibility of the trail project.



**BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN USERS ON SHARED USE PATH**

# PLANNING PROCESS



The Sumter-Florence Rail Trail Feasibility Study began in February 2024. A strategic kickoff meeting was held to establish project goals and objectives, followed by an existing data review to gather insights into the project area's demographics, land use, transportation networks, and environmental factors. This initial phase informed subsequent activities, including base map development, reviewing existing plan documents, and site visits, which contributed to the data collection and analysis process. Regular monthly check-in meetings ensured ongoing coordination among project

team members, stakeholders, and decision-makers, facilitating communication and addressing emerging issues. The findings and analyses from these activities informed the development of preliminary alignments and designs, laying the groundwork for the project's implementation plan. This plan outlined strategies, actions, and timelines for project implementation, considering factors such as funding opportunities, regulations, and community engagement. A draft study document was then prepared, incorporating feedback and revisions to serve as a comprehensive guide for project

implementation. Throughout the study, the team assessed the preliminary opinion of probable cost by identifying funding opportunities and reviewing case studies to inform cost estimates and implementation strategies. The Sumter-Florence Rail Trail Study evaluated initial feasibility through this systematic approach.

# 3. INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

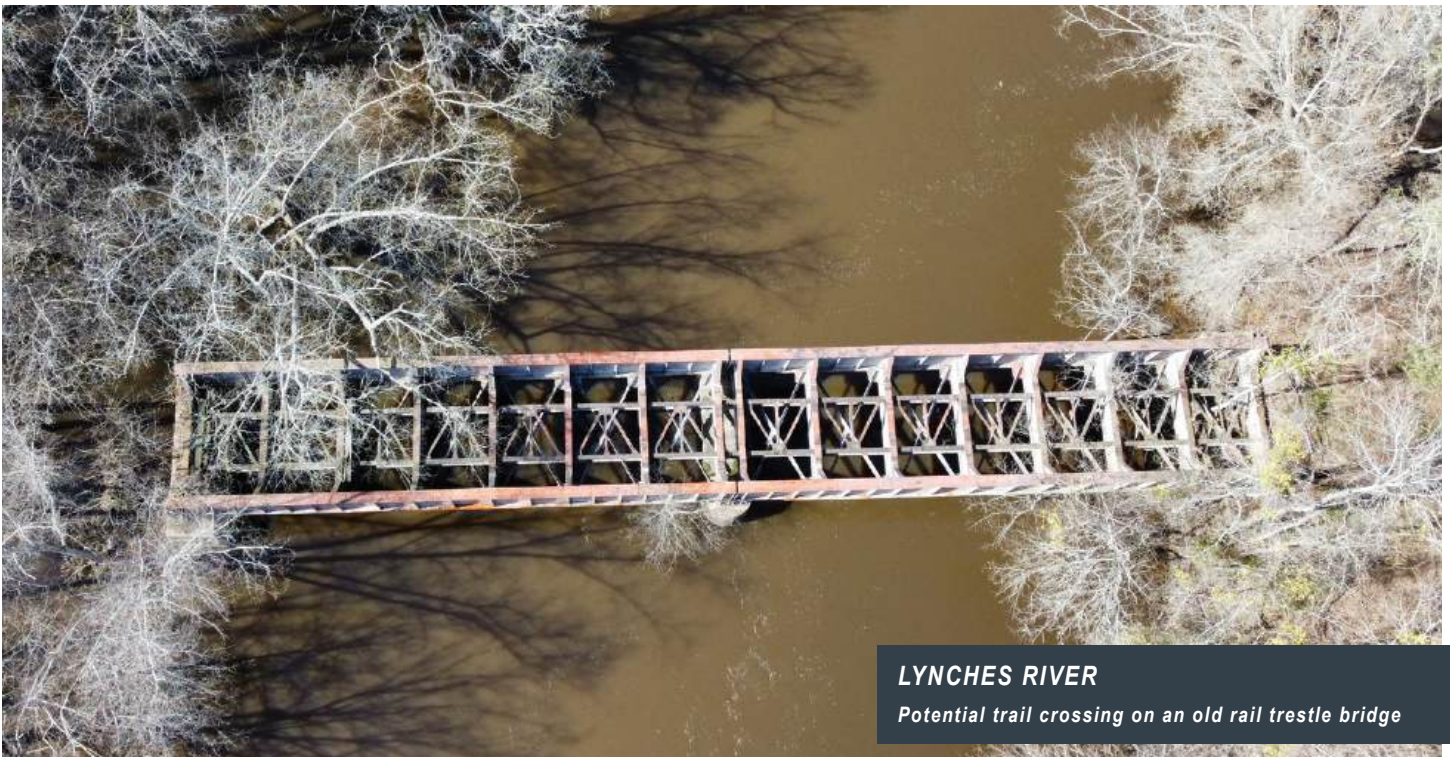
*Combining thorough reviews and hands-on fieldwork to understand the corridor, identify opportunities for developing this new trail segment, and constraints along the corridor.*

The Inventory and Analysis chapter provides a comprehensive look at the current infrastructure within the Sumter-Florence Rail Trails corridor. The project team undertook a review of relevant state and local trail projects to ensure a thorough understanding of what needed to be evaluated when reviewing the corridor's existing conditions and looking at this potential trail development.

This review included a detailed assessment of both existing and proposed trails, aiming to identify opportunities for connectivity and enhancement within the corridor.

Fieldwork was an essential aspect of this analysis. The project team conducted visits to important locations and evaluated current bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, along with priority

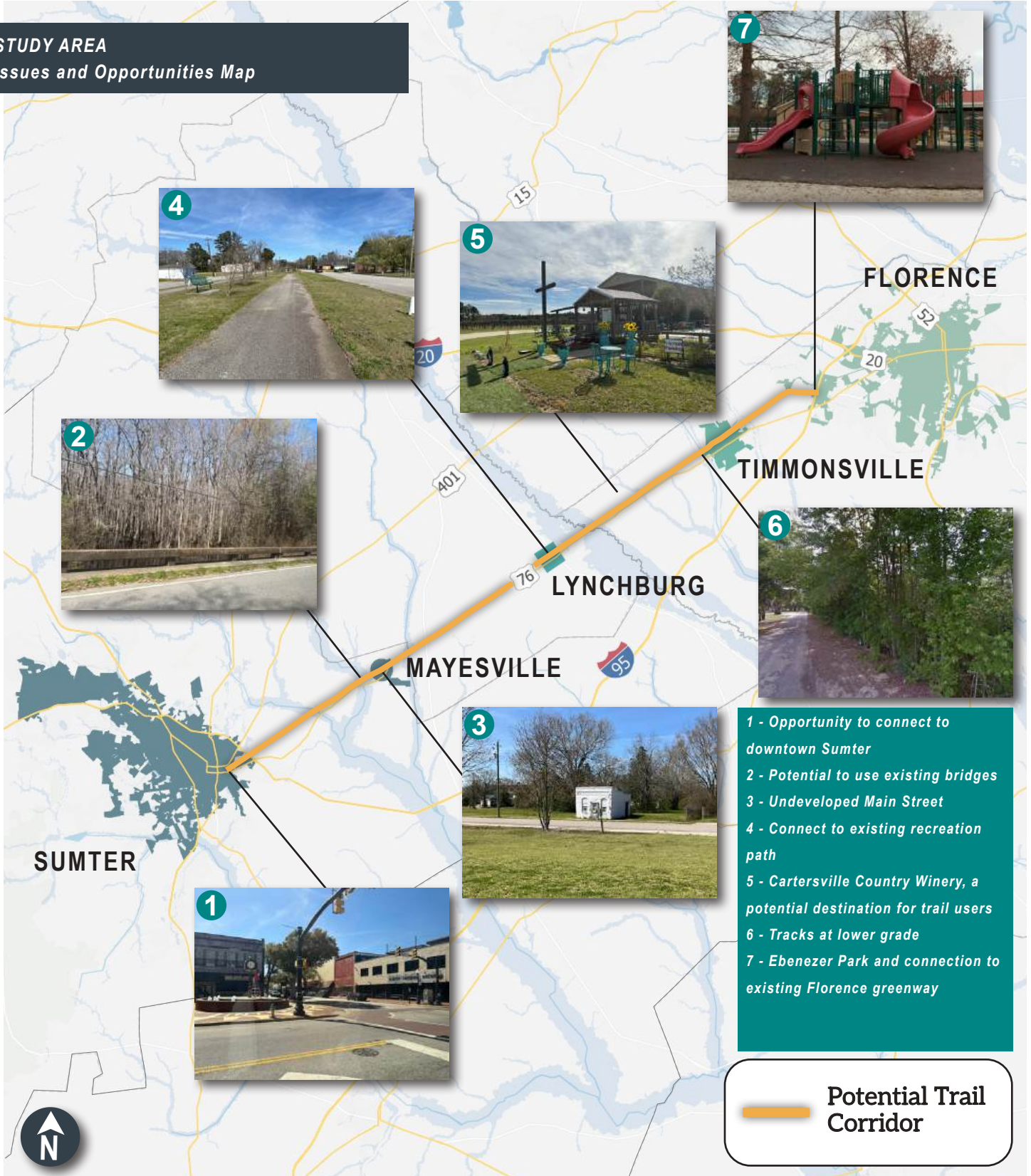
corridors vital to the trail network. This on-site research was instrumental in providing valuable insights into practical challenges and potential improvements for the trail system. The conclusions drawn from this fieldwork are synthesized in both the issues and opportunities map and the site tour summary presented in this section.



**LYNCHES RIVER**

*Potential trail crossing on an old rail trestle bridge*

**STUDY AREA**  
*Issues and Opportunities Map*



- 1 - Opportunity to connect to downtown Sumter
- 2 - Potential to use existing bridges
- 3 - Undeveloped Main Street
- 4 - Connect to existing recreation path
- 5 - Cartersville Country Winery, a potential destination for trail users
- 6 - Tracks at lower grade
- 7 - Ebenezer Park and connection to existing Florence greenway

 Potential Trail Corridor

# STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



1 - Stakeholders inspect CSX railroad

2 - Wooded area with steep slopes

3 - Potential road crossing examined

4 - Dr. Mary M. Bethune Nature Trail terminus

5 - Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Nature Trail

6 - Maintained corridor parallel to U.S. 76

7 - Locals horseback riding

8 - Potential trail alignment

9 - Lynches River

## SITE TOUR

The site visit on March 11th, 2024, served to complement mapping data and was coordinated with the Swamp Fox Trails team and city staff. Technical representatives from the City of Sumter and Florence along with County officials from Sumter, Lee and Florence accompanied the field visit, as well as CVB. Representatives from the smaller communities were not able to join the site visit. This approach aimed to enhance understanding of local priorities and values. The visit documented the current conditions of the existing rail corridor, including crossings, structures, and trestle bridge structures. Photos and field notes were diligently recorded to document site conditions and considerations. An ArcGIS Field Maps site was maintained, enabling photos to be geospatially linked to their specific locations, facilitating later review of key considerations throughout the planning process. The collected data was subsequently incorporated into segment maps to provide a comprehensive representation of existing conditions.

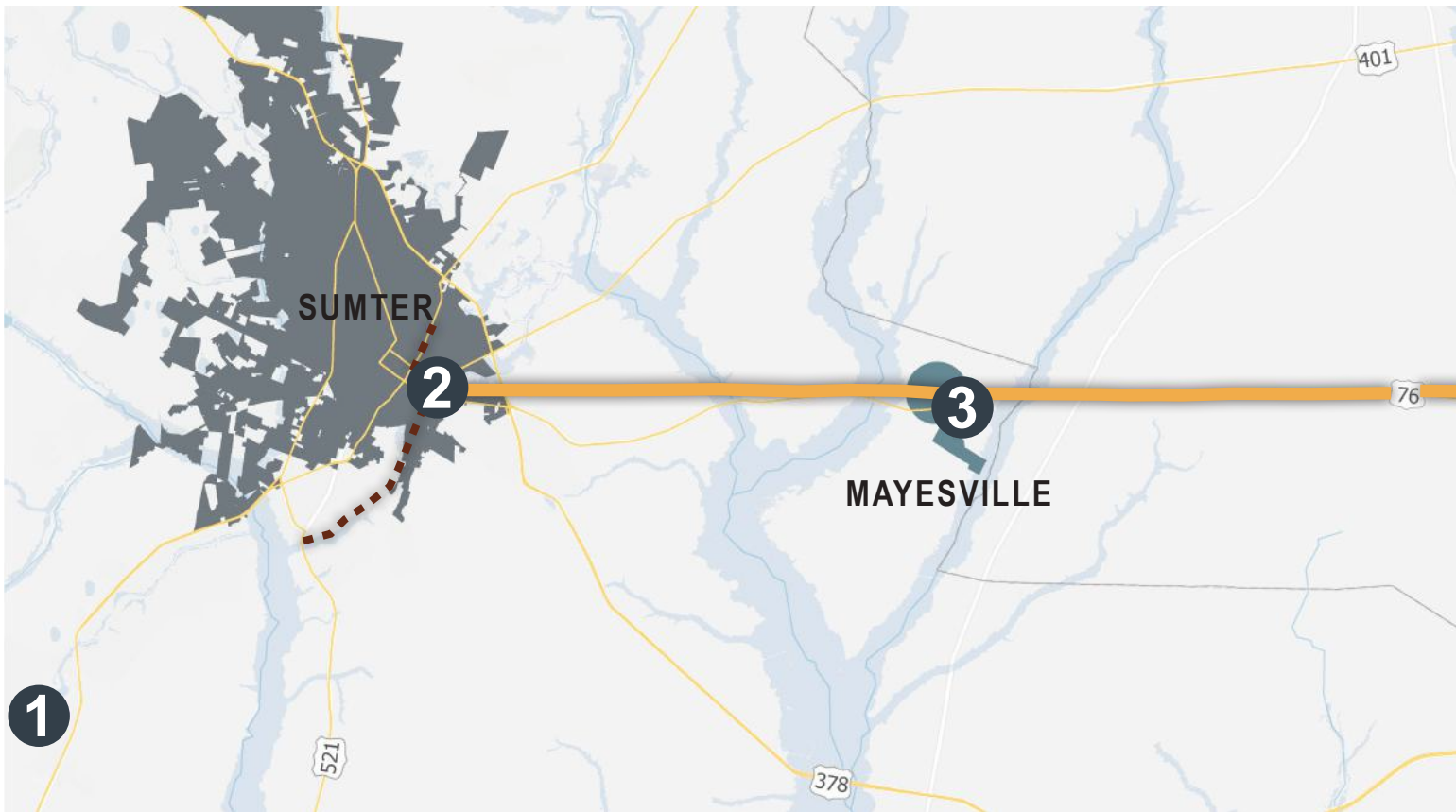


*DR. MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE NATURE TRAIL  
Mayesville, SC*



*TIMMONSVILLE RAIL-TRAIL  
Timmonsville, SC*

# EXISTING & PLANNED TRAIL PROJECTS



## 1 Wateree Passage of the Palmetto Trail

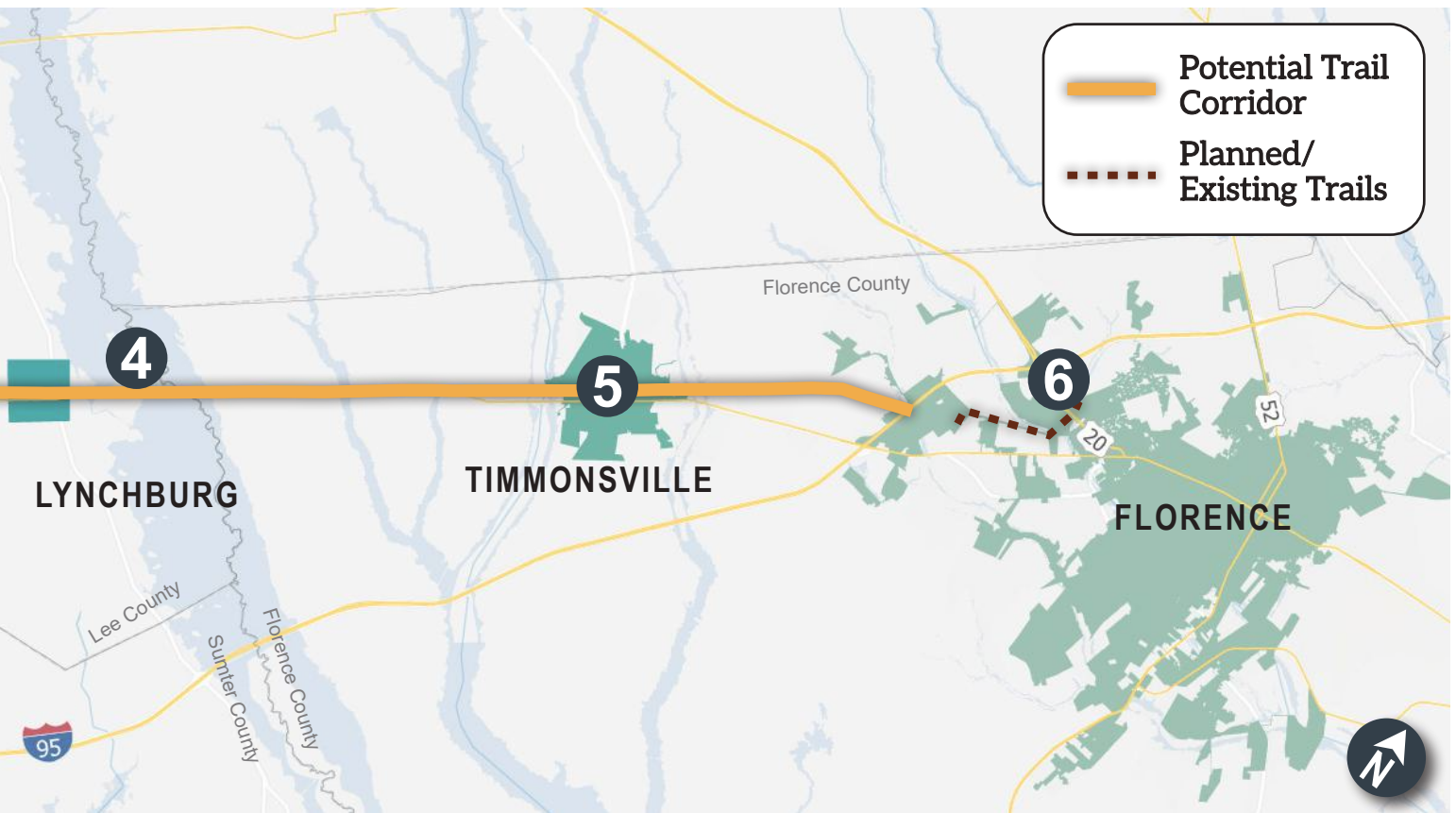
- The Wateree Passage follows the remnants of the old SC Railroad through Sumter Junction.
- It is one of the most varied segments of the Palmetto Trail, it spans a range of landscapes, from elevated hills to river swamps.
- Covering a distance of 11.40 miles, this natural trail is ideal for walking, hiking, and mountain biking.
- Amenities along the trail include a trail head, parking facilities, camping grounds, picnic areas, restrooms, and scenic viewpoints.

## 2 Turkey Creek Greenway

- The Turkey Creek Greenway is a proposed paved path being assessed for future development in Sumter County.
- Starting at Crosswell Drive Park and ending at Red Bay Rd, it would trace the course of Turkey Creek.
- The greenway aims to offer walking, bicycling, and wheeling opportunities for local residents.
- Designed to facilitate separated, comfortable, non-motorized travel and recreational activities.

## 3 Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Nature Trail

- The Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Nature Trail is a paved linear, out-and-back trail spanning almost 1.5 miles. It features historical markers along its route, offering insights into its significance.
- Situated on Mills Street, the trail is nestled between E. Sumter Street and S. Main Street E. in Mayesville.
- The nature trail can be used for an afternoon stroll, bike ride, or horseback riding, and is equipped with amenities such as parking facilities, handicap access, picnic area, and convenient trailhead access



#### 4 Lynch River Blue Trail

- The Lynch River flows through diverse terrain, including:
  - Farms
  - Rural crossroads
  - Deep swamp forest
- The 11.40 mile trail segment of the river spans from:
  - Northeast of Lynchburg's town limits on U.S 76
  - To northeast of Elliott's town limits on U.S 401
- This moderately difficult trail offers recreational activities such as:
  - Paddling
  - Camping
  - Fishing opportunities

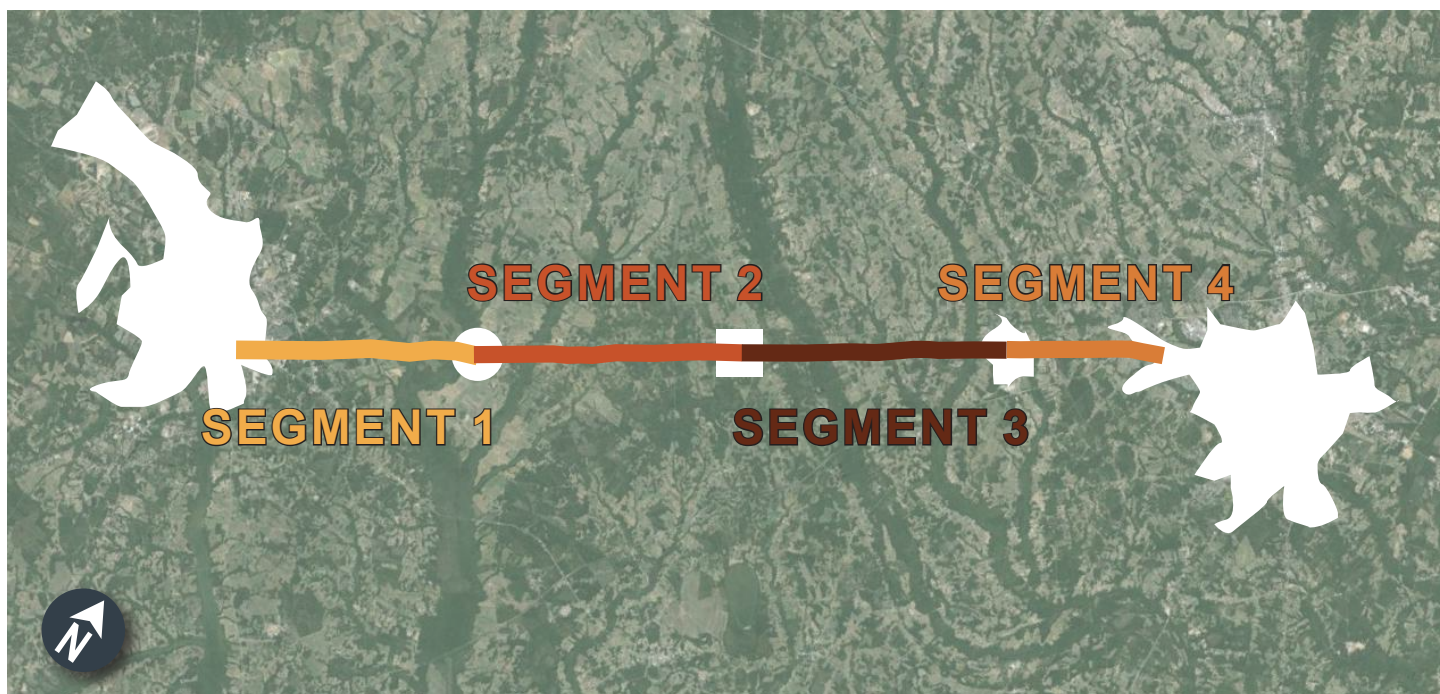
#### 5 Timmonsville Rail-Trail

- Timmonsville features a bike path along Main Street, replacing the former railroad route.
- The Timmonsville Rail-Trail spans a few blocks through the town center.
- This paved pathway offers a straightforward route, dotted with trees, linking homes and businesses.
- Stretching 0.5 miles, it's suitable for walking, biking, and leisurely strolls.
- Amenities include parking and handicap access for convenience.

