CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER GREENWAY STUDY
FOR THE CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERLANDS

GEORGIA PLANNING ASSOCIATION
FALL CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 2nd, 2019
THE RIVERLANDS
THE CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVERLANDS GREENWAY STUDY
MEET THE TEAM
PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM

[Logos and insignias of ARC, The Trust for Public Land, Cobb County, and Resurgens]
DESIGN TEAM

SCAPE

Gresham Smith

Biohabitats

NEW SOUTH ASSOCIATES
PROVIDING PERSPECTIVES ON THE PAST

EDWARDS PITMAN

DR. NA'TAKI OSBORNE JELKS, MPH

DR. RICHARD MILLIGAN
CHATTAAHOOCHEE WORKING GROUP

SUB-AREA COMMITTEES

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
THE GREENWAY PLAN
CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER GREENWAY PLAN
- Envision one seamless and fully functional public realm along the Chattahoochee River
- Create a new inclusive vision for the River’s future that will raise public awareness
- Improve connections and access and identify potential for greenspace and park development
- Build on a legacy of ecological conservation and protection
- Guide investment in the region

PILOT SITE
- Embrace the spirit of the greenway study and develop a concept-level design for a 1.5 mile local trail in Cobb County
- Opportunity to test proposals against permitting agencies
DRIVING TOUR
STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Nathan Farnau and Jerry Hightower at Stakeholder Meeting #1

Stakeholder Meeting #2

Stakeholder Meeting #3

Stakeholder Meeting #3

SCAPE
PUBLIC MEETINGS - MAPPING EXERCISE
PUBLIC MEETINGS - MODEL EXERCISE
RIVER LEGACY
CHATTHOOCHEE RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY - 1972
WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS
TASK 2: INVENTORY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS
**THE RIVER AS BOUNTY**

Fish weirs are visible traces of the longest, continuous occupation of human settlements in the US - built over 2,000 years. Semi-nomadic mound builders collected along the River's fertile banks.

**THE RIVER AS BOUNTY**

The river and its tributaries were the primary source of power for mills and industry leading to the development of the first towns along the River in the 1800s.

**THE RIVER AS BORDER**

The Chattahoochee River served as a border between encroaching white settlers and the remaining Cherokee and Creek lands to the west. Chief William McIntosh was a controversial chief of the Lower Creeks. In 1821, McIntosh negotiated the Treaty of Indian Springs giving away large portions of the Creeks' land to the state of Georgia. By 1838, all Native People had been removed from Georgia.

**THE RIVER AS BOUNDARY**

At the turn of the 20th Century, the Chattahoochee River powered the region's public transit system of electric streetcars that connected the urban core of Atlanta with outlying greenspaces including the Chattahoochee River.

**THE RIVER AS BORDER**

The river's natural fords, a historic focus of traffic along the river, gave way to ferries that began operation in the early nineteenth century. For a fee, ferries would transport individuals and cargo across the river. By 1835, approximately a dozen ferries were in operation, connecting to Nighthawk Trail and Old Alabama Road. By World War II, bridges had replaced most ferries.
The Chattahoochee River supports a thriving recreational fishing economy and healthy populations of native and introduced species. The construction of Buford Dam in the 1950s created cold water conditions capable of supporting the most southern trout fishery in the United States. Rainbow trout are regularly stocked in the upper portion of the river, while brown trout stocking efforts have been so successful they now have a self-sustaining population. Cooling of the river, combined with water quality issues, once devastated the native fish population. Water quality has since greatly improved in recent years and native species like wheel bass are being reintroduced through breeding and restocking programs.

**ECOLOGY CONNECTIVITY**

Sub-Area 3 has large tracts of intact forests along the river. The area provides an ecological corridor and connectivity along the river that extends to an even larger regional network. This area also contains some of the healthiest supporting tributaries of the Chattahoochee including Sweetwater Creek and Big Creek. Tributary health is important for the overall health of the river.

**WATER QUALITY**

Water quality has significantly improved in recent years but the health of the Chattahoochee is largely dependent on the health of its tributaries. Water quality is impacted by the impacts of upstream urbanization, including runoff, sedimentation and disconnection of floodplains.

**WATER USE**

The Chattahoochee is a valuable resource. The river and Lake Lanier provide about 70% of metropolitan Atlanta's drinking water. As a relatively small river supporting a large population, the river is heavily relied upon by metropolitan Atlanta.
**INCREASING DIVERSITY**

The Atlanta metro area as a whole is becoming increasingly diverse, with its fastest growing areas located outside of the City of Atlanta. Inclusivity must be central in the approach to developing the Greenway. The Greenway should strive to be a resource for the growing diverse population and pave the way for more inclusive and accessible green space.

**POPULATION GROWTH**

The Atlanta metro population is projected to grow by 2.5 million people by 2040. The Chattahoochee River Greenway will be an invaluable resource to meet growing demands for urban green space and active transportation and can play a role in reducing impacts of this growing population on riparian habitats and streamflow.

**EMPOWERING WATERSHED COMMUNITIES**

The Greenway should strive to empower local leaders like the Proctor Creek Stewardship Council, who have taken a grassroots, comprehensive watershed approach to improving the ecological health of the creek’s watershed and the quality of life for all its people.
SUB-AREA 2

The middle portion of the project area is a mix of industrial land and utility easements which could facilitate greenway alignment along the river’s edge. This area benefits from numerous bridges and crossing points along the river but given the high traffic volumes, bike and pedestrian safety is a concern. There are few trails and multi-use paths in the area, but the proximity of the Silver Comet Trail could be leveraged to create regional connections from the far west to the Atlanta Beltline. As the most densely populated area, special care should be given to providing numerous access points to re-connect Atlanta’s population with the river and its scenic beauty.