#### 6 Florence Rail Trail

- The Florence Rail Trail offers a gently sloping, paved out-and-back route suitable for hiking and biking, with a nature loop at the end.
- Starting from the parking area, visitors can access this two-mile main trail, which includes several other sections and connectors.
- The entire network trail spans approximately 5 miles, providing an ideal setting for walking and biking activities.
- Amenities along the trail include parking facilities, scenic viewpoints, picnic areas, restrooms, and a playground located in Ebenezer Park.

# 4. TRAIL DESIGN



*Four distinct segments with unique opportunities, constraints, potential alignments, trail design, and access solutions.*

The current condition of the 32.1 mile corridor has been categorized into one of four classifications, with the proportions for each category as follows:



10% ●●●●

PUBLICLY OWNED AND MAINTAINED



33% ●●●●●●●●●●

PRIVATELY OWNED AND MAINTAINED



46% ●●●●●●●●●●●●●●

CORRIDOR NOT MAINTAINED



11% ●●●●●

TRAVERSES WATERWAYS

# OVERVIEW OF SEGMENTS

The Sumter-Florence Rail Trail project comprises four key segments, each contributing to the development of a multi-use trail system spanning across the region. These segments vary in length and traverse diverse landscapes, significant waterways, and rivers. While each segment presents its own set of challenges, such as terrain variations, water crossings, and maintenance requirements, they have the potential to enhance connectivity, promote outdoor recreation, and provide alternative transportation options for residents and visitors. This project underscores a commitment to fostering community engagement, sustainable development, economic development, tourism, and the preservation of natural resources. Within each segment, the current condition of the corridor has been classified into one of four categories to aid in planning and implementation strategies.

- Portions of the corridor that are publicly owned and maintained, often featuring existing trails or well-maintained grassy areas.
- Portions that are privately owned and maintained, typically with mowed grass or serving as private drives.
- Sections of the corridor that are not maintained, characterized by overgrowth of trees and vegetation, missing grades, and other challenges.

- Sections of the corridor alignment that traverse wetlands, swamps, or rivers, where some structures may still exist, but significant improvements or new systems are required.

While this classification system is helpful for allocating resources effectively, it's not without its limitations. For instance, sections running through wetlands may also fall under the category of not maintained. Additionally, rare instances like part of the Mary McLeod Bethune Walking Trail, where a publicly maintained trail traverses a wetland, are categorized as publicly owned and maintained. Overall, publicly owned and maintained portions of the corridor make up 10.5% of the trail, privately owned and maintained areas account for 32.5%, not maintained portions constitute 45.7%, and sections running through wetlands comprise 11.3%.

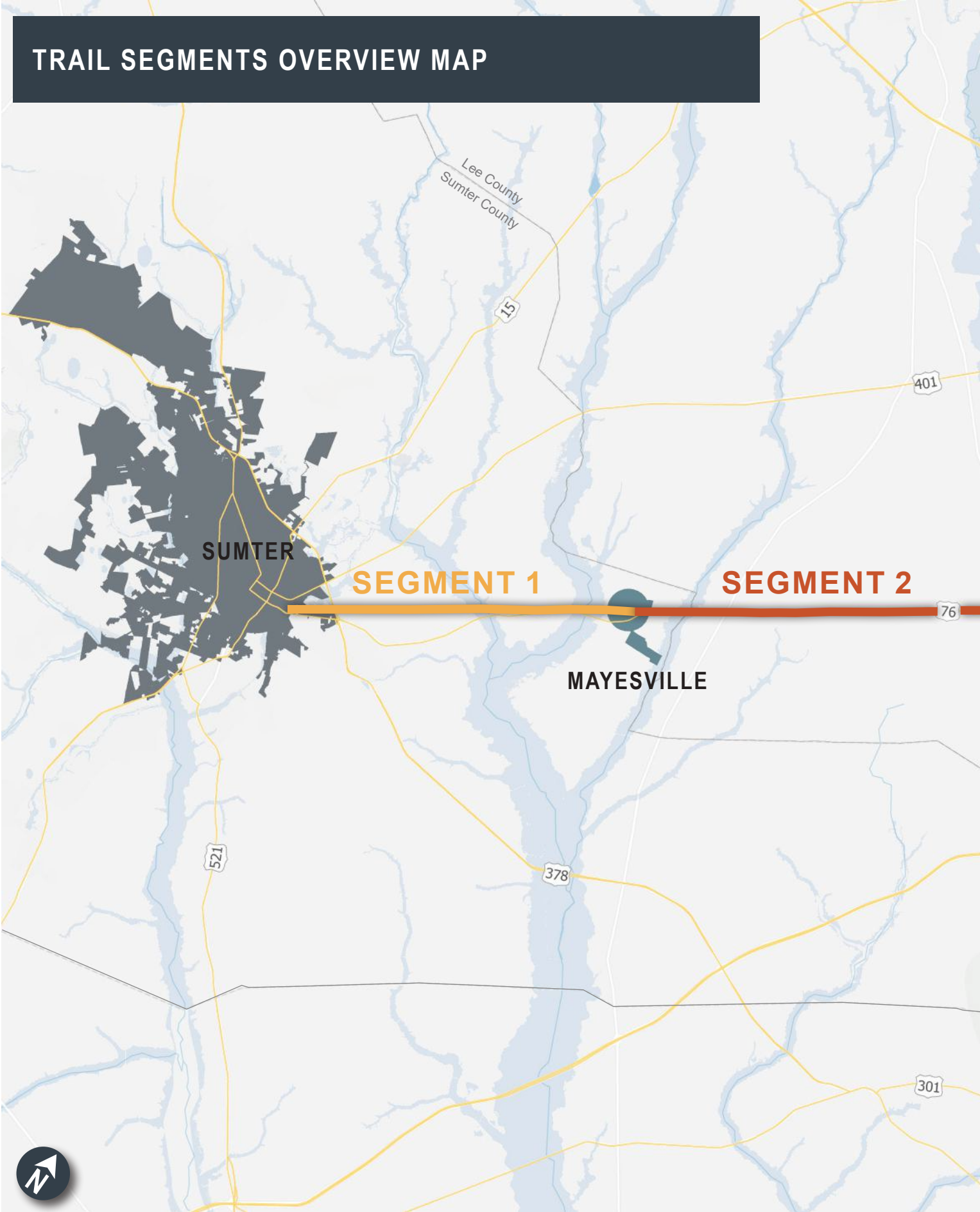
## ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENT

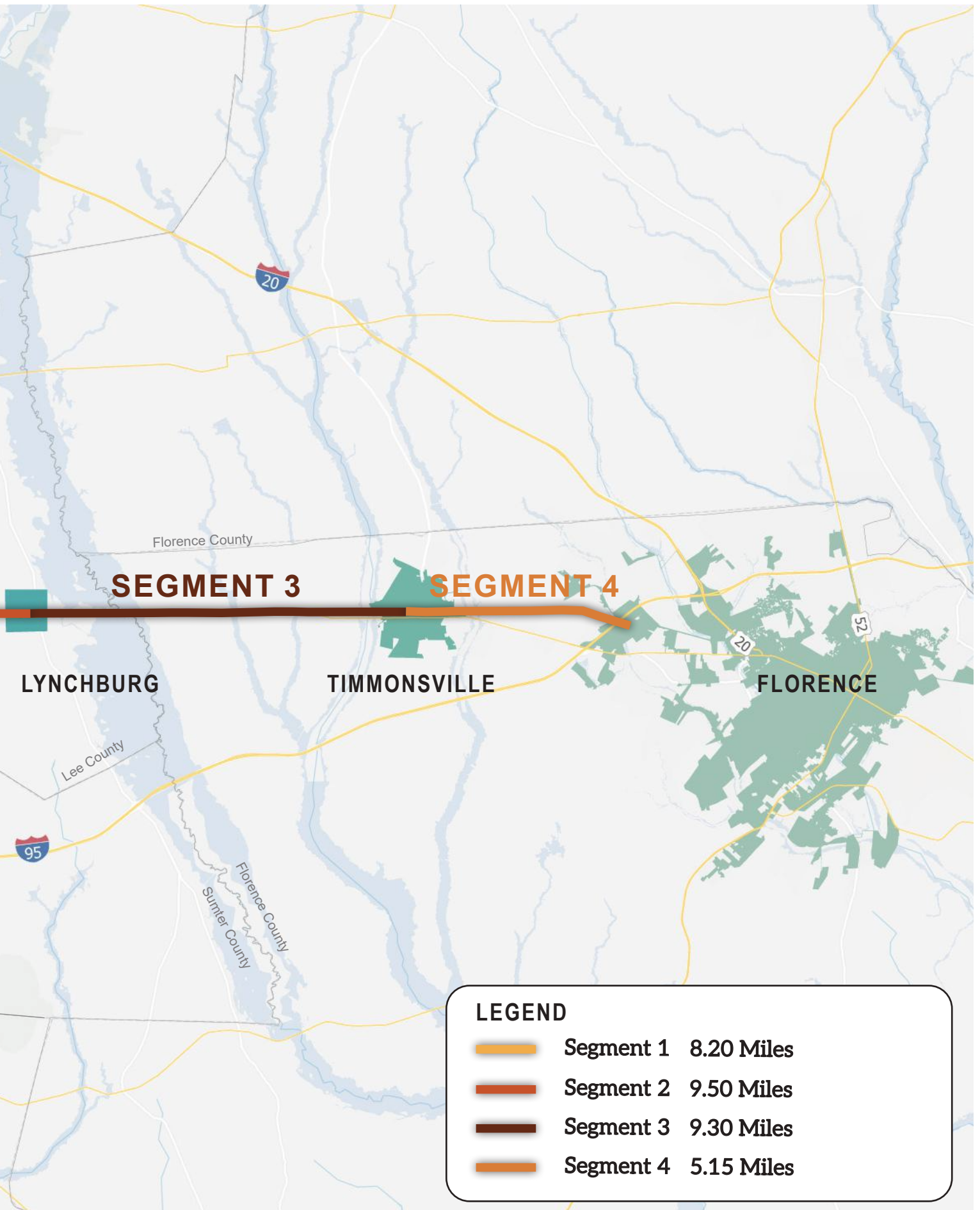
Due to the potential alignment passing through areas with major constraints, alternative alignments have been identified and documented for each segment. These alternatives should be further studied and considered as the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail project advances to later stages, as they might offer more feasible and cost-efficient routes for the corridor.

## Existing Corridor Condition Categories

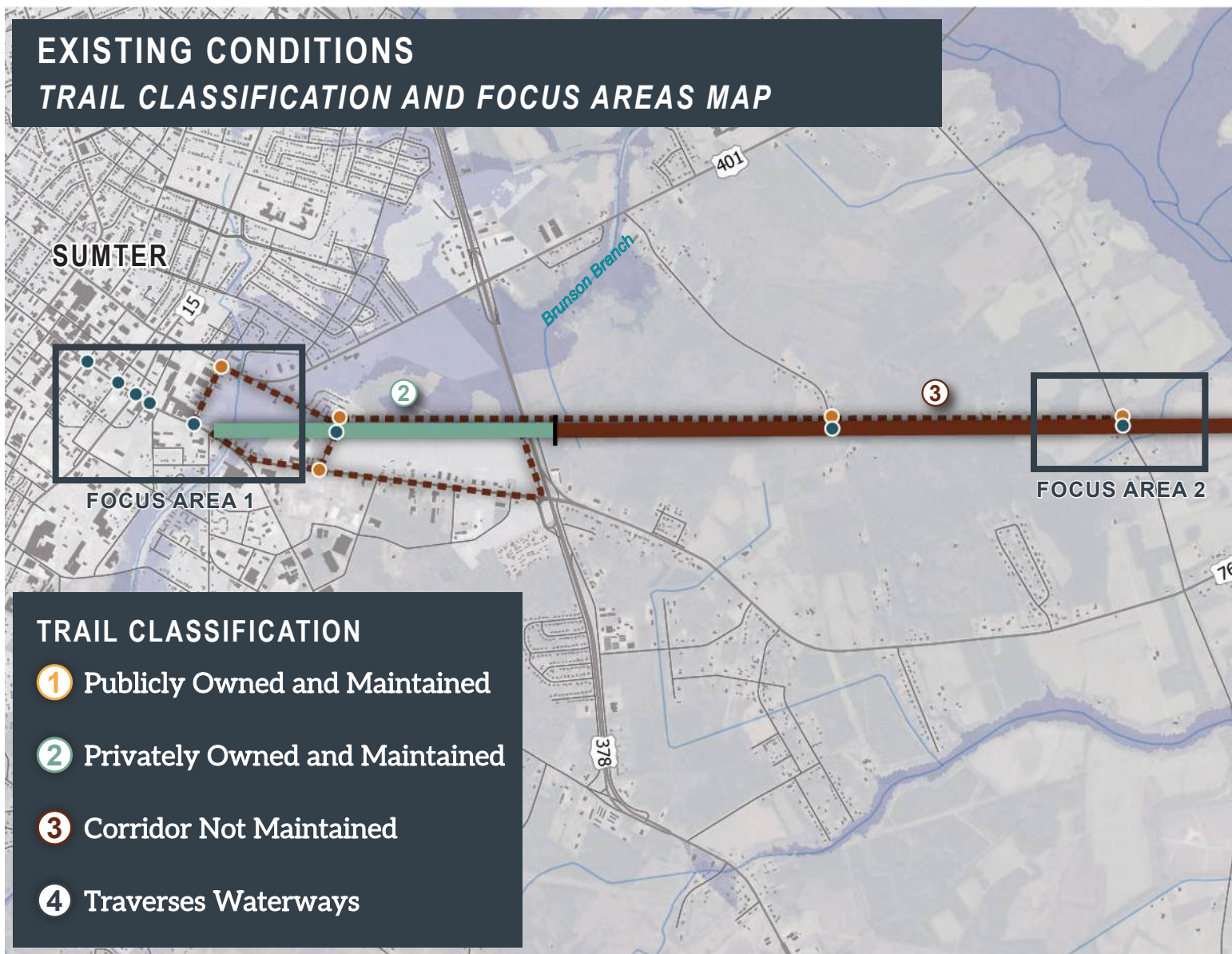


# TRAIL SEGMENTS OVERVIEW MAP





# SEGMENT 1 SUMTER TO MAYESVILLE

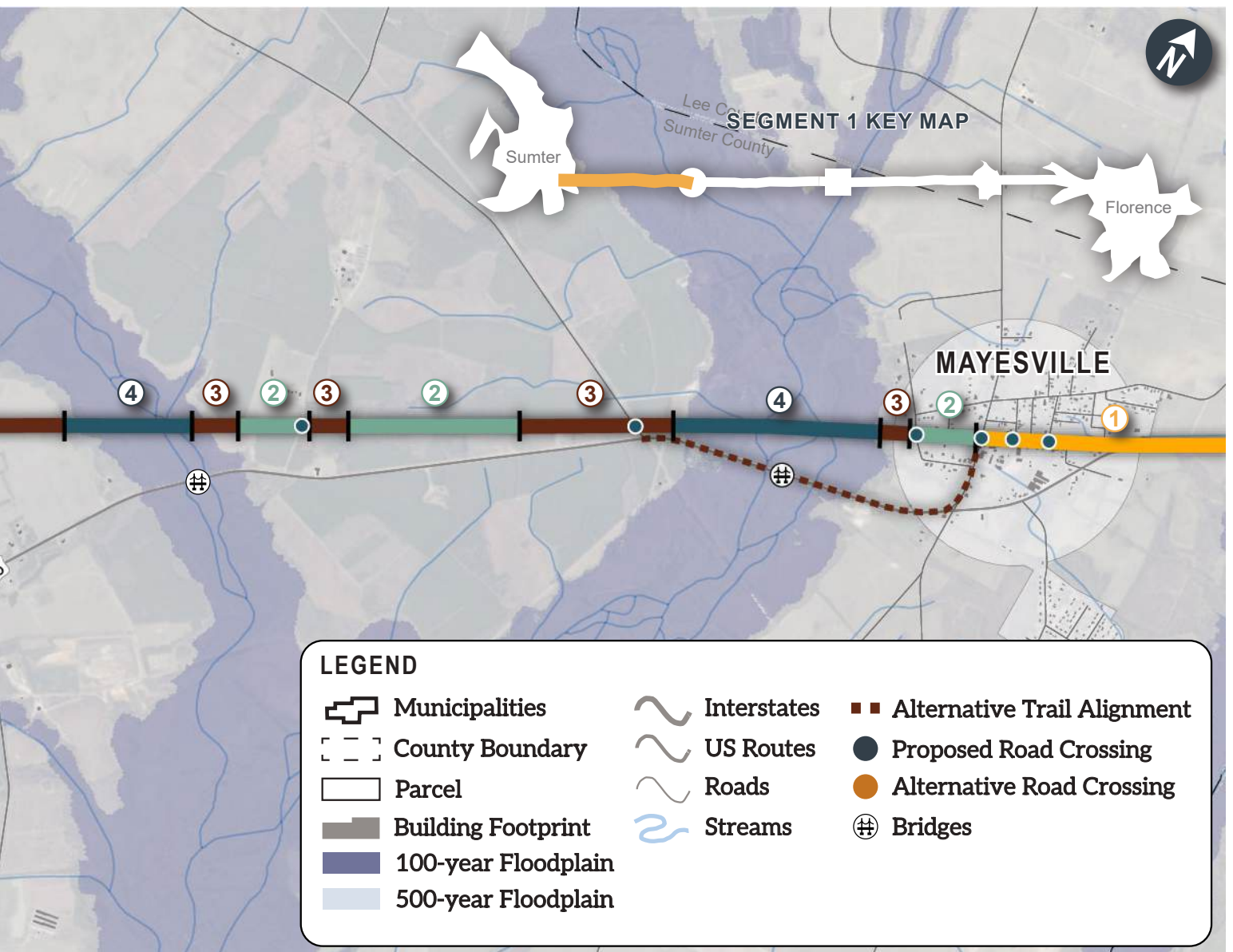


# SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

Segment 1 spans approximately 8.20 miles from Sumter to Mayesville. Sumter, the county seat of Sumter County and the state's eighth-largest metropolitan area with a population nearing 92,000, marks the starting point.

This existing railroad corridor features extensive sections lacking maintenance, water body crossings overgrown vegetation, missing railroad bedding, and steep slopes. The CSX railroad tracks in Sumter see infrequent

use and terminate northeast of the city limits. There is a desire by the City of Sumter to extend the future trail toward the downtown area terminating at the intersection of Liberty St and Main St.

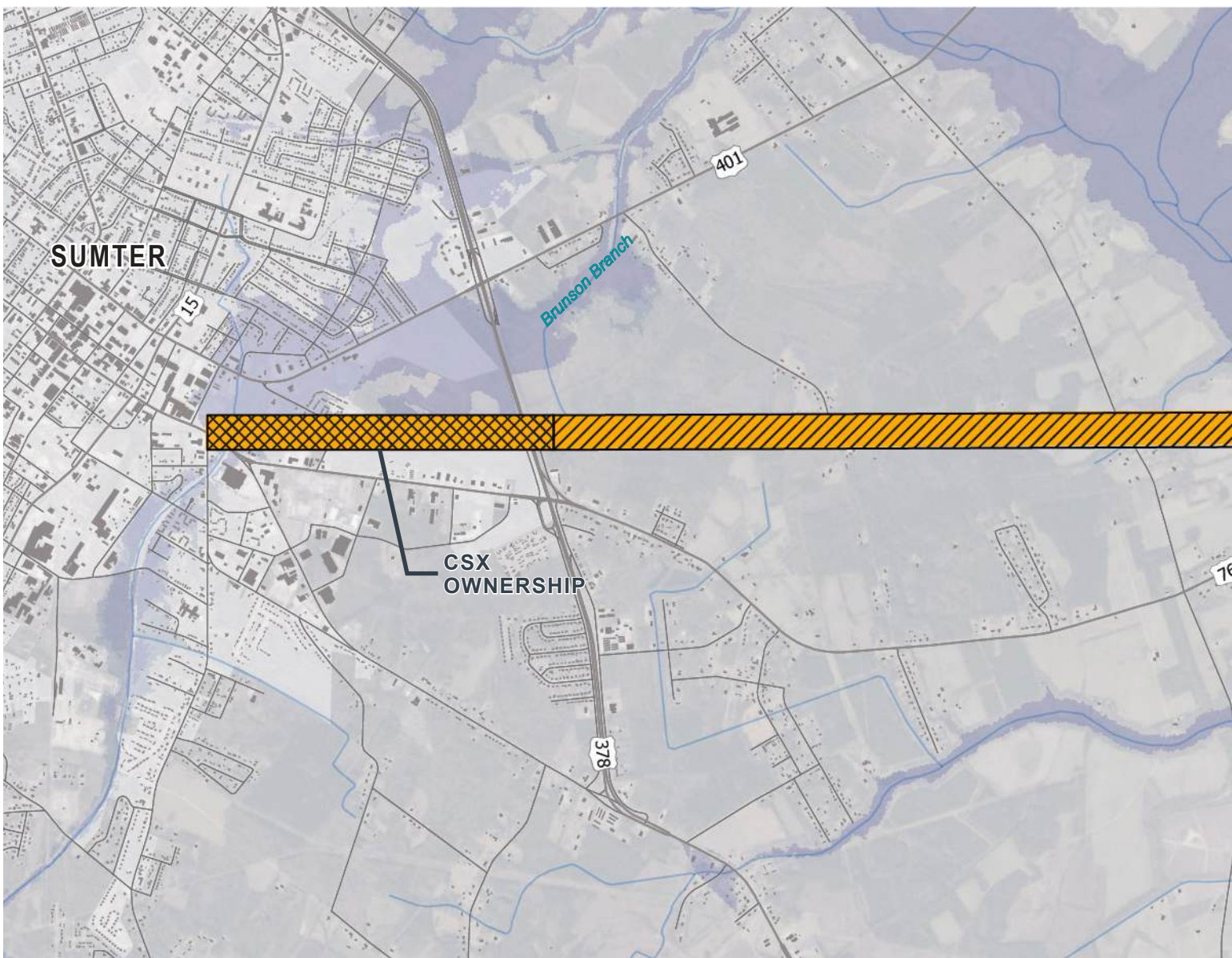


# SEGMENT OWNERSHIP

The former CSX railroad segment between Sumter and Mayesville is owned by a mix of private and public entities. Within the Sumter city limits, CSX Transportation retains much of the segment.

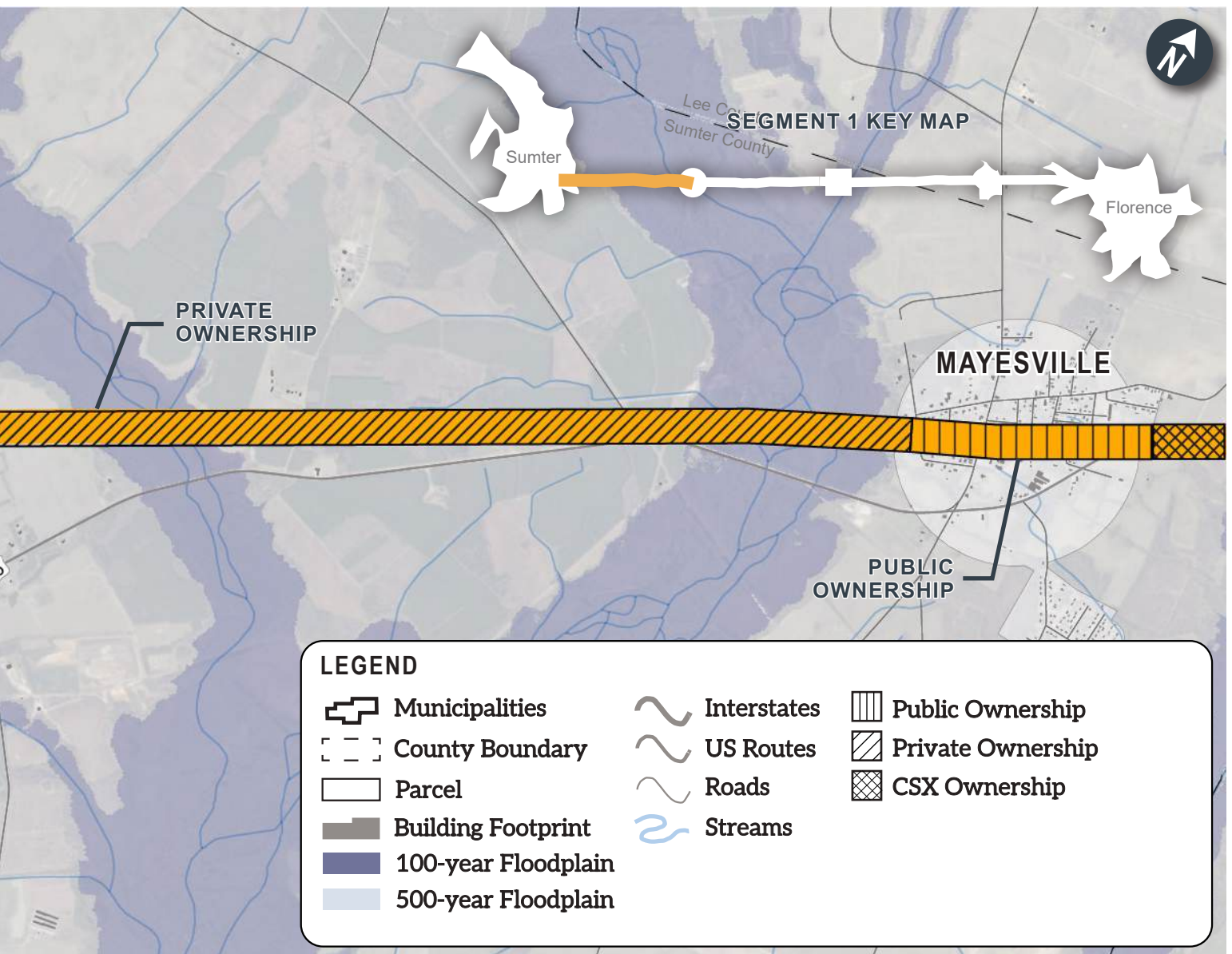
As the corridor approaches Mayesville, ownership shifts: the town of Mayesville controls a large portion and has incorporated part of it into the Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Nature Trail. The remainder in Mayesville is still

owned by CSX. Between Sumter and Mayesville, nearly all of the former railroad land is privately owned.



## SEGMENT 1 - SUMTER TO MAYESVILLE

\*Ownership data is based on Geographic Information System (GIS) provided by various municipalities. Please note that the rail and road right-of-way data does not always correspond directly to ownership records. Some areas of the corridor may be represented with a degree of assumption regarding parcel boundaries, with parts of the corridor assumed to belong to one parcel over another.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

Segment 1 of the trail encompasses a diverse range of environments, spanning from rural to highly urbanized areas. This presents unique challenges, particularly in the last mile as the trail transitions into the established downtown of Sumter.

The proximity of the CSX railroad adds another layer of complexity; although still occasionally utilized for freight storage, its activity has significantly diminished over time. Despite being well-maintained within Sumter, the railroad tracks terminate just beyond the city limits.

Highlighted in the image "CSX Railroad and Sidewalk", the railroad crossing at Liberty Street has opportunities for improvements. This image shows the condition of sidewalks along the proposed route and a potential trailhead site. The sidewalk along this stretch is situated north of the road, measuring approximately 4-5 feet in width and showing signs of deterioration.

Efforts to improve these sidewalks are ongoing, but currently, the area lacks walkability, limiting connectivity from the potential trailhead to downtown. The

new sidewalks terminate at the railroad crossing with limited ADA accessible routes.

As Liberty Street merges with U.S. 76 on the approach to downtown, the city-owned industrial buildings are set back from the street. This setup presents an opportunity to either front new buildings closer to the street or widen the sidewalks, or perhaps both.



**CSX RAILROAD NEAR E LIBERTY STREET**



**CSX RAILROAD AND SIDEWALK NEAR E LIBERTY STREET**

## SEGMENT 1 - SUMTER TO MAYESVILLE



**LOCATION WHERE TRAIL WOULD CROSS RURAL 2-LANE ROADWAY**

Significant sections of Segment 1's proposed corridor do not run alongside U.S. 76, resulting in large, unmaintained sections being away from the highway. This lack of proximity to smaller local roads makes it challenging to fully assess these remote parts of the corridor. As a result, alternative alignments may be necessary for these areas to ensure better understanding of their conditions.

In total, the proposed corridor would intersect six roads. Including the extension of the trail into Sumter's downtown, this segment would required up to 11 intersection crossings.



**MAINTAINED CORRIDOR NEXT TO U.S. 76 (PRIVATELY OWNED AND MAINTAINED)**

# FOCUS AREA 1

## Downtown Sumter



### SITES OF INTEREST

- ① Sumter Opera House
- ② County Library
- ③ First Baptist Church
- ④ Magnolia Place
- ⑤ The O'Donnell House
- ⑥ City of Sumter Public Works
- ⑦ Central Carolina Technical College's Health Sciences Center

### LEGEND

- Proposed Rail/Trail Alignment
- Alternative Trail Alignment
- Potential Trailhead
- Active CSX Railroad
- Intersection Improvement
- Potential Road Diet
- Road Crossings
- Alternative Road Crossings

## SEGMENT 1 - SUMTER TO MAYESVILLE

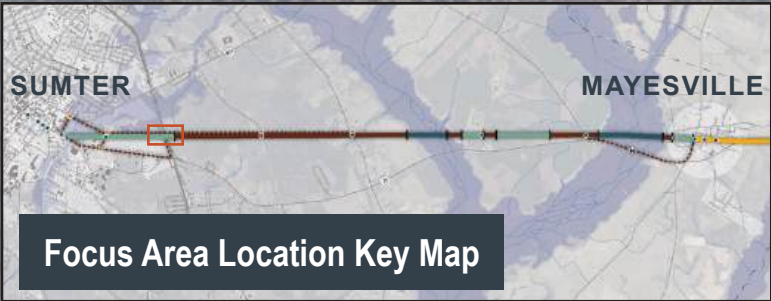


## FOCUS AREA 2

### *Calhoun Street Extension*









SEGMENT 1 - SUMTER TO MAYESVILLE



State road, maintenance ends at intersection



**LEGEND** 

-  Proposed Rail/Trail Alignment
-  Alternative Trail Alignment
-  Intersection Improvement
-  Road Crossings
-  Alternative Road Crossings

# KEY FINDINGS

The City of Sumter is the focal point of Segment 1, where many trail users will either begin or end their route along the corridor. There is an existing CSX Railroad track that has great potential to accommodate a trail. Several greenway and trail projects, such as the Turkey Creek Greenway, are planned in the surrounding

areas, making it important to establish a direct or complementary connection. The current alignment could be extended further into downtown Sumter to better integrate the trail with the city's urban fabric and amenities. As the segment moves east and out of the city, significant topographical changes need to be considered.



## TRAIL EXTENSION TO DOWNTOWN SUMTER

- The trail could connect to a terminus near the Sumter Opera House/City Hall and Sumter Opera House.
- Deep setbacks in the area allow room for the trail extension.
- The super block where the City's Public Works Department is currently located offers a significant redevelopment opportunity.
- The trail could be integrated along the front of this block, with improved sidewalks which are currently very narrow and of poor quality.
- Sidewalk quality improves closer to downtown, highlighting the need for upgrades along the proposed trail route.
- A proposed road diet from a 4-lane to a 3-lane configuration along the corridor would benefit the trail by providing more space.
- Several road crossings in this extension to downtown need to be addressed to ensure a high comfort network for trail users.

## CONNECTION TO TURKEY CREEK GREENWAY

- The Turkey Creek Greenway is a planned trail running perpendicular to the proposed extension of the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail on Liberty Street/U.S. 76.
- The Greenway could become part of the broader Sumter-Florence Rail Trail network, or the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail might need to complement the already established Turkey Creek Greenway.
- The Turkey Creek Greenway will serve as a great north-south connector, complementing the east-west orientation of the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail, especially within the City of Sumter.
- Near the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail, the Turkey Creek Greenway will run along the super block on Green St and continue down Brooklyn Street.
- The intersection of Brooklyn and Liberty Streets would need to be improved to accommodate both trail systems effectively.

## SEGMENT 1 - SUMTER TO MAYESVILLE

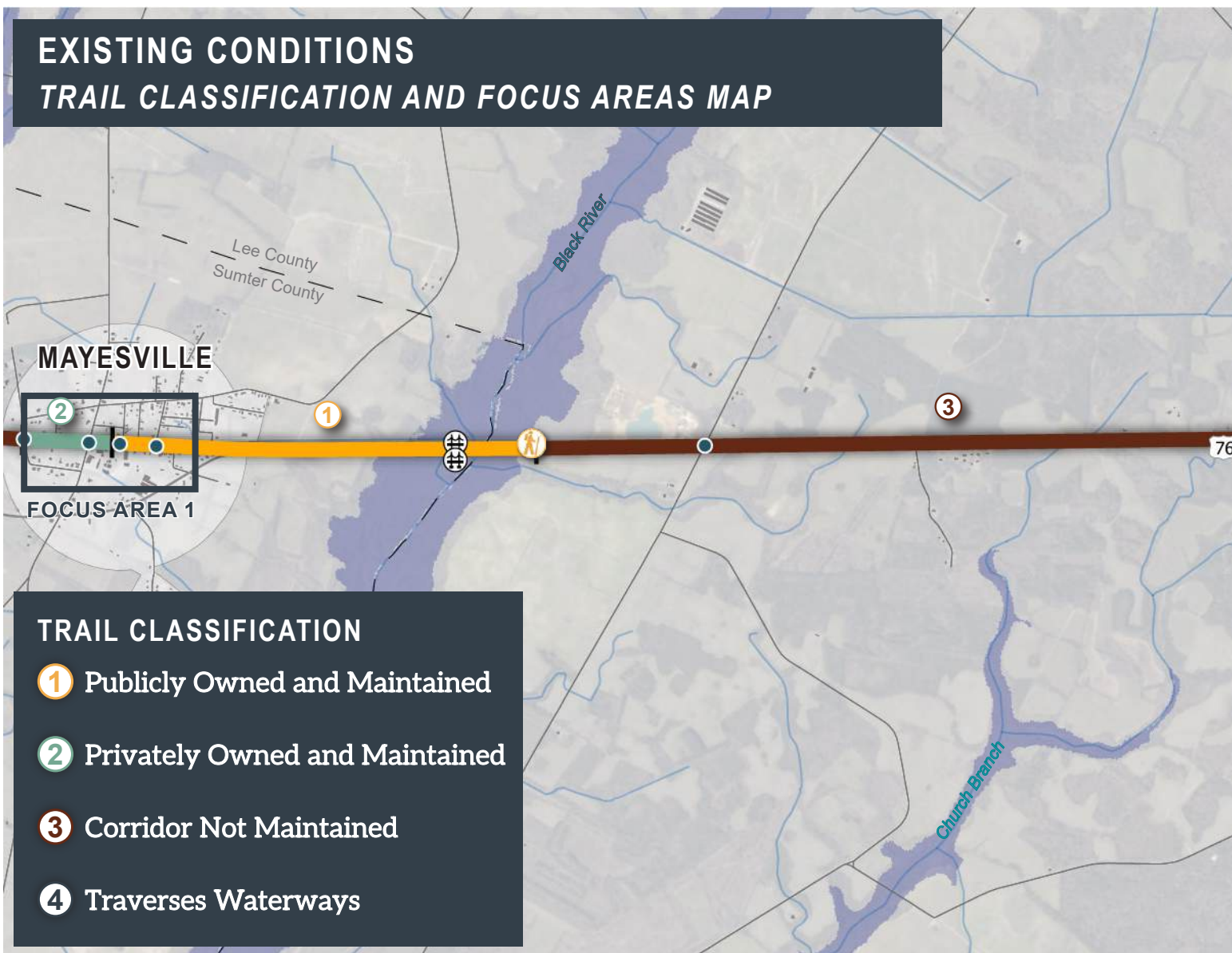
## CHANGES IN TOPOGRAPHY

- Just outside the city limits and after the CSX railroad tracks end, the proposed alignment traverses heavily wooded areas with segments of steep topography changes.
- This is particularly noticeable at the intersection of E Calhoun Street Extension and Salterstown Road.
- An alternative route for this segment is to have the trail run beside Calhoun Street, which may be more feasible in the wooded areas outside the city limits.
- Another consistent alternative alignment possibility for all segments of the corridor is to follow U.S. 76.
- Generally, the highway runs close to most of the proposed Sumter-Florence Rail Trail alignment. However, outside Sumter's city limits, U.S. 76 does not run close to the corridor and is several miles away.



*HEAVILY WOODED, STEEP GRADE CHANGE  
NEAR SALTERSTOWN ROAD*

# SEGMENT 2 MAYESVILLE TO LYNCHBURG

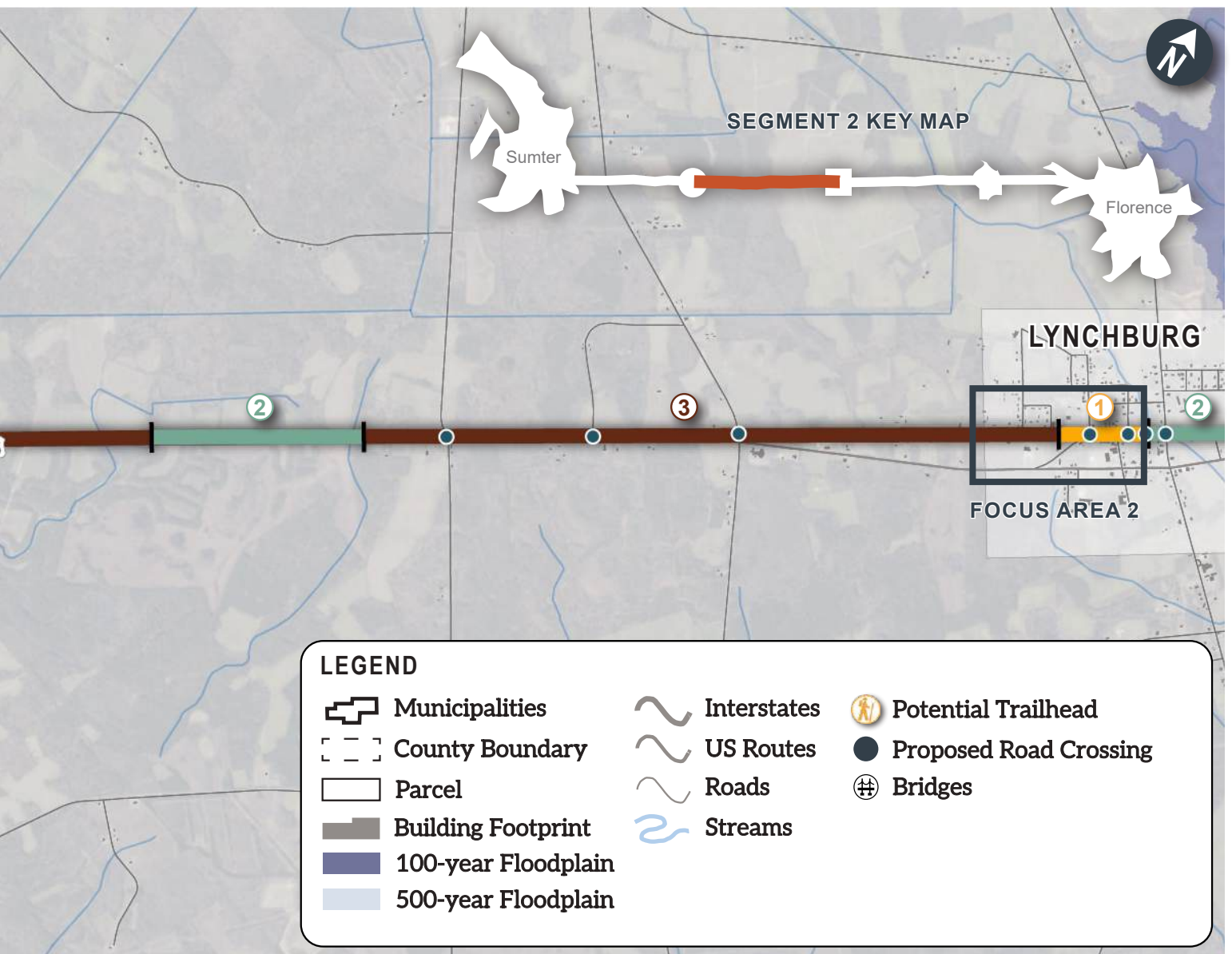


# SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

Segment 2 spans approximately 9.5 miles from Mayesville to Lynchburg. Mayesville, a rural town in Sumter County, is renowned for its representation of nineteenth-century South Carolina's cultural, commercial, and architectural

development, boasting a population of 543. Lynchburg, a small town in Lee County, serves as a transitional community in the Pee Dee region, with an estimated population of 300. The corridor experiences minimal maintenance

until nearing urban cores. Mayesville features an established 1.5-mile walking trail, while several bridges are already in place along this segment.

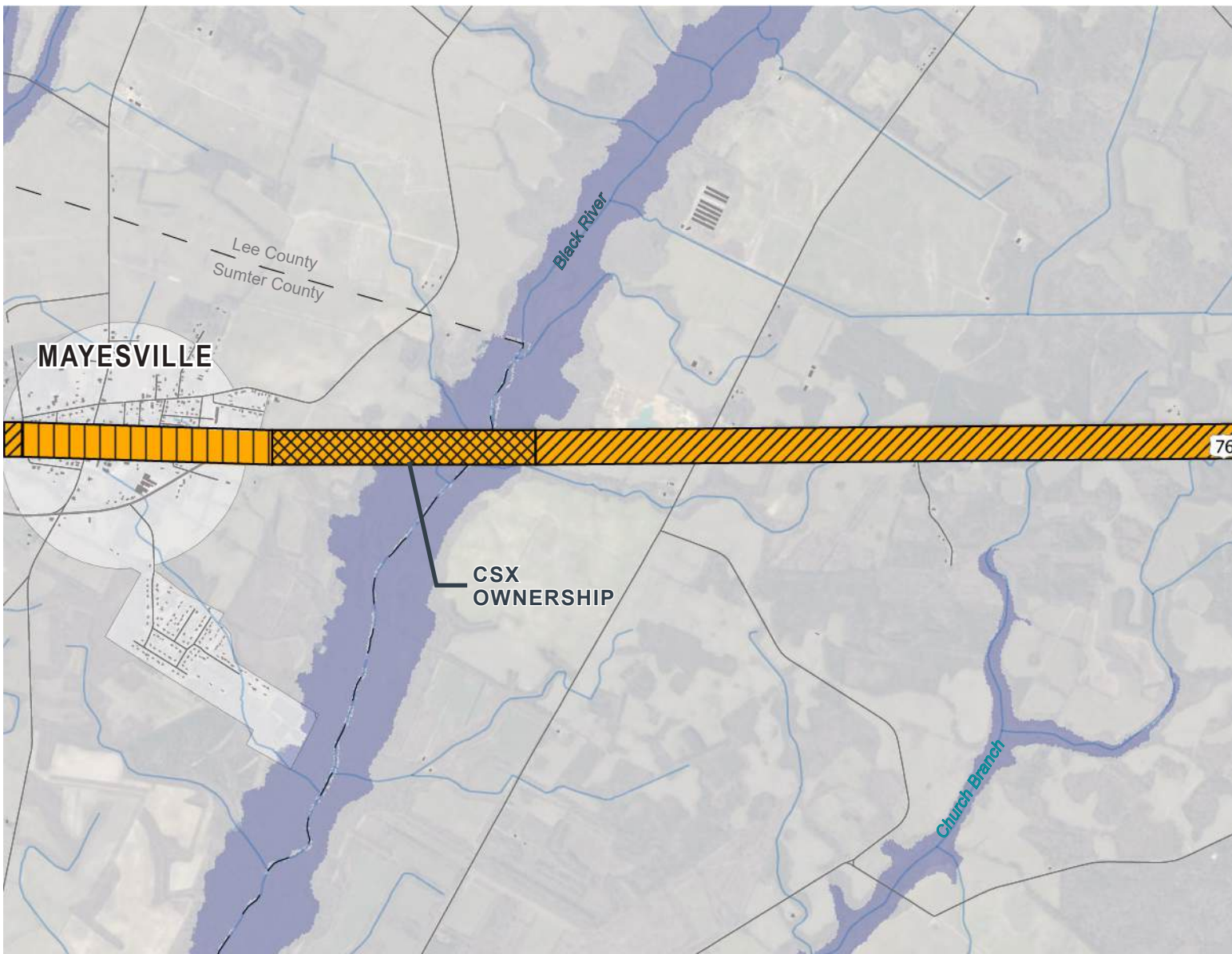


# SEGMENT OWNERSHIP

As the corridor departs Mayesville, part of it, including sections of the Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Nature Trail, remains under the ownership of CSX Transportation.

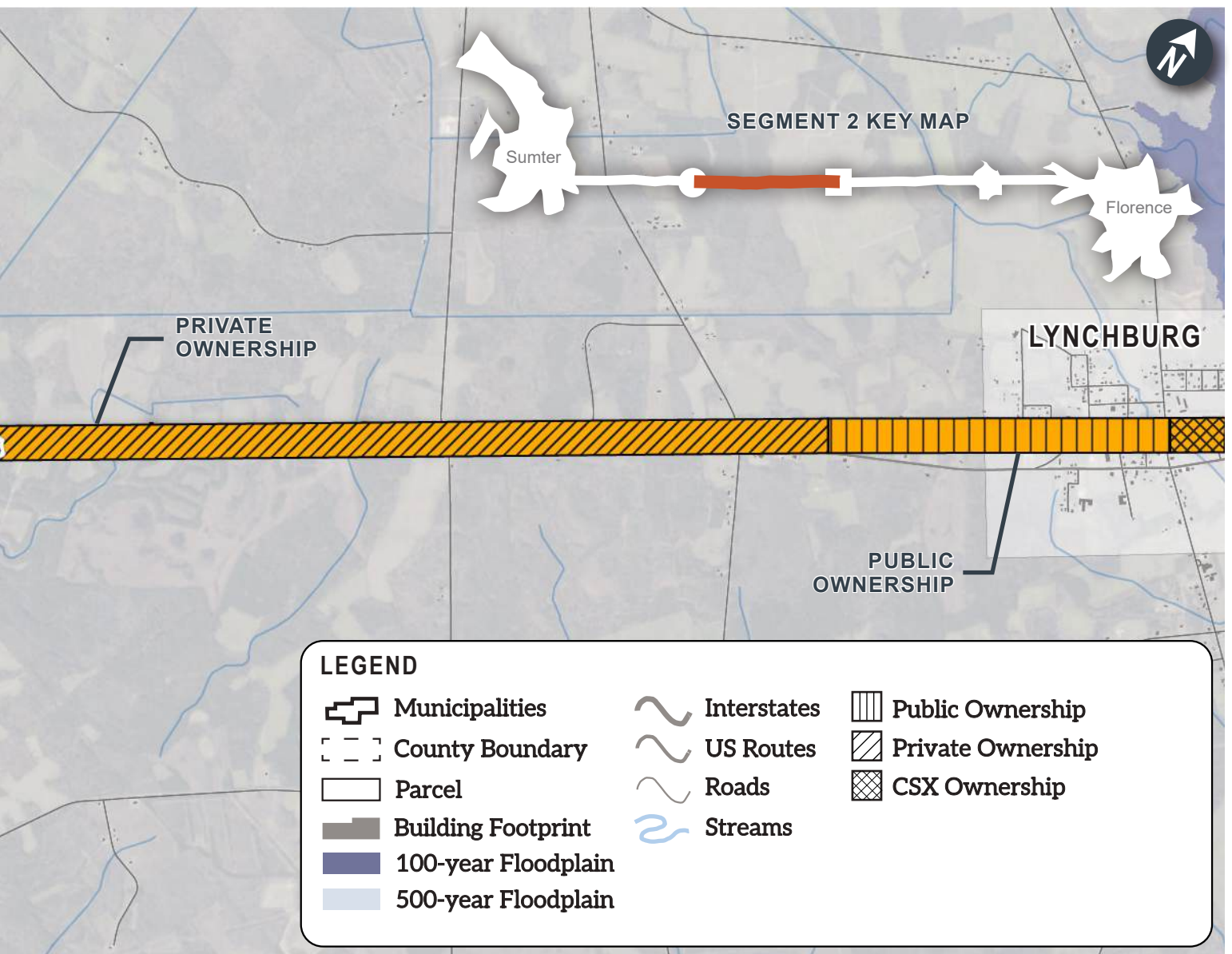
Moving towards Lynchburg, the segment primarily falls within the road right-of-way, which is generally regarded as public property. However, within the eastern part of Lynchburg's boundary, there is a segment of

the old railroad right-of-way that appears to still be under CSX's ownership. This reflects a nuanced distribution of ownership, with significant portions managed by public entities and others retained by the original rail operator.



## SEGMENT 2 - MAYESVILLE TO LYNCHBURG

\*Ownership data is based on Geographic Information System (GIS) provided by various municipalities. Please note that the rail and road right-of-way data does not always correspond directly to ownership records. Some areas of the corridor may be represented with a degree of assumption regarding parcel boundaries, with parts of the corridor assumed to belong to one parcel over another.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

Segment 2 traverses through the core of two small rural downtowns, where remnants of their once vibrant railroad past still exist, albeit diminished. Amidst the compact confines of these areas, there is a mix of dilapidated, renovated, and partially demolished buildings. In Mayesville, there are North and South Main Streets flanking a central green space.

The Town Hall resides along South Main Street, while the Mary McLeod Bethune Learning Center stands on North Main

Street, serving as key focal points. Additionally, the existing Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Nature Trail boasts a designated trailhead site, presenting an opportunity for further homage to Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune's legacy.

Inconsistent sidewalk construction characterizes both main streets, with well-maintained, broad sections in front of landmark sites, contrasting with narrower and lower-quality stretches elsewhere. Lynchburg shares a similar sidewalk condition and overall downtown fabric. It, too, features

two major roads surrounding a central green space with a walking loop. While Lynchburg may have fewer standout landmarks, an existing park and a prominent water tower offer potential points of interest within the area.



**MAYESVILLE TOWN HALL**



**DR. MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE NATURE TRAIL  
(PUBLICLY OWNED AND MAINTAINED)**

## SEGMENT 2 - MAYESVILLE TO LYNCHBURG



**MAINTAINED CORRIDOR PARALLEL TO U.S. 76  
(PRIVATELY OWNED AND MAINTAINED)**

Segment 2's potential trail route largely parallels U.S. 76, yet significant stretches cut through local farmland, where maintenance is lacking. In total, there are potential crossings of 11 roads, along with a 900-foot bridge spanning the Black River, which is already integrated into the Mary McLeod Bethune Walking Trail.



**LYNCHBURG WALKING LOOP  
(PUBLICLY OWNED AND MAINTAINED)**

# FOCUS AREA 1

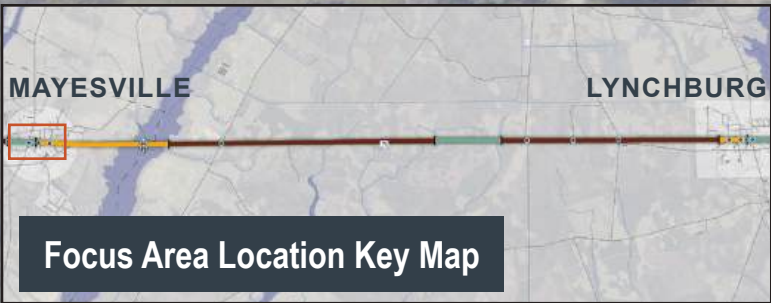
## Downtown Mayesville



Potential connection to Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Birthplace & Park 3 miles away

Trail generally aligned centrally meandering around existing features

- SITES OF INTEREST**
- 1 Town Hall
  - 2 Water Tower
  - 3 Learning Center
  - 4 Historic Museum
  - 5 Gazebo
  - 6 Existing Walking Trail
  - 7 Church



Potential road realignment

**LEGEND**

 Proposed Rail/Trail Alignment

 Existing Trailhead

 Existing Walking Trail

 Sidewalk

 Potential Parking

 Intersection Improvement

 Road Crossings

 Existing Pedestrian Lighting



# FOCUS AREA 2

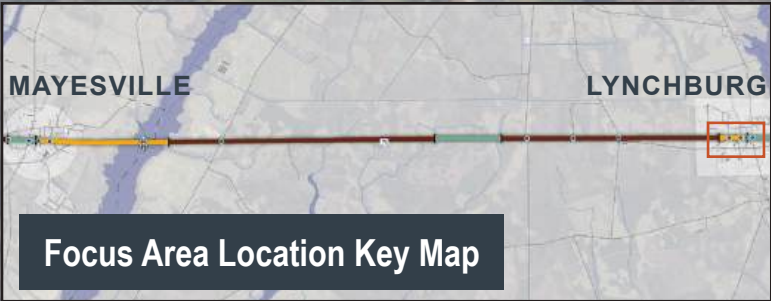
## Downtown Lynchburg










### SITES OF INTEREST

- ① Walking Loop
- ② Water Tower
- ③ Memorial Park
- ④ Dollar General

Formalize and redesign parking to be on-street, parallel, perpendicular, and/or diagonal



**LEGEND**

-  Proposed Rail/Trail Alignment
-  Intersection Improvement
-  Potential Parking
-  Gateway Treatment Opportunity
-  Road Crossings
-  Existing Pedestrian Lighting
-  Sidewalk



# KEY FINDINGS

Segment 2 is unique in this corridor as it involves two municipalities in different counties, each with its own goals, visions, and codes. This can pose challenges, but the respective focus areas are quite similar in form. Both towns could benefit from reactivation through simple urban design and planning interventions, such as formalizing

parking and improving sidewalk quality. Each town has valuable assets to build upon: Mayesville features the Mary McLeod Bethune Learning Center and Walking Trail, while Lynchburg has a walking loop and a memorial park.



## DOWNTOWN MAYESVILLE

- As the trail enters Mayesville and connects to the existing walking trail, there are three road crossings to consider.
- Given the current low-volume traffic, the crossings may only need marked crosswalks. However, this may need to change as visitor numbers increase.
- The area surrounding the trail features the learning center, a gazebo, and a water tower. Enhancing the visual appeal of the water tower could attract visitors, providing a pleasant spot for breaks and scenic enjoyment.
- The sidewalk network could be improved in both quality and

quantity, as some sections lack sidewalks entirely, to better serve residents and visitors.

## DOWNTOWN LYNCHBURG

- The current walking loop needs to be seamlessly integrated into the greater Sumter-Florence Rail Trail network.
- Similar to Mayesville, both the quality and quantity of sidewalks, as well as intersections, should be improved to increase trail user comfort.
- The memorial park, though currently underdeveloped, could be a significant destination along the corridor. Enhancing it could attract locals and visitors, serve as a community anchor, and provide an excellent site for families.
- Despite fronting the street, the park is fenced off, making it less inviting in its current state.
- The noticeable water tower could be transformed into a major public art gateway, signaling to trail users that they have arrived in Lynchburg.

## SEGMENT 2 - MAYESVILLE TO LYNCHBURG

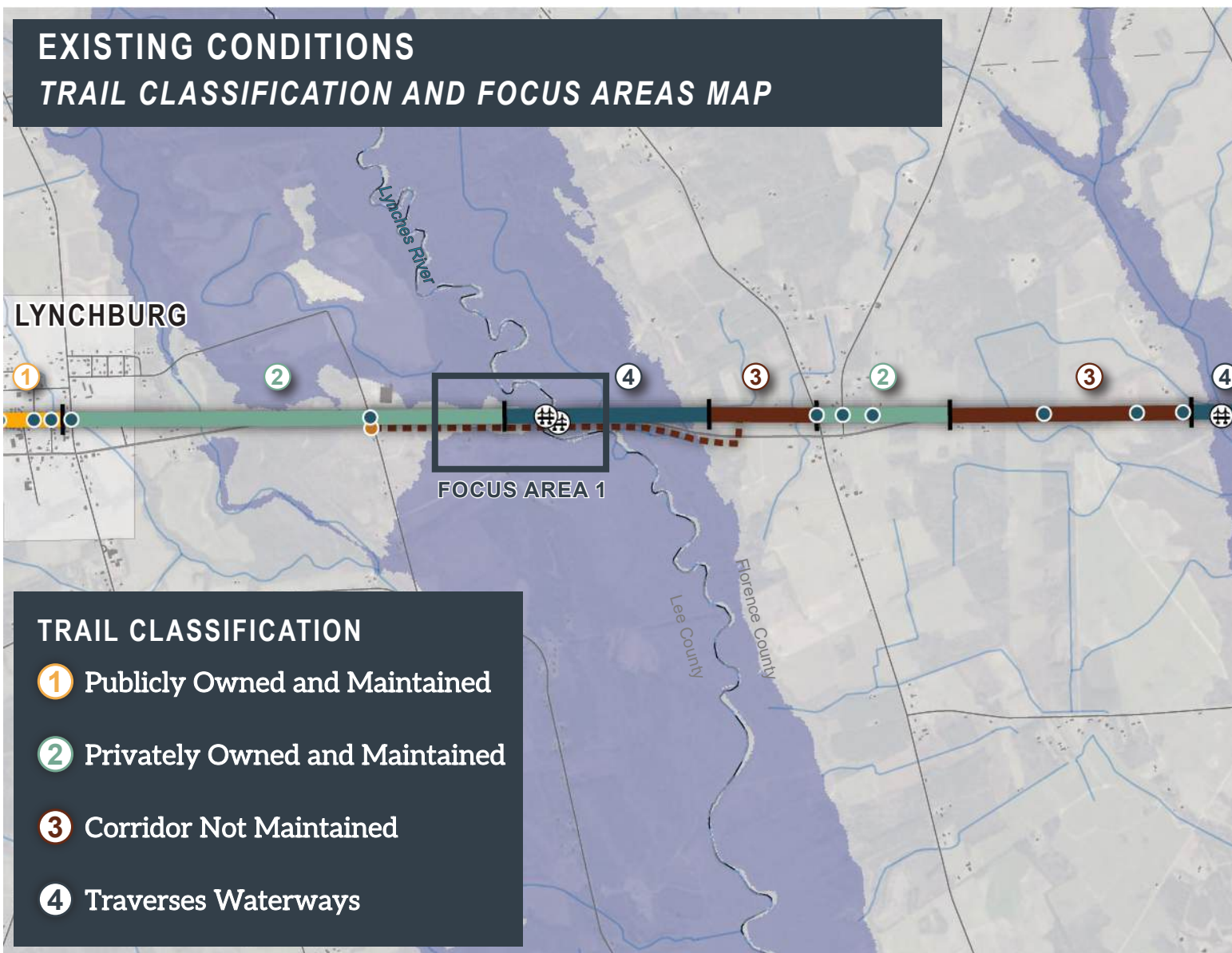
## FORMALIZE PARKING

- Parking in both Mayesville and Lynchburg needs to be formalized and improved.
- If the proposed trail goes through these centers, many more visitors from neighboring municipalities will drive there, and the current parking layout is not very convenient.
- Presently, there are just asphalt patches next to the central green corridor in both towns.
- In Lynchburg, there is a triangular asphalt area next to the walking loop that could be better designed to accommodate vehicles.



*LOCALS HORSEBACK RIDING ON EXISTING DR. MARY MCLEOD BETHUNE NATURE TRAIL*

# SEGMENT 3 LYNCHBURG TO TIMMONSVILLE

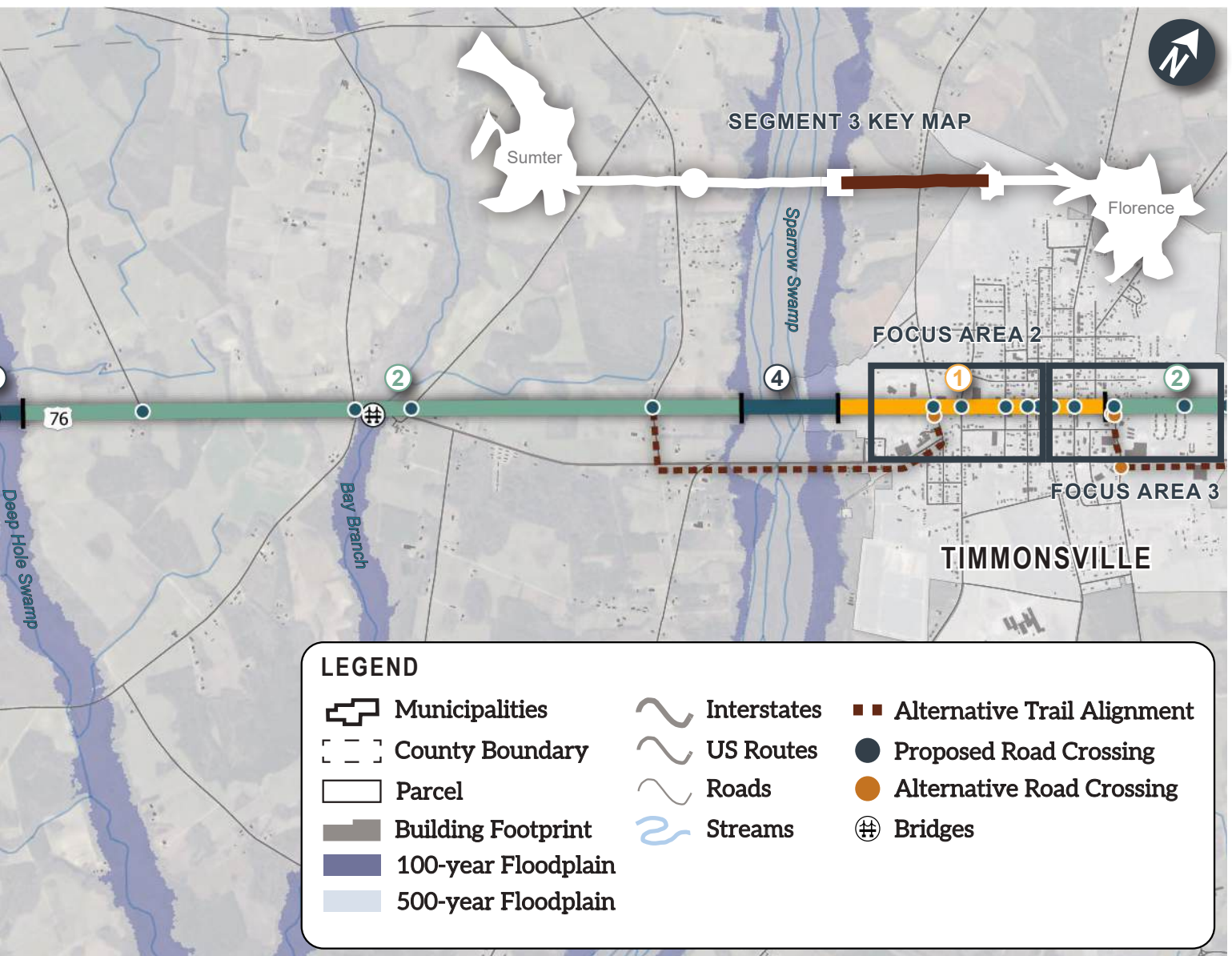


# SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

Segment 3 extends approximately 9.3 miles from Lynchburg to Timmonsville. Timmonsville, situated in Florence County, hosts a population of just over 3,000 residents. The corridor

is subject to both public and private maintenance efforts, with numerous bridges along its length. Notably, near the Lee and Florence County border, one bridge features support in decent condition.

In downtown Timmonsville, the track elevation is lower, and a well-maintained bike path stretches approximately 0.5 miles.

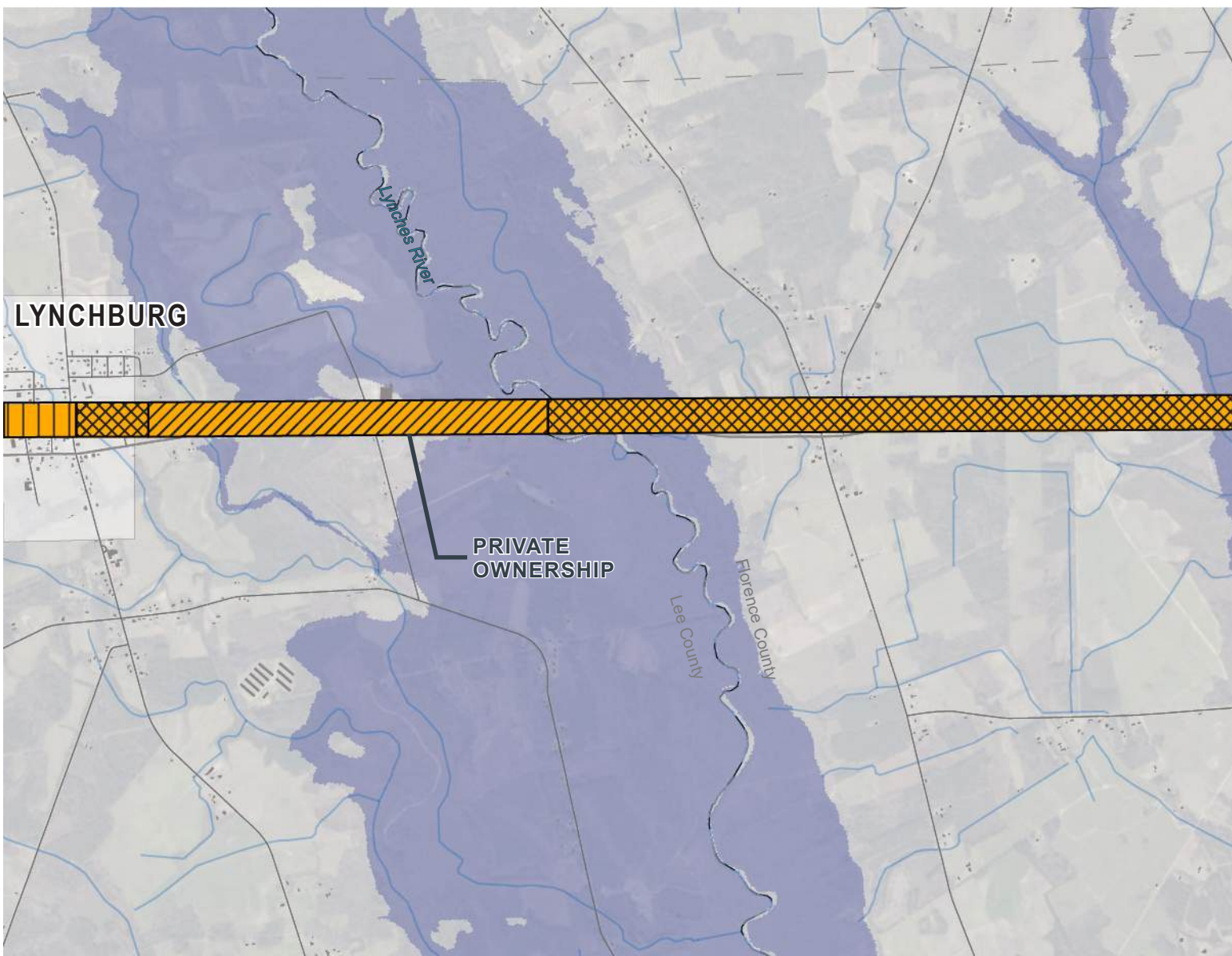


# SEGMENT OWNERSHIP

The former CSX railroad segment between Lynchburg and Timmonsville features a mix of ownership. As the rail line departs Lynchburg, much of the land in Lee County is privately owned.

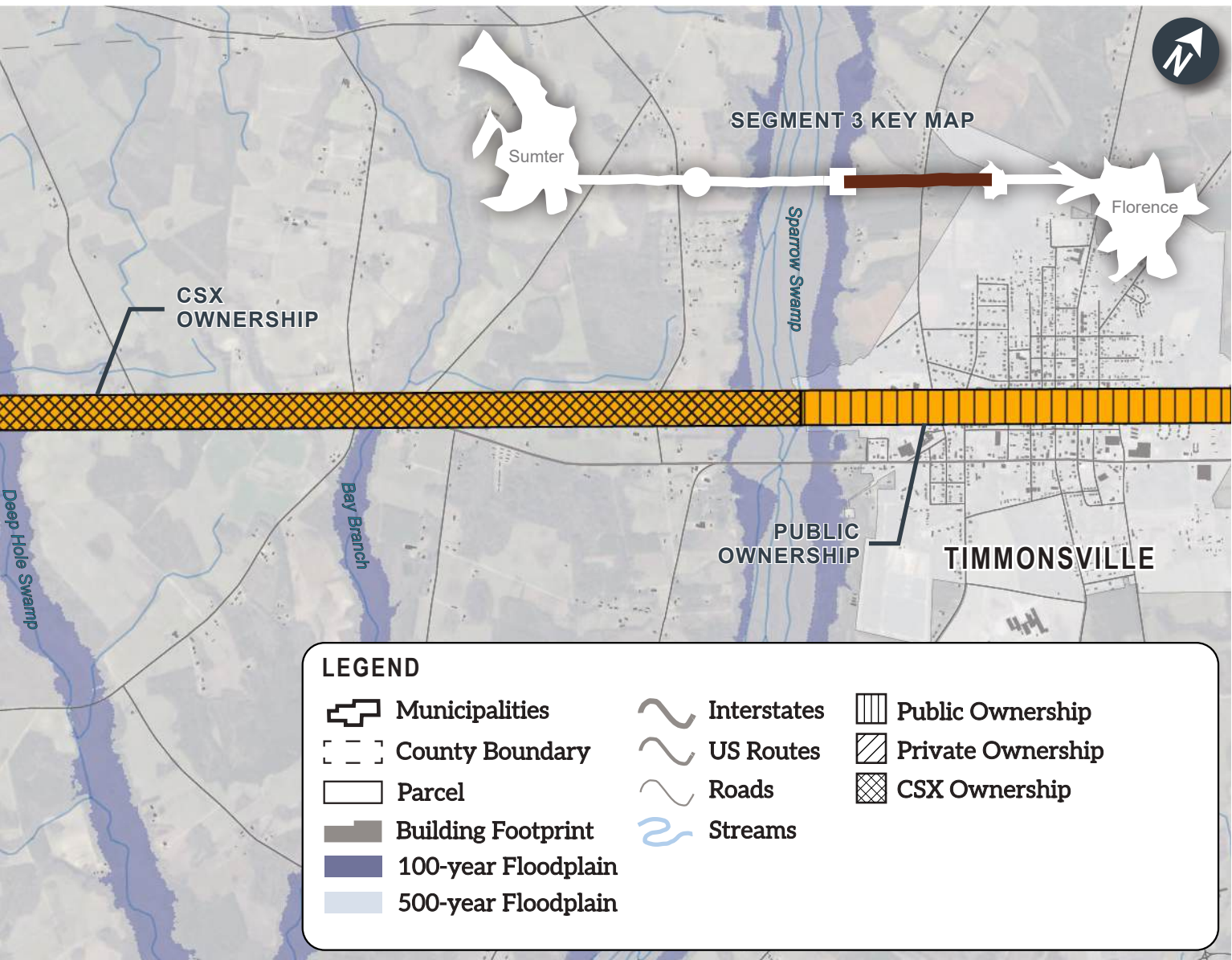
Within Florence County, ownership reverts to CSX Transportation, maintaining their stake in the corridor. In the Town of Timmonsville, all remaining sections of the old railroad are owned by the municipality.

This distribution highlights a transition from private and corporate ownership to municipal control as the line progresses from Lynchburg through the surrounding areas.



## SEGMENT 3 - LYNCHBURG TO TIMMONSVILLE

\*Ownership data is based on Geographic Information System (GIS) provided by various municipalities. Please note that the rail and road right-of-way data does not always correspond directly to ownership records. Some areas of the corridor may be represented with a degree of assumption regarding parcel boundaries, with parts of the corridor assumed to belong to one parcel over another.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

Similar to Segment 2, Segment 3 primarily parallels U.S. 76. Therefore, in heavily forested and unmaintained areas of the corridor, it may be feasible to consider an alternative alignment closer to the highway. In Segment 3, there are extensive privately maintained sections that could potentially become part of the corridor, even beyond the main urban area. When crossing the Lynches River on U.S. 76, remnants of what appears to be a pedestrian bridge are visible, though much of it has decayed, some structures remain. Unlike any other segment, this one

encounters water bodies on three occasions, posing a significant challenge.

Timmons ville, the urban setting through which this segment passes, is characterized by a linear green space flanked by two main streets. One main street is notably wide, featuring intermittent on-street parking and sections with no parking, along with faded pavement markings. The other main street is narrower, with a 4-foot sidewalk running alongside it. The existing Timmons ville trail consists of a curvilinear paved

path with landscaping and shade trees providing a buffer from the adjacent main streets. Along this path, users can find amenities such as benches, bike racks, and lamps, offering comfort for walkers, strollers, and cyclists.



**EXISTING RAILROAD CORRIDOR BRIDGE  
(TRAVERSES WATERWAYS)**



**MAINTAINED CORRIDOR IN CARTERSVILLE  
ON OLD RAILROAD AVE**

## SEGMENT 3 - LYNCHBURG TO TIMMONSVILLE



**TIMMONSVILLE RAIL-TRAIL  
(PUBLICLY OWNED AND MAINTAINED)**

Along this section of the corridor, there are 20 road crossings, and three bridge crossings. Within Timmonsville alone, there are over 6 road crossings, some of which are along the existing trail and have very faded pavement markings to delineate the crossing and do not offer much protection to the user.



**DOWNTOWN TIMMONSVILLE**

## FOCUS AREA 1

### *Rail Bridge over Lynches River*

Segment appears to be elevated above floodway and in fair condition, but further analysis is needed to confirm



HWY 76 E

P



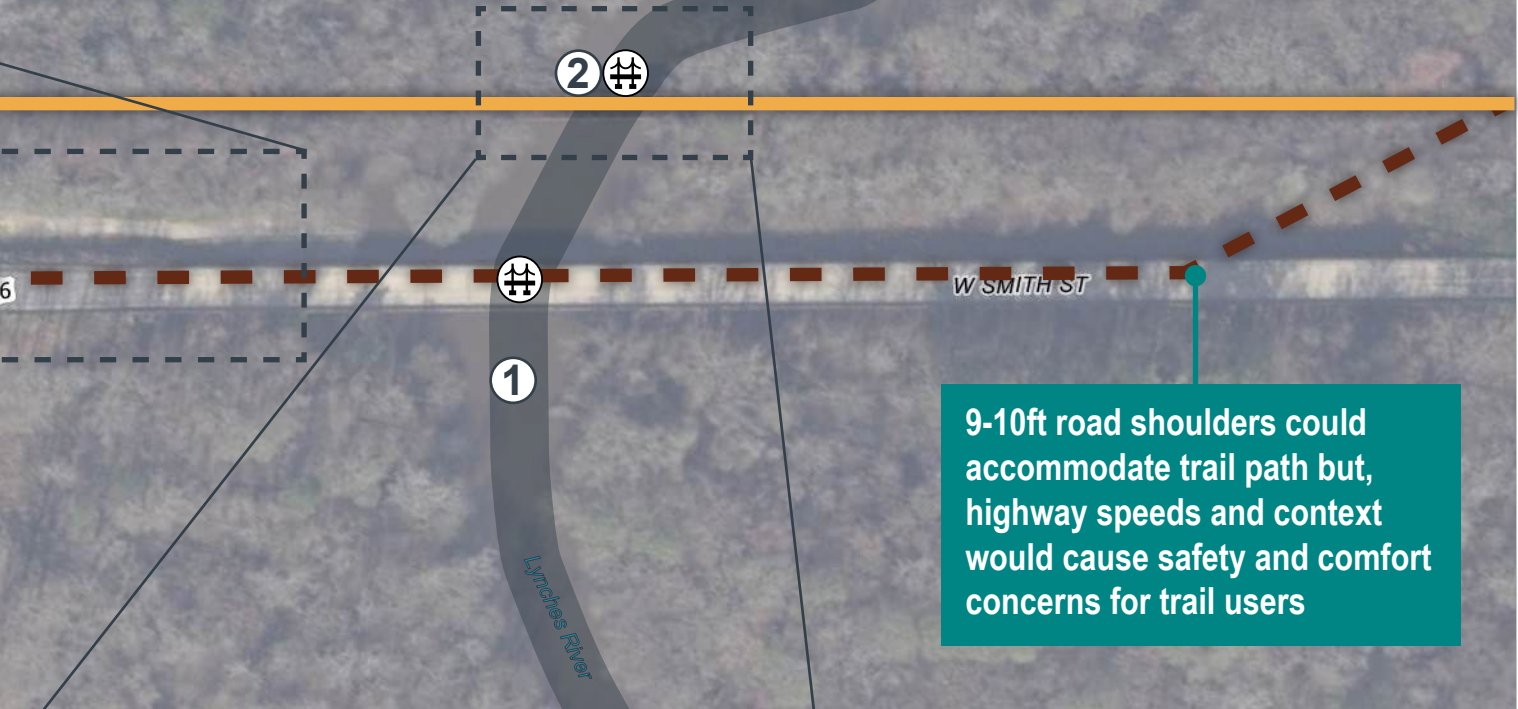
This is a major trailhead opportunity being at the crossroads of two trails and having public parking available

## SITES OF INTEREST

- 1 Lynches River
- 2 Old Rail Trestle Bridge








Recreational activities on the Scenic River Blue Trail include paddling and fishing



9-10ft road shoulders could accommodate trail path but, highway speeds and context would cause safety and comfort concerns for trail users



**LEGEND**

-  Proposed Rail/Trail Alignment
-  Alternative Trail Alignment
-  Potential Trailhead
-  Potential Parking
-  Bridges

## FOCUS AREA 2

### *Downtown Timmonsville West*

Potential Timmonsville Rail Trail Park and Trailhead located less than 1000ft west of existing paved trail



#### SITES OF INTEREST

- ① Community Center
- ② Strip Mall
- ③ Police Department
- ④ Presbyterian Church
- ⑤ Baptist Church



# FOCUS AREA 3

## Downtown Timmonsville East












### SEGMENT 3 - LYNCHBURG TO TIMMONSVILLE



Corridor is flat and well-maintained here, with opportunity for continued lighting, shade trees, and/or seating

**LEGEND**

	Proposed Rail/Trail Alignment		Potential Parking
	Alternative Trail Alignment		Improvement Opportunity
	Gateway Treatment Opportunity		Road Crossings
	Existing Paved Trail		Alternative Road Crossings
	Sidewalk		Existing Pedestrian Lighting

# KEY FINDINGS

This segment has considerable potential, especially since several long stretches are already privately maintained, and there is an existing trail in downtown Timmonsville. The trail also passes through Cartersville, a smaller rural community, providing opportunities to connect to destinations like the Cartersville Country Winery.

Timmonsville could become a notable destination; however, its streetscape may require improvements to handle the anticipated increase in visitors brought by the trail. Additionally, there are three bridge crossings along this segment, including one over the Lynches River, that will need to accommodate the trail.



## CARTERSVILLE COUNTRY WINERY

- Known for its selection of locally produced wines and vineyard setting, it is also a popular event venue that hosts several weddings a year.
- The winery could offer a unique and relaxing stop for users of the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail and enhance the trail experience by providing a scenic, enjoyable destination.
- The winery is a 1-mile detour from the potential trail corridor or any alternative alignment, which may be inconvenient for some trail users.
- Provide opportunities for trail users to spend a couple of nights and explore the smaller rural area.
- Ideal to have camping grounds near Cartersville, as it is close to the Lynches River, allowing people to paddle and fish.
- Having camping grounds along the trail reduces the inconvenience of detours, providing users with additional amenities and attractions to explore.

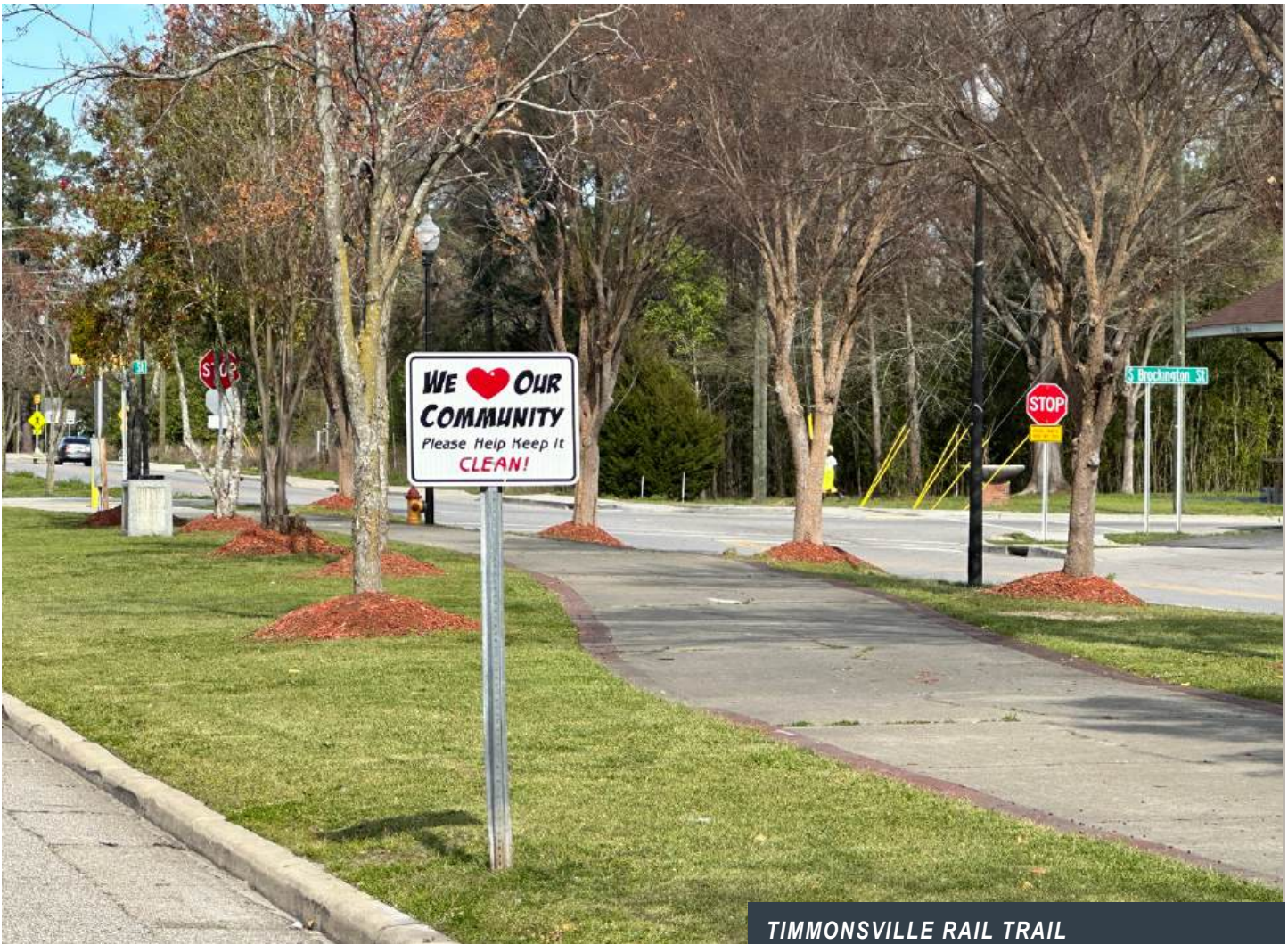
## LYNCHEs RIVER BRIDGE

- Crossing the Lynches River on U.S. 76, remnants of a pedestrian bridge are visible, though much of it has decayed, some structures remain.
- The current alignment suggests building a pedestrian bridge next to the Lynches River Bridge, but this may not be the most feasible or cost-effective solution due to the challenging nature of the Lynches River.
- Another proposed alternative is to align the trail along U.S. 76. This segment of the highway has two lanes with roughly 9-10 ft shoulders that could potentially accommodate a trail path on one side or both.
- Currently, the only separation between the lanes and shoulders is a white line, so if the trail were to choose this alignment, additional safety measures would be necessary to ensure the comfort and safety of trail users.

## SEGMENT 3 - LYNCHBURG TO TIMMONSVILLE

## TIMMONSVILLE DOWNTOWN STREETScape

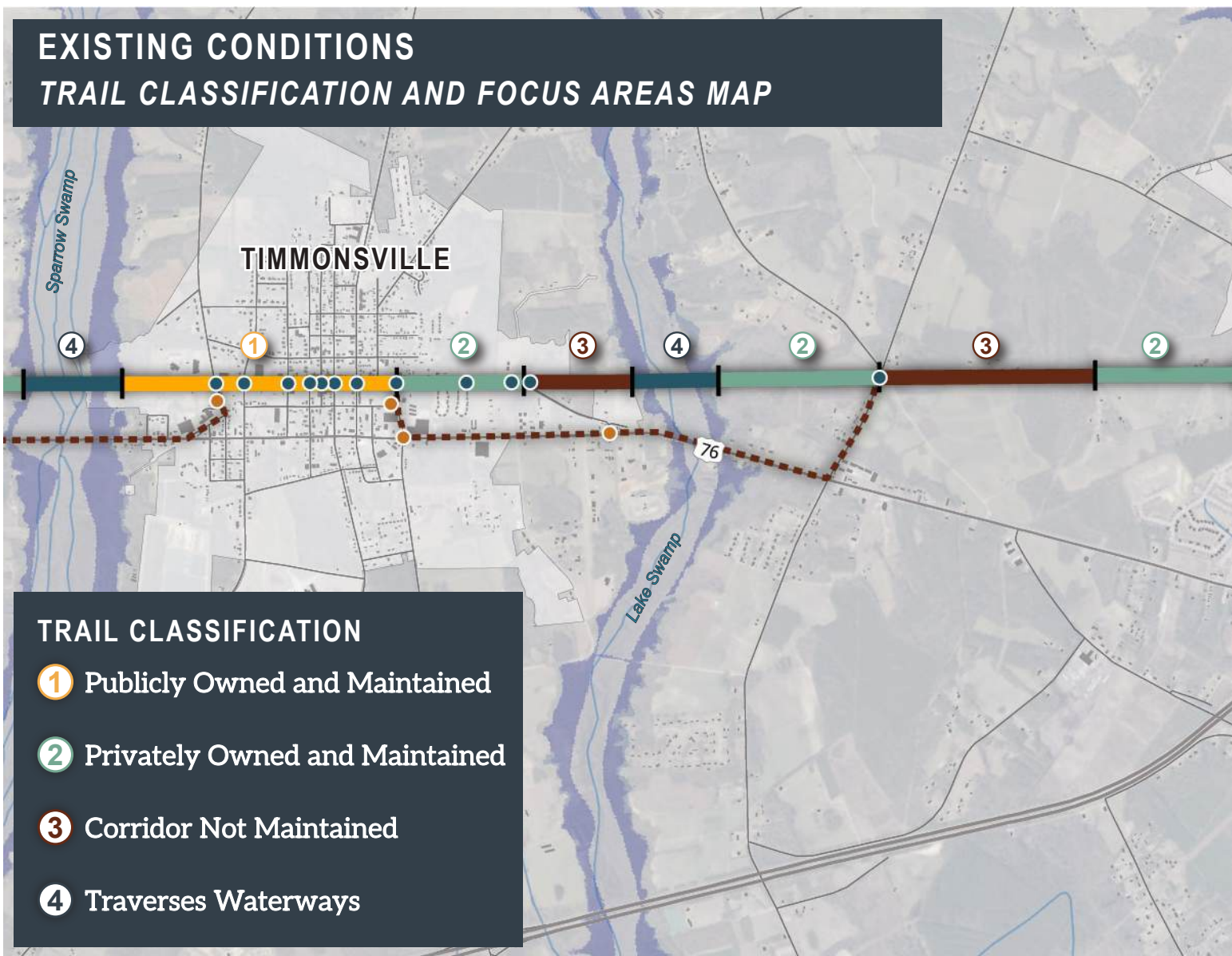
- Users can find amenities such as benches, bike racks, and lamps, providing comfort for walkers, strollers, and cyclists.
- This existing infrastructure serves as a great asset that could drive the enhancement of the surrounding areas.
- Several sidewalk improvement projects in the area have recently been completed, enhancing walkability and connectivity to the broader Sumter-Florence Rail Trail network.
- The main street north of the trail corridor could accommodate more traffic than it currently experiences.
- There is a mix of diagonal parking on one side of the street and parallel on-street parking on the other. Implementing more uniform parking and pavement markings could improve this aspect.
- Gateway treatments are recommended in several locations to inform trail users they are entering Timmonsville.



**TIMMONSVILLE RAIL TRAIL  
(PUBLICLY OWNED AND MAINTAINED)**

# SEGMENT 4

# TIMMONSVILLE TO FLORENCE

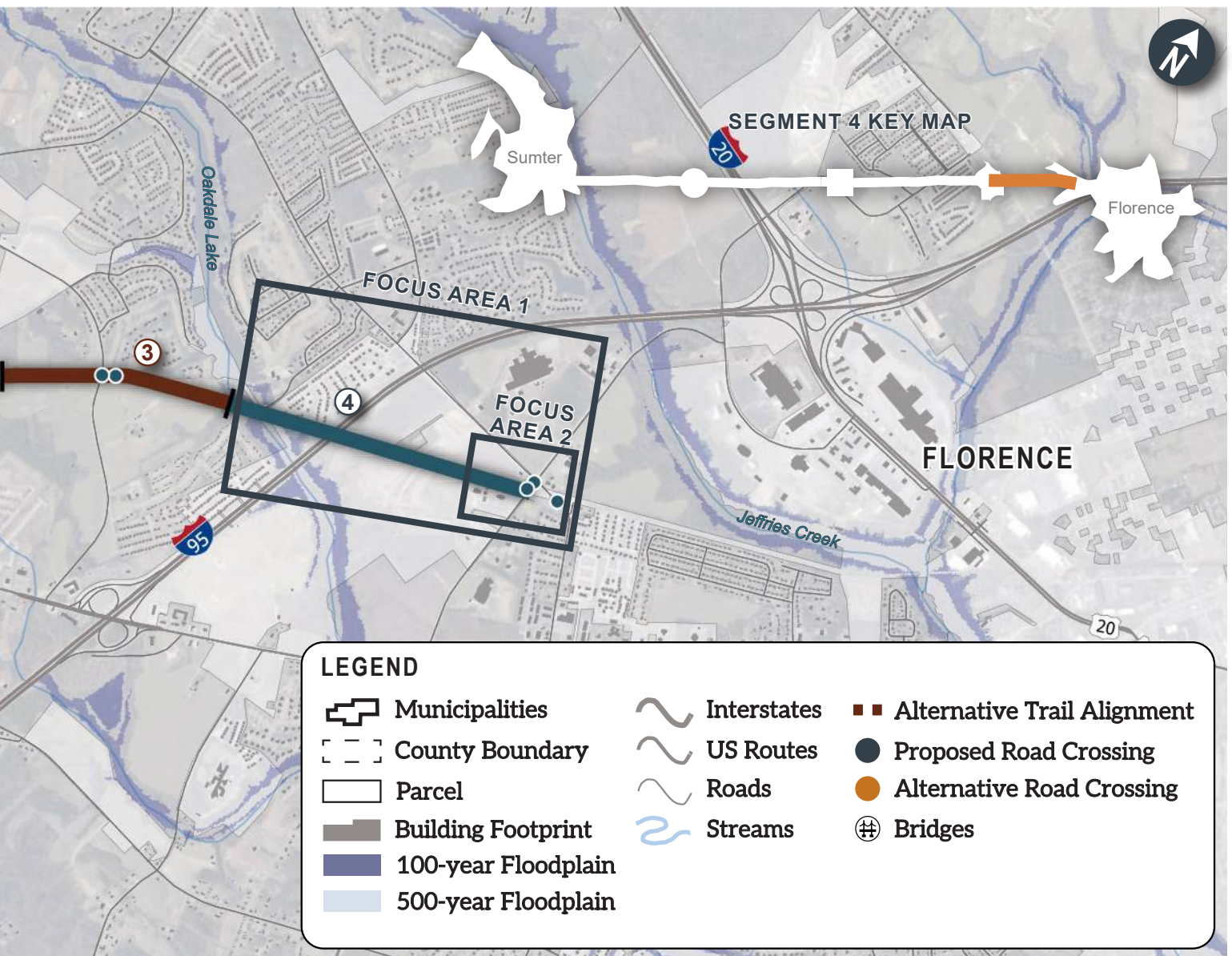


# SEGMENT DESCRIPTION

Segment 4 covers approximately 5.15 miles from Timmonsville to Florence. Florence, a city and the county seat of Florence County, boasts a population of around 40,000 residents. Positioned at the crossroads of Interstates

20 and 95, it serves as a hub of activity for both local residents and visitors to the Pee Dee region. This segment of the corridor presents significant challenges, with large sections lacking maintenance and traversing water bodies,

wooded areas, and steep slopes. The alignment of this segment largely diverges from U.S. Route 76. There exists potential for this segment to link with the soccer fields and Ebenezer Park.



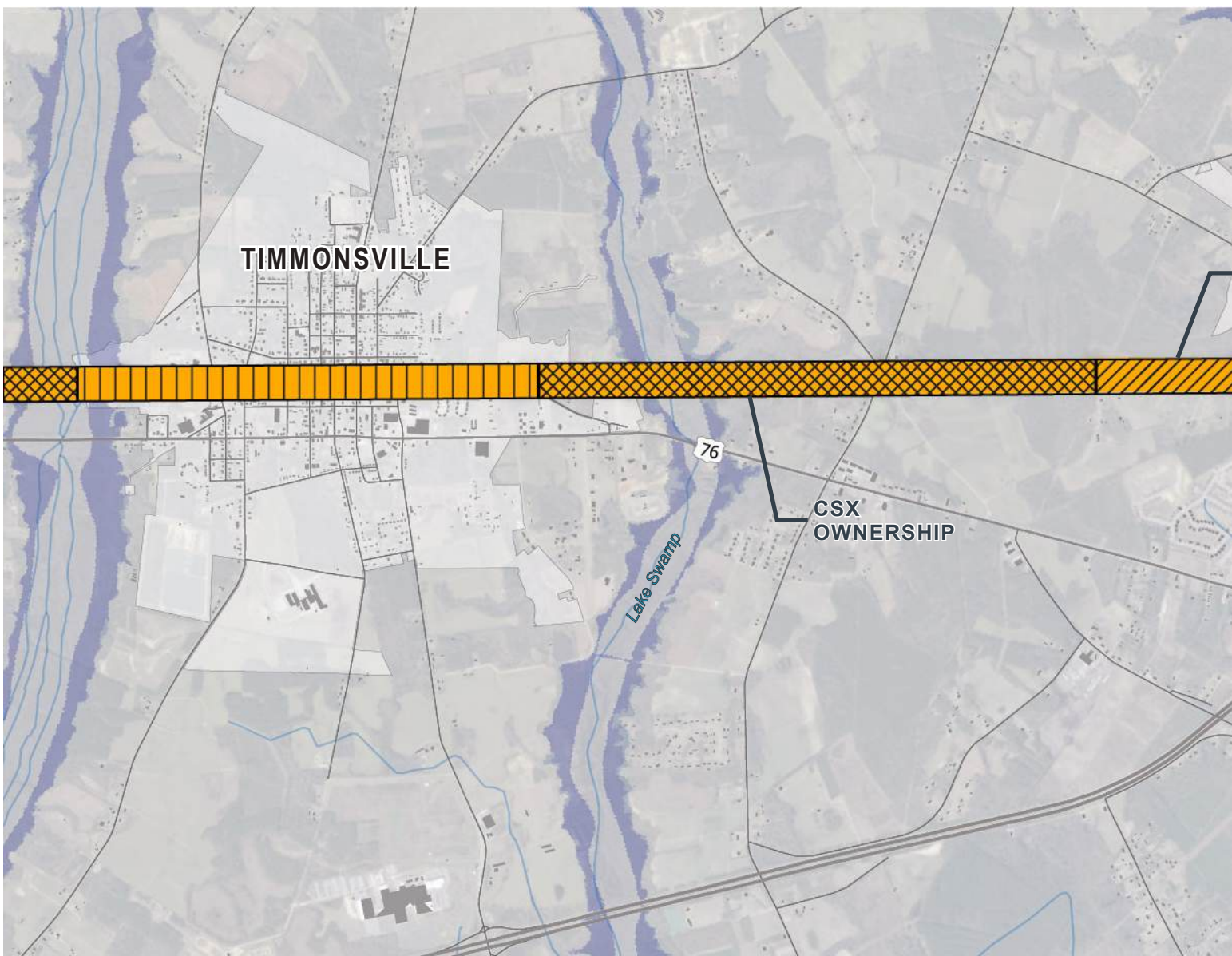
# SEGMENT OWNERSHIP

Segment 4 of the former CSX railroad also features a diverse ownership structure. Outside the municipal boundaries of Timmons ville and Florence, CSX Transportation owns the majority of the old railroad land. There

is a higher proportion of private ownership in these unincorporated areas compared to Segment 3.

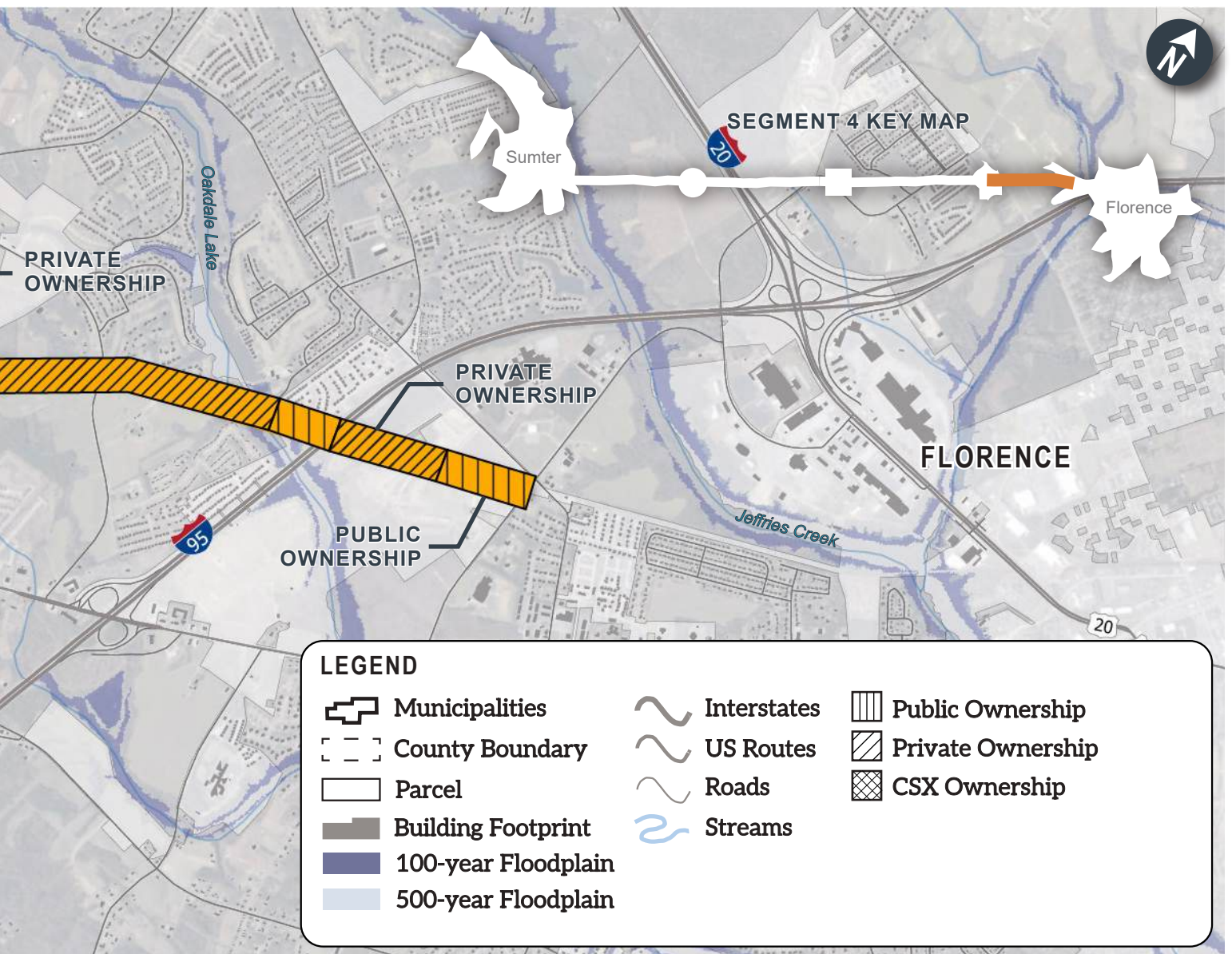
Within the city limits of Florence, the ownership of the old railroad land is divided. While the city

owns a portion of the land, it is mixed with privately owned sections that are planned for future development. This division highlights a blend of public and private interests as the corridor transitions through Florence.



## SEGMENT 4 - TIMMONSVILLE TO FLORENCE

\*Ownership data is based on Geographic Information System (GIS) provided by various municipalities. Please note that the rail and road right-of-way data does not always correspond directly to ownership records. Some areas of the corridor may be represented with a degree of assumption regarding parcel boundaries, with parts of the corridor assumed to belong to one parcel over another.



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

Segment 4 consists of three main parts: privately maintained sections, unmaintained areas, and sections that traverse waterways. The privately maintained sections are primarily dirt roads in decent condition. While there are no publicly maintained trails in this segment, the existing Florence Rail Trail, just east of Ebenezer Park, presents an opportunity for the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail to connect and function as a major trailhead for this corridor.

U.S. Route 76 diverges significantly from the proposed corridor alignment, serving as an alternative route for other segments. This divergence limits alignment possibilities for Segment 4 and imposes constraints in heavily wooded areas. A notable section near western Florence would likely need to pass under I-95 as it transitions into the urban setting. An alternative to this would be redirecting the corridor through a residential neighborhood along Stratton Drive.

This area that the corridor is proposed to go through is characterized by a linear wooded tract surrounded by residential, commercial, and civic uses. If the corridor is extended, it will be close to recreational areas such as Ebenezer Park and the ESAB Soccer Fields. The intersection of Pine Needles Road and S Ebenezer Road is a critical node that requires improvement, as it currently does not provide a safe and comfortable crossing for pedestrians and cyclists accessing the potential trail.



**UNMAINTAINED CORRIDOR NEXT TO SCHAFFER ROAD**



**DIRT PATH HUGGINS ROAD NEAR WEST FLORENCE**

## SEGMENT 4 - TIMMONSVILLE TO FLORENCE



**FLORENCE RAIL TRAIL**

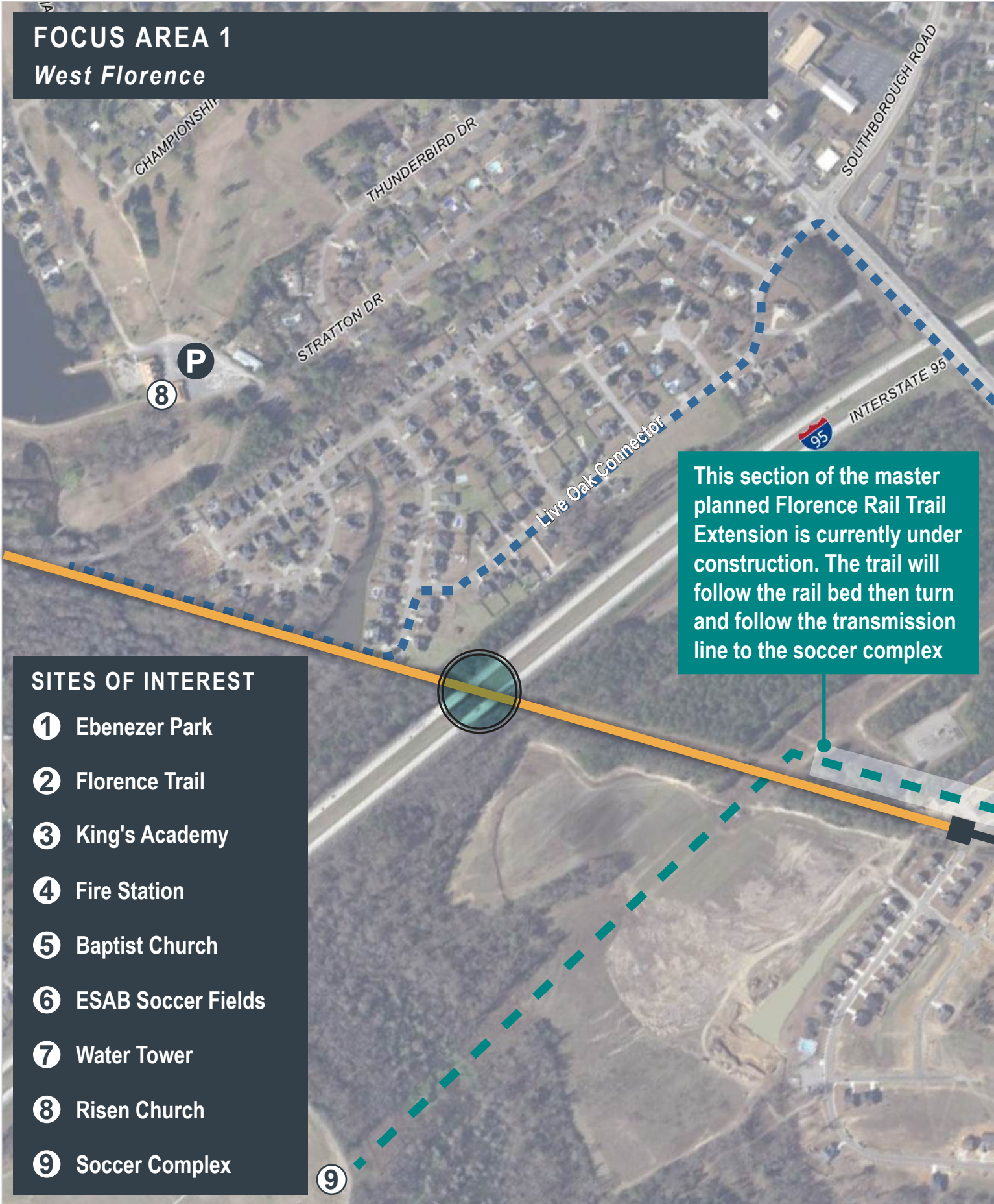
This segment has only six road crossings in total, which is relatively few compared to the previous segments. Three of these crossings are in the immediate vicinity of Ebenezer Park, a major node and community asset in western Florence. The existing Florence Rail Trail access point in this area is fairly hidden, with no clear wayfinding or signage indicating the trail's presence.



**PINE NEEDLES ROAD AND S EBENEZER ROAD INTERSECTION**

# FOCUS AREA 1

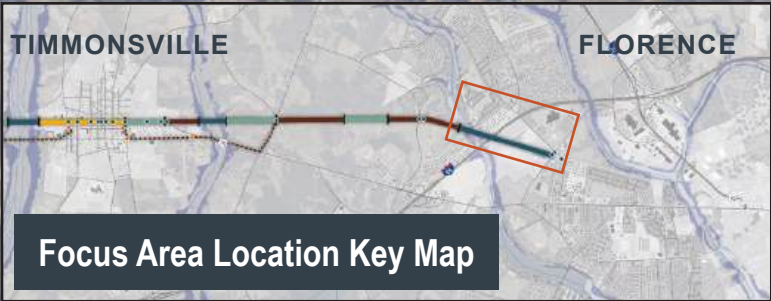
## West Florence



This section of the master planned Florence Rail Trail Extension is currently under construction. The trail will follow the rail bed then turn and follow the transmission line to the soccer complex

- ### SITES OF INTEREST
- ① Ebenezer Park
  - ② Florence Trail
  - ③ King's Academy
  - ④ Fire Station
  - ⑤ Baptist Church
  - ⑥ ESAB Soccer Fields
  - ⑦ Water Tower
  - ⑧ Risen Church
  - ⑨ Soccer Complex

### SEGMENT 4 - TIMMONSVILLE TO FLORENCE



**LEGEND**

- Proposed Rail/Trail Alignment
- Existing Walking Trail
- Walking Trail Extension
- Rail Trail Connections
- Potential Trailhead
- Gateway Treatment Opportunity
- Potential Parking
- Intersection Improvement
- Road Crossings

Potential connection to King's Academy

Potential trail connection to existing Florence Trail

Major trailhead opportunity

## FOCUS AREA 2

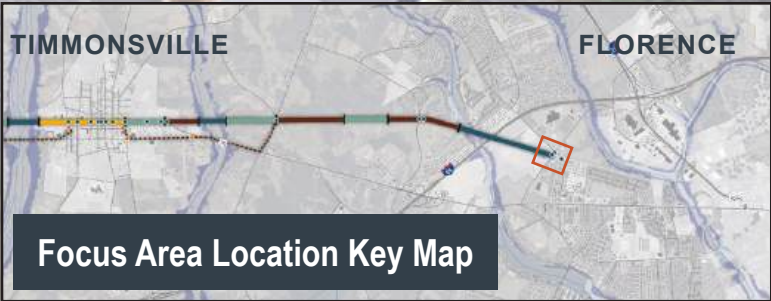
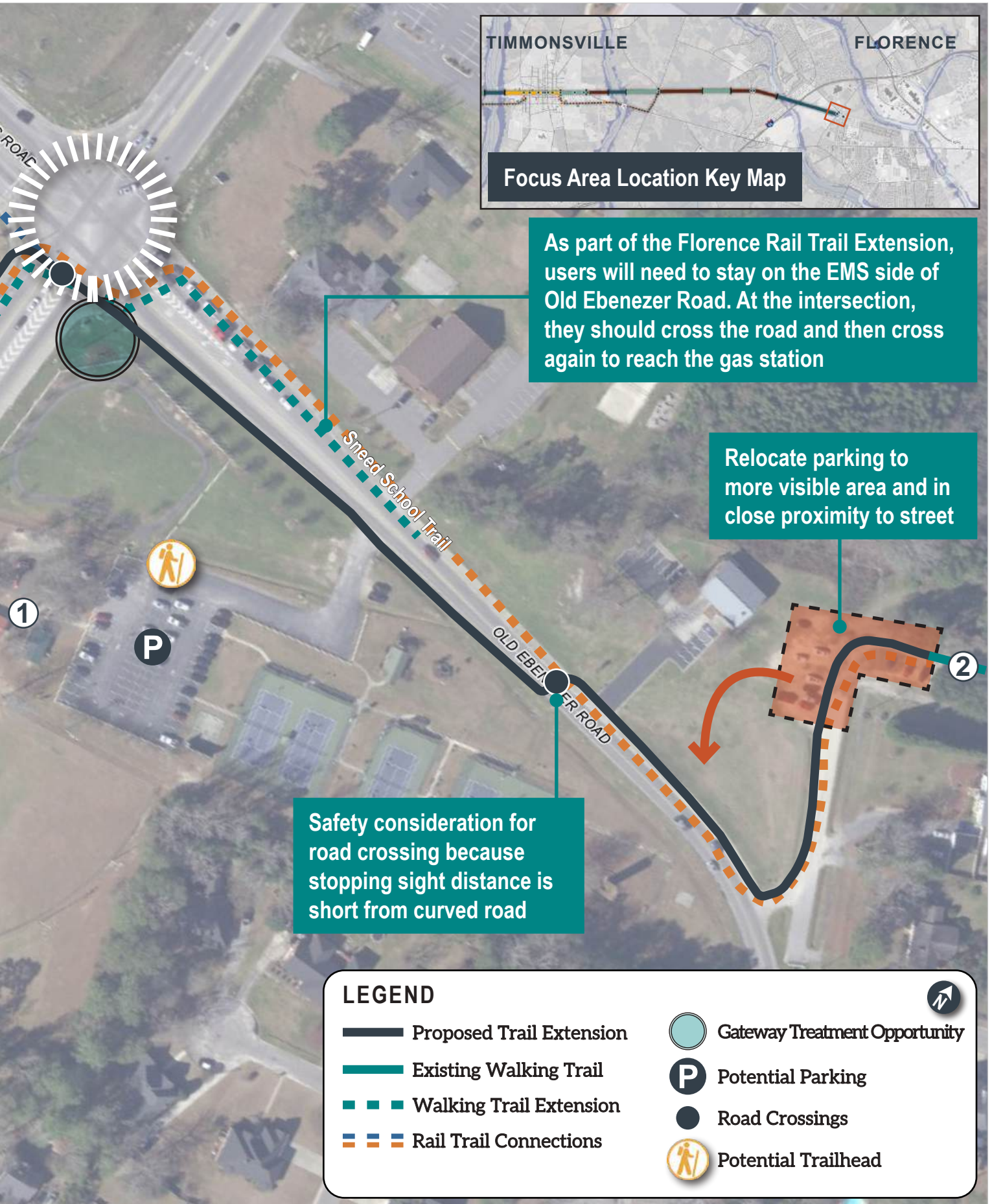
### *Ebenezer Park*

Extra caution with this alternative alignment as it runs near a school

Ebenezer Park is a community asset with public restrooms, parking, and amenities that could attract visitors to the trail

#### SITES OF INTEREST

- ① Ebenezer Park
- ② Florence Trail
- ③ King's Academy
- ④ Fire Station



Focus Area Location Key Map

As part of the Florence Rail Trail Extension, users will need to stay on the EMS side of Old Ebenezer Road. At the intersection, they should cross the road and then cross again to reach the gas station

Relocate parking to more visible area and in close proximity to street

Safety consideration for road crossing because stopping sight distance is short from curved road

**LEGEND**

	Proposed Trail Extension		Gateway Treatment Opportunity
	Existing Walking Trail		Potential Parking
	Walking Trail Extension		Road Crossings
	Rail Trail Connections		Potential Trailhead

# KEY FINDINGS

West Florence is an area with significant potential. If the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail extends through this region, it could serve as a new anchor for the community, complementing downtown Florence. Beyond the potential trail, the area boasts various community assets that can attract both locals and visitors. However,

there are also issues that may need further study. These include improving accessibility and enhancements to Ebenezer Park, connecting to the existing rail trail, navigating constraints related to the corridor passing through or around King's Academy, and considering a potential underpass for I-95.



## EBENEZER PARK

- The park offers a variety of sports facilities, picnic tables, restrooms, and ample parking.
- Its proximity to significant thoroughfares and available amenities make it an excellent location for a major trailhead.
- There is a small walking loop that doubles as a dog park, located at a nearby intersection.

This area is currently fenced off, likely for safety reasons.

- The fenced-off area, which would likely serve as the entry point for many trail users, is not very inviting or accessible in its current state.
- Improving this section of the park, along with upgrading the intersection at Pine Needles

Road and S Ebenezer Road, would support the goal of creating a more comfortable and accessible trail network.

- Extra safety consideration for road crossing on Old Ebenezer Road because stopping sight distance is short from curved road.

## FLORENCE RAIL TRAIL

- The existing trail is located less than 900 feet from Ebenezer Park and extends to the Florence CVB Center.
- There are no clear signs, banners, or maps near Ebenezer Park to indicate the trail's close proximity.
- Enhancing signage is crucial for informing and educating

trail users about the history and significance of the existing Florence Rail Trail, especially as a connection to the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail network.

- The existing parking is somewhat hidden and could be relocated closer to the street for better convenience and safety.

- The existing trail is a valuable asset that needs to be fully utilized through better connectivity and visibility.

## SEGMENT 4 - TIMMONSVILLE TO FLORENCE

## KINGS ACADEMY

- The trail is currently planned to follow the linear wooded track just north of the school site
- One alternative route runs along the periphery of the school, passing outside the baseball field, soccer field, parking lot, and then across S Ebenezer Road.
- Special considerations are necessary for this route as it passes through a private educational institution, that could raise concerns about student and faculty safety, among other factors.
- Developing a partnership between the school and the public could be beneficial due to the trail's proximity to the school.
- The school's existing parking facilities could help meet parking demands, making it a strategic location for trail access.

## I-95

- The proposed alignment of the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail is to go under I-95.
- This underpass presents significant logistical and cost challenges, making alternative routes worth exploring.
- A shared-use underpass would need a gateway treatment to indicate to users they are entering or leaving Florence.
- Just west of I-95, the corridor intersects the end of a residential neighborhood.
- Two alternative routes run through well-maintained, paved neighborhoods suitable for residential-scale trails.
- Ensuring the safety of both residents and trail users is crucial to maintaining a high comfort network.



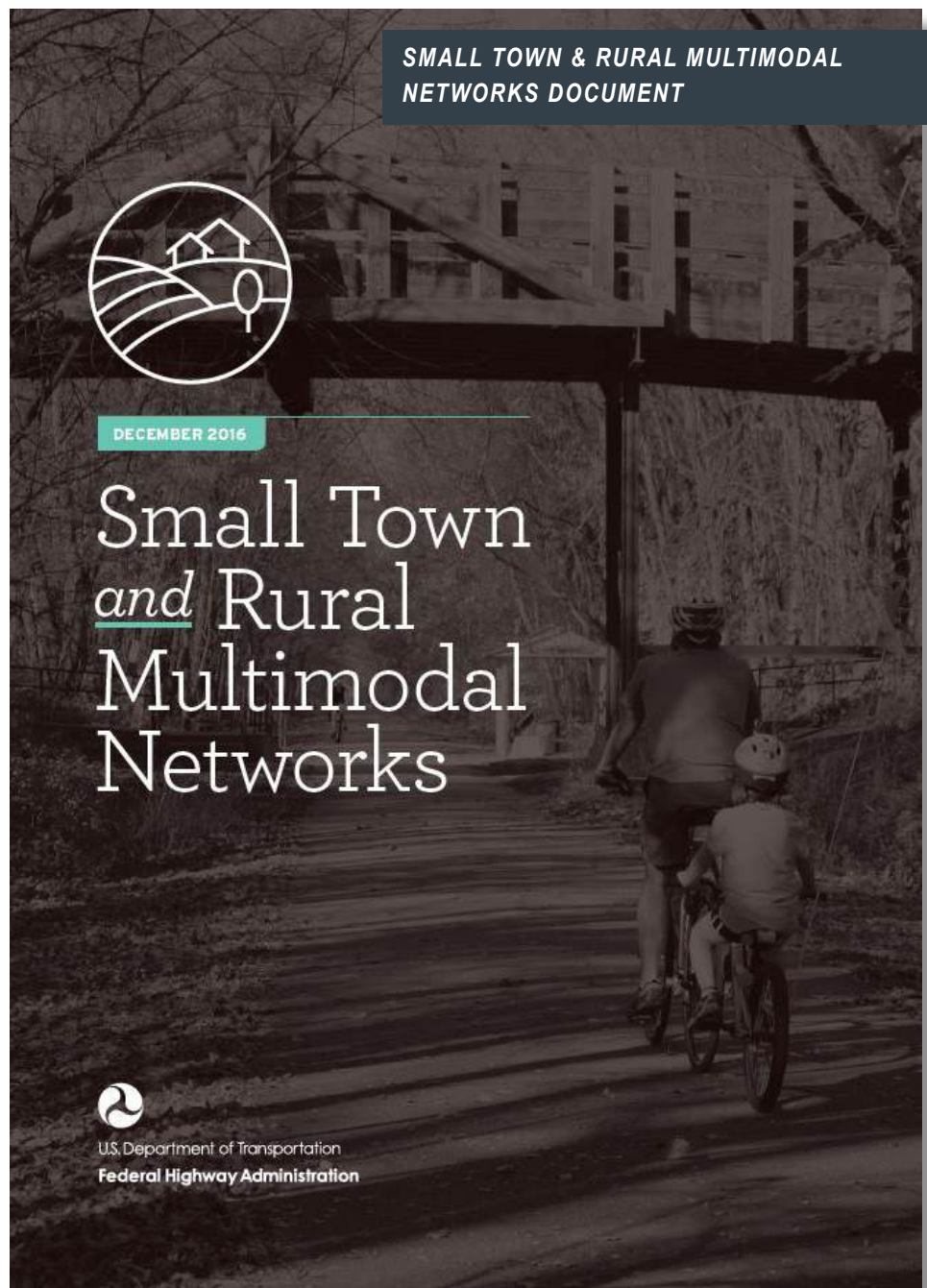
EBENEZER PARK

# GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

*Considering the regional and multi-jurisdictional scope of the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail, it's important to apply consistent design standards throughout the entire project. Using uniform corridor widths and materials ensures a seamless and intuitive experience for users, with the aim of providing a safe and convenient pathway for people of all ages and abilities.*

Applicable national and state standards exist for shared-use paths and pedestrian and bike facilities. While these documents often serve as guidelines rather than absolute standards, many municipalities may require projects to meet these minimum conditions. These guidelines may include factors such as surface condition, horizontal and vertical clearances, slope, pavement markings, signage, and wayfinding, among others. In addition to state and national design standards, local design and construction guidelines must also be followed. A key document that will be referenced throughout the general design guidelines chapter is the [FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide](#).

The guide provides practical design and planning solutions tailored to the unique needs of small towns and rural communities, emphasizing cost-effective and context-sensitive approaches. Key features of this document include: design solutions, case studies, planning strategies, safety enhancements, and community engagement.



## SHARED USE PATH

A shared-use path offers a separate travel area for bicyclists, pedestrians, skaters, wheelchair users, joggers, and others, away from motorized traffic. These paths provide a low-stress experience for transportation and recreation and are often found in parks, along rivers, beaches, and in greenbelts or utility corridors, minimizing conflicts with motorized vehicles.



SHOT POUCH GREENWAY, SOUTH CAROLINA

### Design

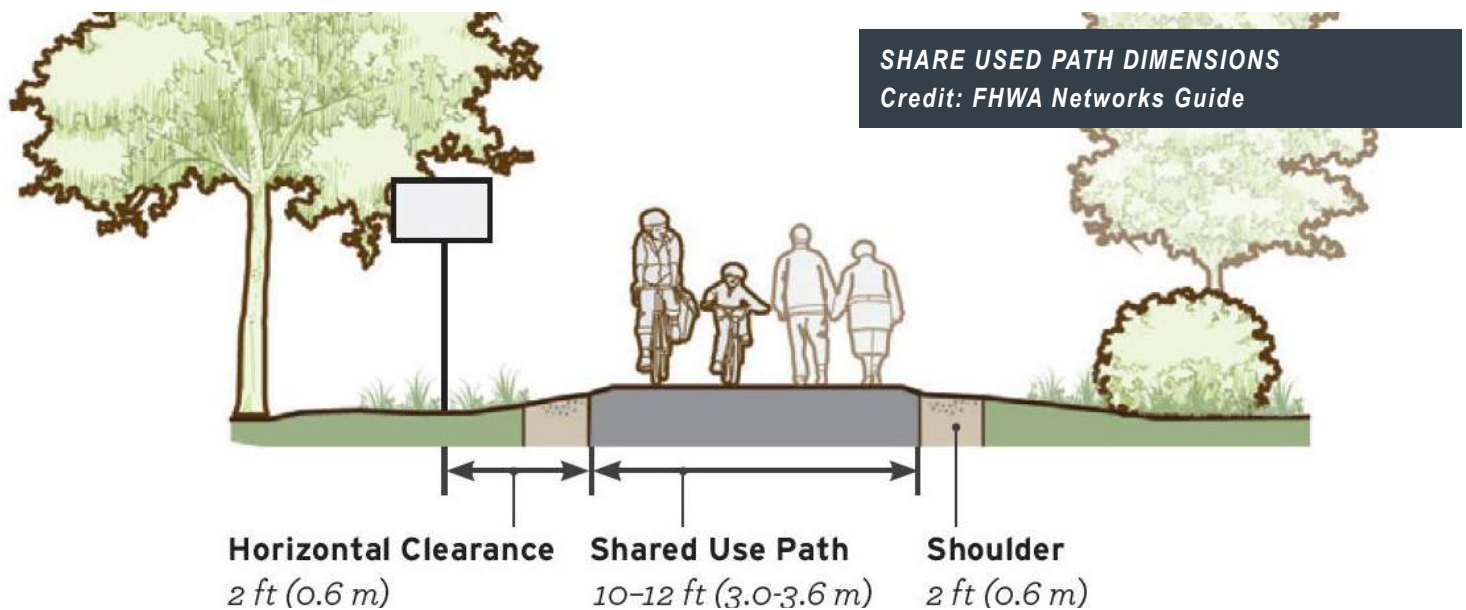
- 8 ft is the minimum for a two-way bicycle path, recommended only for low traffic or short lengths.
- 12-14 ft is recommended for heavy use with high concentrations of users.
- Wider paths accommodate maintenance vehicles, allow comfortable passing on steep grades, and provide more space through curves.

### Markings and Signage

- Center line markings are usually unnecessary; users will naturally keep right except to pass.
- For heavy peak hour or seasonal volumes, a center line stripe can help organize traffic.
- Yield etiquette signs may be used in mixed user environments. Customized signage may reflect local conditions.

### Crosswalks

- Marked: Includes a marked crosswalk, signs, and markings to slow or stop traffic.
- Median: Should allow users to cross one lane at a time with an 8 ft deep waiting area for various bicycle types.
- Active: For greater visibility or control, a rectangular rapid flash beacon (RRFB) or pedestrian hybrid beacon (PHB) may be used.



For additional information, see pages 4-3 to 4-10 of [FHWA Networks Guide](#)

## SIDEPATH

A sidepath is a two-way shared-use path positioned directly beside and parallel to a road. It provides a superior experience for users of all skill levels, especially in busy traffic areas, shortens crossing distances, and preserves the rural and small-town feel.



### Design

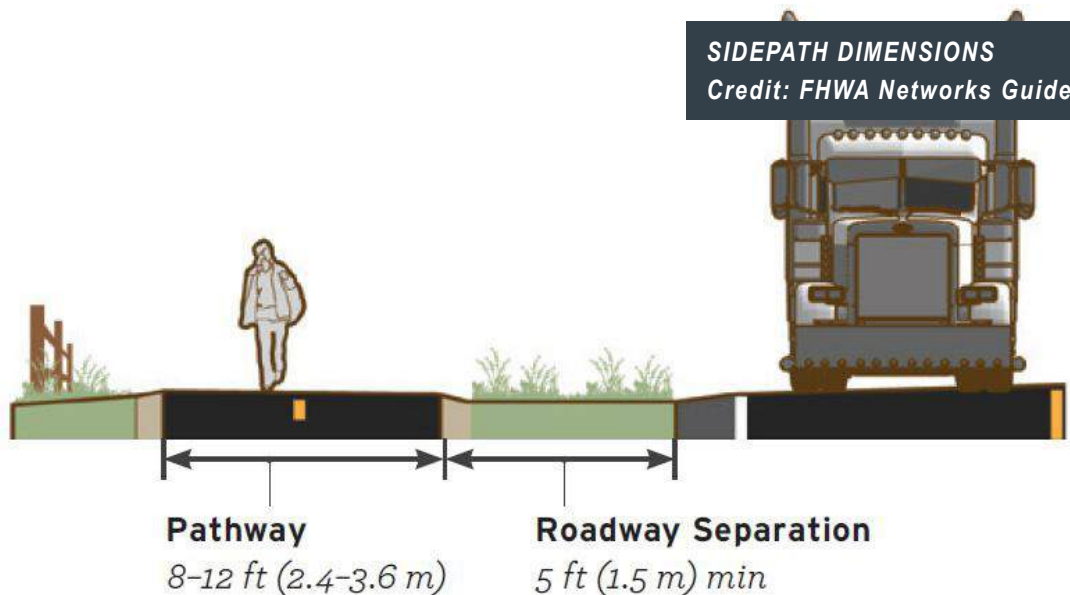
- Minimum pathway width: 10 ft; absolute minimum in low-volume or tight conditions: 8 ft
- Preferred road separation width: 6.5 ft; minimum distance: 5 ft
- Maintain 3 ft horizontal clearance between trees and pathway to prevent pavement damage; consider planting small caliper trees with a max diameter of 4 inches.

### Markings and Signage

- Mark edge lines for evening use.
- Install centerlines for paths with high bidirectional traffic.
- Post signs for path users indicating direction without confusing with roadway lanes.

### Crossings

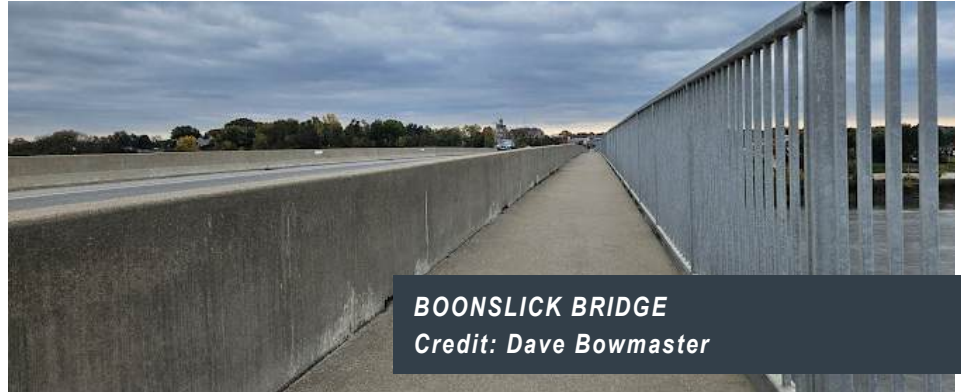
- Ensure physical separation through crossings, varying from 5 ft–24 ft.
- Include raised median islands for safety and speed control.
- Provide transitions for users when sidepath ends, directing to facilities on the opposite side of the road.



For additional information, see pages 4-11 to 4-18 of [FHWA Networks Guide](#)

## BRIDGES

Bridges are crucial links in transportation networks. Strategies for pedestrian and bicycle accommodation depend on whether the bridge is being reconfigured, retrofitted, or replaced. Candidate bridges typically have lanes wider than 11 ft or existing but inadequate pedestrian facilities or shoulder space.



### Reconfigure

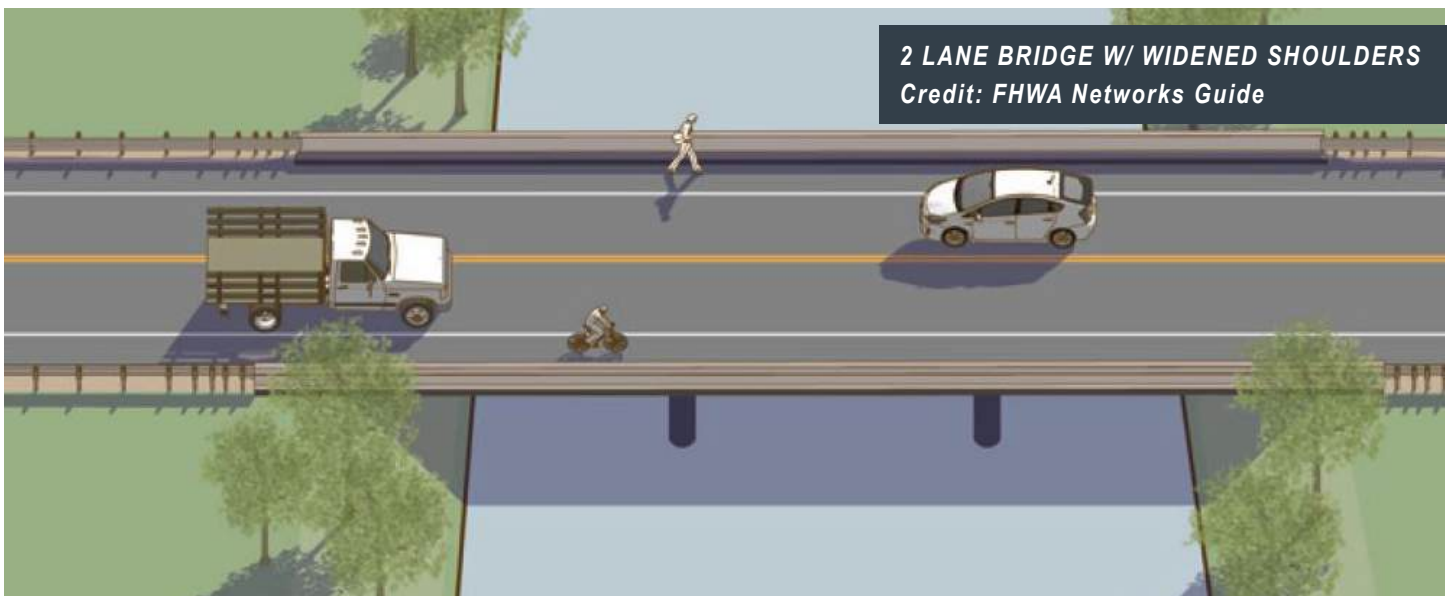
- **Widen Shoulders:** Replace narrow or substandard sidewalks with widened shoulders.
- **Widen Sidewalks:** Extend or replace sidewalks into the shoulder or travel lane to ensure a minimum width of 5 ft, aiming for as wide as possible.
- **On-Deck Sidepath:** Shift travel lanes to create a shared use path on one side of the bridge deck. Add a barrier if possible.

### Retrofit

- **Markings, Signs, and Beacons:** Use active warning beacons, R4-11 signs, and SLMs to alert users to bicyclists on the roadway.
- **Advisory Shoulders:** Create dedicated bike/ped space within the existing roadway width by establishing advisory shoulders.
- **One-Lane Bridge:** Configure as a one-lane bridge to provide exclusive space for pedestrians and bicyclists.

### Replace

- **Wide Shoulders:** A minimum width of 8 ft is desirable for comfortable use by bicyclists and pedestrians.
- **Sidewalks and Shoulders:** New bridge decks should have sidewalks at least 6 ft wide for and 5 ft wide shoulders for bicyclists.
- **Shared Use Path:** Ensure bridges along roads with sidepaths maintain continuity.



For additional information, see pages 5-19 to 5-26 of [FHWA Networks Guide](#)

## ADVISORY SHOULDER

Advisory shoulders provide space for bicyclists on narrow roads, marked by pavement lines and optional color. Motorists can enter the shoulder only when no bicyclists are present and must pass cautiously due to potential oncoming traffic.



**ADVISORY SHOULDER IN HANOVER, NH**  
Credit: Western Transportation Institute

### Design

- Advisory shoulder width should ideally be 6 ft, with a minimum of 4 ft if no curb and gutter are present.
- Consider using different paving materials to distinguish the advisory shoulder from the center two-way travel lane.
- Preferred width for the two-way center travel lane is 13.5–16 ft, but it can still operate effectively within a range of 10–18 ft.

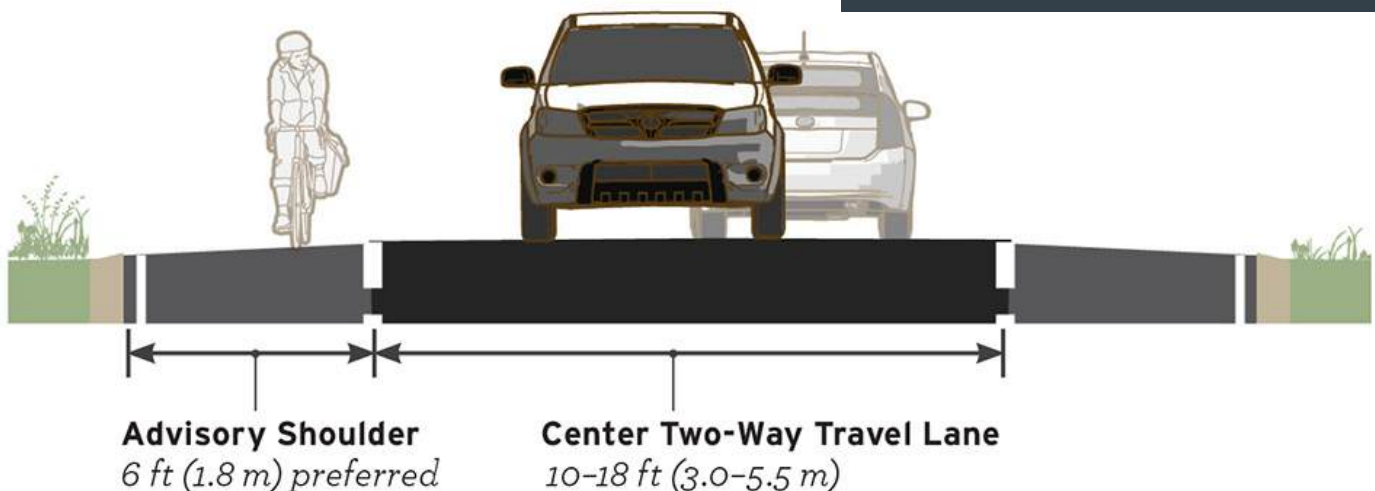
### Markings and Signage

- Use broken lane lines consisting of 3 ft segments and 6 ft gaps to delineate the advisory shoulder.
- Add a solid white edge line alongside the broken advisory shoulder line for additional edge definition if needed.
- Employ signs such as "NO PARKING ON PAVEMENT (R8-1)" to deter parking in the advisory shoulder or "NO CENTER LINE" (W8-12) to clarify the unique striping pattern.

### Crossings

- Extend dotted lines on both sides of the advisory shoulder at minor street crossings.
- Maintain contrasting pavement material through driveway crossings and minor intersections if used.
- Discontinue the advisory shoulder 50 ft before controlled intersections with stop signs or traffic signals.

**ADVISORY SHOULDER DIMENSIONS**  
Credit: FHWA Networks Guide



For additional information, see pages 2-17 to 2-24 of [FHWA Networks Guide](#)

## PAVED SHOULDER

Paved shoulders on roadways can be upgraded to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians where separate facilities are lacking. Adequate shoulder width enhances safety and comfort for bicyclists, especially in high-speed or high-traffic areas. Place rumble strips on the edge line or in a buffer zone to maintain usable space for bicyclists.



### Design

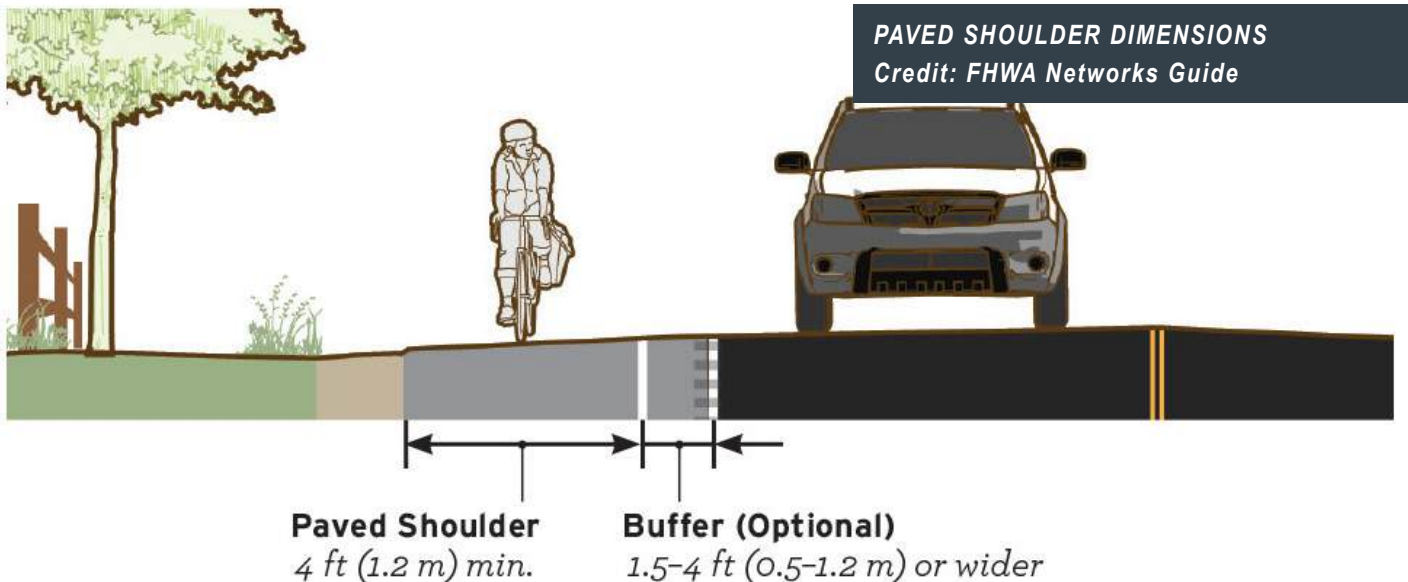
- Provide varying shoulder widths based on road type and speed limit:
  - Minor Collector: up to 5 ft
  - Major Collector: up to 6.5 ft
  - Minor Arterial: up to 7 ft
  - Principal Arterial: up to 8 ft
- Optimize rumble strip dimensions and placement for bicycle routes: 12-inch spacing, 6–8 inches long, 6 inches wide, 3/8 inch deep.

### Markings and Signage

- Consider alternative markings beyond a standard white line, including wide 8-inch white lines, narrow buffer spaces, and wide buffer spaces with optional crosshatch markings.
- While signs aren't mandatory, they can identify roads as bicycle routes.

### Crossings

- Preserve 6 ft of shoulder for bicyclist travel during bypass and turn lanes; maintain a minimum 4 ft width for accessibility.
- Integrate right turn lanes alongside on-street bike lanes with defined entrances and yield signs for motorists.
- Transition shoulders into shared-use paths before intersections, maintaining separation up to the crossing.



For additional information, see pages 3-3 to 3-10 of [FHWA Networks Guide](#)

## TRAILHEADS

- Trailheads should provide local users with essential greenway access and amenities like lighting, public art, wayfinding, gateways, parking, restrooms, and seating.
- Major trailheads should be near urban settings and transportation nodes for high accessibility.
- Minor trailheads should have minimal infrastructure and can be located at parks and residential developments.
- Conduct user and vehicle counts during peak hours to assess the need for major or minor trailheads.

## LIGHTING

- Install sufficient lighting along trails and pathways to enhance user experience and increase the sense of security.
- Ensure lighting is only used where necessary and adheres to dark-sky guidelines to reduce light pollution affecting people, wildlife, and the environment.
- Follow the minimum standards established by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials' (AASHTO) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities for shared-use paths.

## PUBLIC ART

- Public art plays a vital role in civic life and creates memorable experiences for trail users.
- Commission artists to provide art at one or multiple locations throughout the trail network.
- When suitable, design greenway furnishings and amenities with artistic intent. Highlight key locations, such as turns or landscape changes, with public art.
- Install art displays on trails with high anticipated use, and consider incorporating community-based art and temporary installations.

## RESTROOMS

- Local, state, and federal regulations hold authority over restroom facilities.
- Emphasize positioning restrooms at trailheads in current parks; assess areas for additional placement along the trail network.
- Utilize directional signs along trails to guide users to existing restroom facilities within the park and trail system.

## WAYFINDING

- Install decorative wayfinding signage to guide users and provide educational information.
- Implement a connected, consistent, and straightforward wayfinding system throughout the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail corridor.
- Design urban gateways as entrance points and gathering places that transition between different spaces.
  - Minor gateways can be included within major gateways.
  - Use signage as public art and incorporate various scales of public art in all gateways, both major and minor.

## SEATING

- Along a 32.1-mile trail, seating is essential for users to rest, reflect, appreciate public art, and fully engage with their surroundings.
- Place benches at appropriate locations or where user demand is evident, aiming for one-mile intervals. It is recommended to have seating within a half-mile of trailheads.
- Install benches and picnic tables in spots with interesting views, near interpretive elements, and in areas that offer shade or protection from seasonal winds.

---

Sources for images on next page

1 - Pinnacle Real Estate Academy

2 - KUT.org

3 - Dezeen



Trailhead



Major Gateway<sup>1</sup>



Wayfinding<sup>2</sup>



Public Art



Lighting & Banner



Trail Restroom<sup>3</sup>



Seating

# TYPICAL SECTIONS

Given the preliminary feasibility study of the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail, it is evident that using a single typical section for the entire corridor is impractical due to environmental and design constraints. The following pages outline several typical sections and the contexts in which they might be applied. These examples are intended to inform the ongoing study by demonstrating how the trail's profile, width, and placement can enhance user experience, safety, and comfort. The main conditions illustrated include:

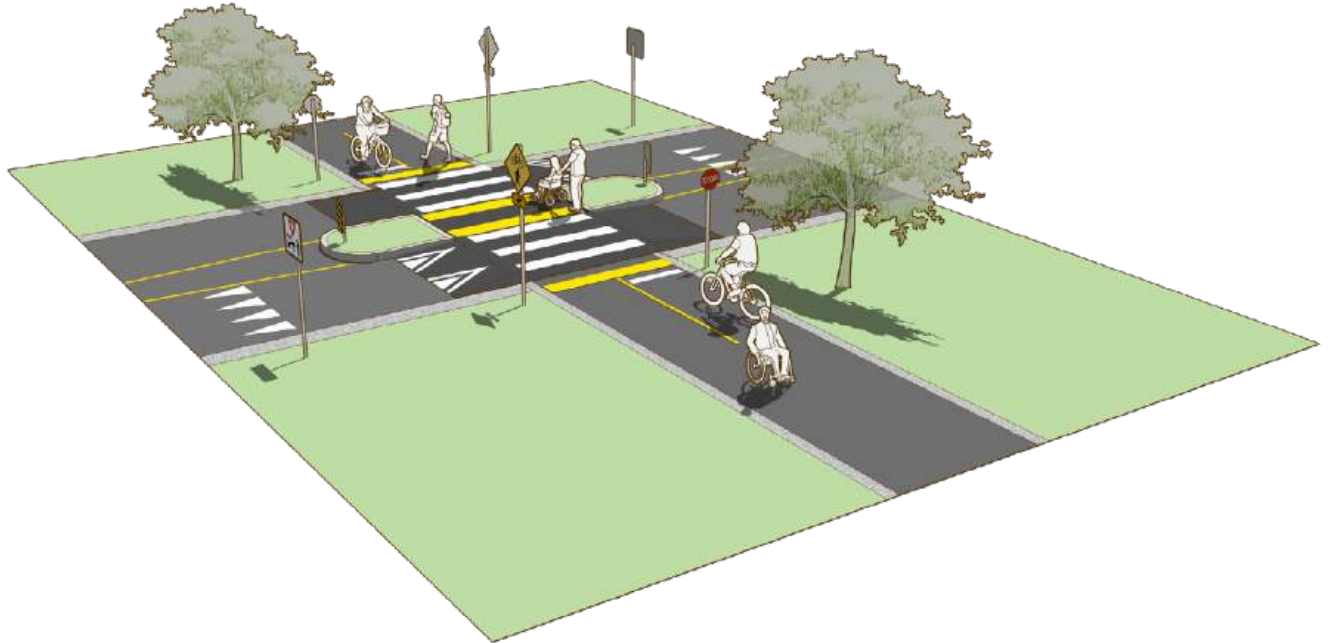
1. Trestle bridges or boardwalk
2. Urban areas adjacent to a 3-5 lane roadway
3. Town sections within linear park zones
4. Rural wooded areas





# CROSSING TYPOLOGIES

## MEDIAN CROSSING ISLAND



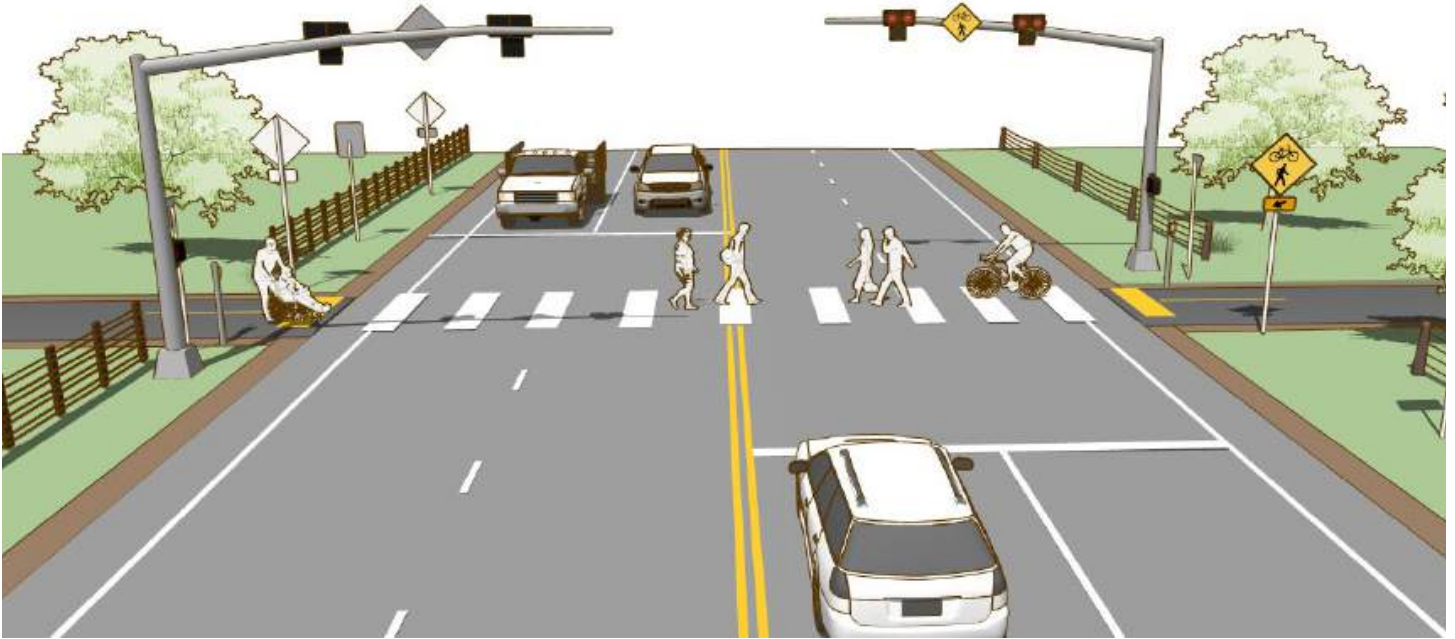
Typical condition for a mid-block crossing to increase safety and comfort of trail users in areas of moderate to high motor vehicle speeds and volumes. *Image Source: Page 4-3 of [FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide](#)*

## MARKED CROSSWALK



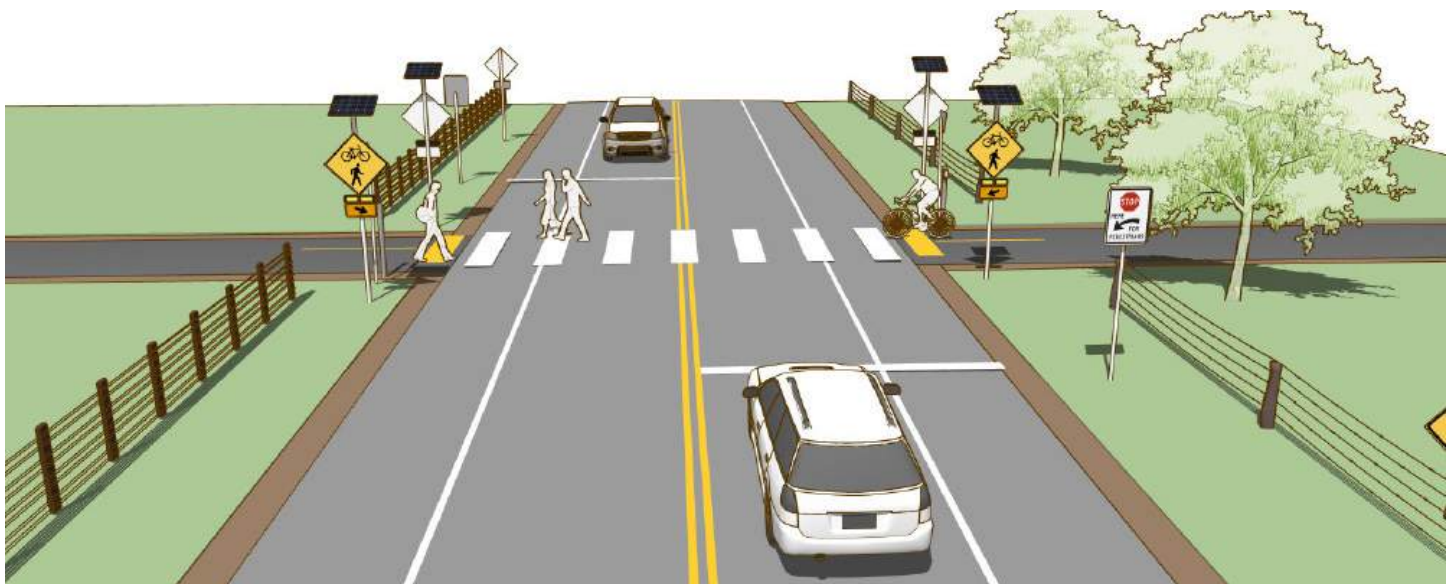
Typical condition for a simple marked crosswalk in areas of low motor vehicle speeds and volumes. *Image Source: Page 4-7 of [FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide](#)*

## MULTILANE ACTIVE CROSSWALK



Typical condition for an active crosswalk to increase comfort of trail users in areas of few gaps for crossing, and high motor vehicle speeds and volumes. *Image Source: Page 4-8 of [FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide](#)*

## SIMPLE ACTIVE CROSSWALK



Typical condition for an active crosswalk in areas where yield compliance is low and there is a need to draw attention to trail users intending to cross. *Image Source: Page 4-8 of [FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide](#)*

# 5. GETTING IT DONE

The "Getting it Done" chapter focuses on cost estimates for each segment, funding opportunities from local, state, and federal sources, case studies of existing rail trail projects, and the next steps to move from this preliminary report to a full feasibility study and beyond.

Cost estimates are detailed in five tables: four tables show the linear footage and associated costs for each category within the segments (figures 1 to 4), and a final table presents the total cost of each segment and the estimated construction cost for the entire 32.1-mile trail. Based on existing projects like the Swamp Rabbit Trail, the Ecusta Trail, and the Chaska Regional Trail, typical costs for rail trail projects range from \$1 million to \$1.5 million per mile, especially for longer trails. However, these estimates may change significantly due to economic conditions.

Constructing the Sumter-Florence Rail Trail all at once would be most cost-efficient, but given its size and the various municipalities involved, breaking down the project into segments may be more feasible. Figure 5 breaks down the total cost by phase and includes a 30% contingency for unknowns at this study level.



*CYCLIST RIDING THROUGH FORESTED TRAIL*

# OPINION OF PROBABLE COST

FIGURE 1 - SEGMENT 1 SUMTER TO MAYESVILLE

SEGMENT 1 SUMTER TO MAYESVILLE	LINEAR FEET/ MILES	COST PER LF	TOTAL COST
Publicly Owned & Maintained	0 LF	\$221	\$0
Privately Owned & Maintained	13,150 LF	\$221	\$2,906,150
Corridor Not Maintained	23,350 LF	\$309	\$7,215,150
Traverses Waterways*	6,750 LF	\$364	\$2,457,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	8.19 miles		<b>\$12,576,300</b>

FIGURE 2 - SEGMENT 2 MAYESVILLE TO LYNCHBURG

SEGMENT 2 MAYESVILLE TO LYNCHBURG	LINEAR FEET/ MILES	COST PER LF	TOTAL COST
Publicly Owned & Maintained	11,800 LF	\$221	\$2,607,800
Privately Owned & Maintained	4,600 LF	\$221	\$1,016,600
Corridor Not Maintained	33,400 LF	\$309	\$10,320,600
Traverses Waterways*	0 LF	\$364	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	9.43 miles		<b>\$13,945,000</b>

\*Estimated unit costs shown for this section does not include possible costs for pre-fabricated bridges or boardwalks for sections of existing railroad corridor that are missing and extend through/over water bodies, wetlands or rivers.

# OPINION OF PROBABLE COST - CONTINUED

FIGURE 3 - SEGMENT 3 LYNCHBURG TO TIMMONSVILLE

SEGMENT 3 LYNCHBURG TO TIMMONSVILLE	LINEAR FEET/ MILES	COST PER LF	TOTAL COST
Publicly Owned & Maintained	5,900 LF	\$221	\$1,303,900
Privately Owned & Maintained	28,100 LF	\$221	\$6,210,100
Corridor Not Maintained	8,300 LF	\$309	\$2,564,700
Traverses Waterways*	6,800 LF	\$364	\$2,475,200
<b>TOTAL</b>	9.30 miles		<b>\$12,553,900</b>

FIGURE 4 - SEGMENT 4 TIMMONSVILLE TO FLORENCE

SEGMENT 4 TIMMONSVILLE TO FLORENCE	LINEAR FEET/ MILES	COST PER LF	TOTAL COST
Publicly Owned & Maintained	0 LF	\$221	\$0
Privately Owned & Maintained	9,250 LF	\$221	\$2,044,250
Corridor Not Maintained	12,350 LF	\$309	\$3,816,150
Traverses Waterways*	5,550 LF	\$364	\$2,020,200
<b>TOTAL</b>	5.14 miles		<b>\$7,880,600</b>

\*Estimated unit costs shown for this section does not include possible costs for pre-fabricated bridges or boardwalks for sections of existing railroad corridor that are missing and extend through/over water bodies, wetlands or rivers.

**FIGURE 5 - OPINION OF PROBABLE COST BY PHASE**

<b>PHASE</b>	<b>OPINION OF PROBABLE COST</b>	<b>WITH 30% CONTINGENCY</b>
<b>PHASE 1</b> Sumter to Mayesville	\$12,576,300	\$16,349,190
<b>PHASE 2</b> Mayesville to Lynchburg	\$13,945,000	\$18,128,500
<b>PHASE 3</b> Lynchburg to Timmons ville	\$12,553,900	\$16,320,070
<b>PHASE 4</b> Timmons ville to Florence	\$7,880,600	\$10,244,780
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$46,955,800</b>	<b>\$61,042,540</b>

Assumptions / Exclusions

1. Estimated construction cost shown above does not include possible pre-engineered bridges or boardwalks for areas of the existing railroad corridor that may be missing and extend through existing wetlands and lowland areas, or over water bodies and rivers.
2. Determination of alternative routes to avoid the need for new pedestrian bridges or boardwalks and their related costs to be determined in next phase of the project.
3. Property acquisition costs are not included in these figures. Determination of actual property ownership will be required in the next phase of this project to determine these costs.

# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## ATIIP GRANT

The [Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program](#) will support projects that enable people to walk, bike, and roll safely and conveniently to school, work, transit, health care facilities, and other destinations.

- On- and off-road transportation infrastructure.
- Notice of Funding Opportunity for 2025 awards was released in March 2024, and will result in the distribution of up to \$44,550,000.
- Awards will range from \$100,000 to \$15,000,000.

## RAISE GRANT

The [Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity](#) is a highly competitive grant program for investments in surface transportation infrastructure

- In 2021, Spartanburg County was awarded over \$23 million in RAISE Grant by the USDOT.
- The federal grant was used to fund the 55+ mile Daniel Morgan Trail System that runs across the urban area of Spartanburg County.
- The grant will fund 15 miles of the new shared use path, in addition to enhancements to other proposed and existing segments.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

The CDBG Program supports community development activities to build stronger and more resilient communities and is allocated through the States.

- Over \$10 million was awarded to 23 South Carolina communities from the CDBG Program in 2021.
- These projects included, but were not limited to, streetscape improvements, park improvements, and crosswalks/landscaping.
- Awards ranged from \$27,000 to \$750,000.

## UNDISCOVERED SC GRANT PROGRAM

The [Undiscovered SC](#) Grant is a SCPRT administered program that invests in the development of publicly owned tourism products that attract visitors and visitor spending.

- In 2022, four projects were awarded a total of \$683,000 from the Undiscovered South Carolina grant program.
- Funding for each project typically ranges from \$50,000 to \$200,000.
- Local Government Units (LGUs) with total accommodations tax distributions of \$900,000 or less are eligible for this grant program.

## RECREATIONAL TRAILS PROGRAM (RTP)

The [Recreational Trails Project](#) of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) allocates funding to states for the creation and upkeep of recreational trails and associated facilities.

- In 2023, eight South Carolina trail projects were selected from a competitive applicant pool of 23.
- More than \$770,000 in total was awarded through the federal grant program.
- Awards ranged from \$44,000 to \$100,000 and included projects such as new bike and hike trails, nature trails, trail improvements, and trail expansions.

## METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FUNDING

A Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is an established policy board that oversees transportation improvement projects.

- The [Sumter Area Transportation Study](#) (SUATS) serves as the MPO responsible in Sumter County.
- Each year, SUATS receives \$5.0 million from FHWA and SCDOT to fund priority transportation improvement projects.
- The [Florence Area Transportation Study](#) (FLATS) acts as the MPO for the urban area of Florence.
- In 2023, FLATS allocated a total of \$2.3 million across various projects.

# CASE STUDIES

## ECUSTA TRAIL

Located between Brevard and Hendersonville, NC, the Ecusta Trail spans a length of 18.9 miles and is slated for construction from 2023 to 2029, with an estimated total cost of \$50 million. Henderson County secured a \$5 million grant for construction and preliminary engineering for the initial 6 miles of the trail within the county. The project's primary funding sources include a \$24.5 million RAISE

Grant from the USDOT and a \$21.4 million NSFLTP Grant from the NCDOT. Additional financial support comes from various organizations, including Friends of The Ecusta Trail, Conserving Carolina, Henderson County TDA, and Transylvania County TDA, contributing several million dollars in matching funds.

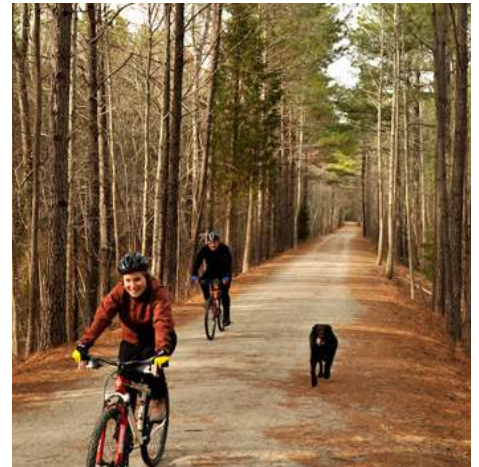


Image source - Ecusta Trail

## VIRGINIA CAPITAL TRAIL

The Virginia Capital Trail, stretching 52 miles between Richmond and Williamsburg, VA, was constructed from 2005 to 2015, at a total cost of \$76 million. Funding for its development included \$71.04 million from federal sources and \$5.28 million from the state. The Virginia Department of Transportation employed a distinctive funding approach, utilizing a combination

of federal enhancement, open-container, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, and Smithsonian funds to cover the design and construction expenses. These funds were specifically designated for enhancing existing corridors and creating multi-use pedestrian and bike trails, rather than for constructing new roadways.



Image source - Billy Draper

## SWAMP RABBIT TRAIL

Located between Travelers Rest and Greenville, SC, the trail is a 28-mile network that has been under construction since 2007 and is continuously being expanded. The main segment of the trail began construction in 2007, with an initial cost of \$2.7 million. Greenville Health System, now known as Prisma Health, donated \$1 million and helped advance the project.

As more segments have been added, the total development cost has neared \$9 million, with further extensions planned. Four investments from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) have collectively contributed an additional \$1.2 million towards the trail's construction, ensuring ongoing development and enhancement of this extensive network.



# NEXT STEPS

The goal of this Preliminary Feasibility Report was to conduct an initial review of the existing conditions of the abandoned CSX railroad corridor between Sumter and Florence, South Carolina. This included identifying access and connection opportunities to the communities, providing prototypical trail cross sections for development, reviewing possible trail alignments to and within the communities, and offering a phasing plan along with an Opinion of Probable Cost for the identified trail segments.

To move forward with this rail-to-trail project, a comprehensive feasibility study and detailed analysis are recommended. This next phase should involve researching property ownership and available right of way, determining if CSX still owns portions of the right of way, and understanding their future intentions for these sections. Additionally, a detailed site visit of the entire corridor should be conducted to assess the current conditions of the former rail bed, wetland crossings, trestle supports,

bridge crossings, and abutments to decide if the suggested alternative routing is preferable. Finally, a detailed implementation strategy for developing trail segments should be provided, including identifying potential public-private partnerships and exploring potential funding mechanisms to ensure realistic development phasing and long-term project success.





Real People. Real Solutions.