SUB-AREA 1

The northern portion of river north of Peachtree Creek, is dominated by a suburban fabric; low density residential houses and subdivisions. This area benefits from numerous water access points, as well as large parks encompassing a dense network of trails and multi-use paths. The presence of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area and its network of parks is a major asset for the greenway study but the land ownership pattern presents challenges to communities that live further away from the river.

SUB-AREA 3

The southern most portion of the river is primarily comprised of large tracts of private land, most of them being agricultural or forested areas. This ownership pattern may present challenges to access the river. Using existing right-of-way along roads or utility easements would allow the greenway to be continuous while providing periodic water access. It is interesting to note that this area has the fewest water access points and the fewest crossings relative to the rest of the project area. The rural nature of this sub-area should be honored and celebrated through the identity of the greenway.
IT'S TIME TO RECONNECT WITH THE RIVER!
THE SUBURBAN PARKLANDS
THE SUBURBAN PARKLANDS
THE URBAN CORE
THE URBAN CORE
THE AGRICULTURAL COUNTRYSIDE
RIVERLANDS VISION
THE TRAILS

GREENWAY + BLUEWAY
THE TRAILS

GREENWAY  +  BLUEWAY  +  TRIBUTARY TRAILS
THE TRAILS

GREENWAY + BLUEWAY + TRIBUTARY TRAILS = THE RIVERLANDS
PROJECT GOALS
PROJECT GOALS

A SAFE, CONNECTIVE CORRIDOR

A COMMON GROUND FOR ALL

AN ECOLOGICAL REFUGE

A LIVING LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
A SAFE, CONNECTIVE CORRIDOR
A SAFE, CONNECTIVE CORRIDOR
INCREASE WATER ACCESS
A SAFE, CONNECTIVE CORRIDOR
CREATE A CONTINUOUS PUBLIC REALM
A SAFE, CONNECTIVE CORRIDOR
CONNECT TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
A SAFE, CONNECTIVE CORRIDOR
PLAN FOR ACCESSIBILITY
A SAFE, CONNECTIVE CORRIDOR

DESIGN A MULTI-MODAL TRAIL
A SAFE, CONNECTIVE CORRIDOR
PROMOTE HEALTH AND SAFETY ON LAND AND WATER
A COMMON GROUND FOR ALL
A COMMON GROUND FOR ALL
IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
A COMMON GROUND FOR ALL
CONNECT ALL COMMUNITIES TO PUBLIC SPACE
A COMMON GROUND FOR ALL
IDENTIFY SITES FOR REMEDIATION AND RESTORATION
A COMMON GROUND FOR ALL
CREATE INVITING DESTINATIONS
AN ECOLOGICAL REFUGE
AN ECOLOGICAL REFUGE
ENHANCE ECOLOGICAL CONNECTIVITY
AN ECOLOGICAL REFUGE

PROMOTE TRIBUTARY HEALTH
AN ECOLOGICAL REFUGE
ALIGN WITH MRPA
AN ECOLOGICAL REFUGE

BALANCE CONSERVATION AND ACCESS
A LIVING LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
A LIVING LEGACY
INTERPRET AND DESIGN FOR LANDSCAPE CHANGE
A LIVING LEGACY

ANTICIPATE GROWTH AND FOSTER EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT
A LIVING LEGACY

ORIENT AND EDUCATE THROUGH SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING
A LIVING LEGACY

REVEAL AND CONNECT HISTORIC RESOURCES

ANTICIPATE GROWTH AND FOSTER EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

ORIENT AND EDUCATE THROUGH SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

INTERPRET AND DESIGN LANDSCAPE CHANGE

REVEAL AND CONNECT HISTORIC RESOURCES
TASK 4 :
ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVES
DOCUMENT
ALIGNMENT PATHWAY

EXISTING CONDITIONS & TOOLS

VISION
DATA
APPROACH
PROCESS

ALIGNMENT ALTERNATIVES
ECOLOGY
LEAST RESISTANCE
DESTINATIONS

COMMUNITY INPUT
VISION
STAKEHOLDER

WE ARE HERE

PREFERRED ALIGNMENT
DATA
OWNERSHIP AND LAND USE
PATH OF LEAST ECOLOGICAL IMPACT
SITE TOPOGRAPHY
APPROACH
PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE
PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE

- Avoids Privately Owned Parcels
- Utilizes Existing Trails, Easements and Pathways
- Existing Bridge Crossings
- Aligns to Existing Roadway Networks
PATH OF LEAST ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS

- Wetland
- Interior Forest
- Existing Bridge
- Restoration Opportunity
- Restoration Opportunity
- Existing Roadway
PATH OF LEAST ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS

- Minimizes Impacts to Ecologically sensitive areas

- Minimizes Forest Fragmentation

- Avoids fragile wetlands and flood prone areas
NETWORK OF DESTINATIONS

- Network of Priority Destinations or Nodes
- Prioritize Access for All
- May be More "Urban in Nature"
- Often, Further Away From the River's Edge
PATH OF LEAST ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS
NETWORK OF DESTINATIONS

NETWORK OF DESTINATIONS

Chattahoochee RiverLands Greenway Plan

LEGEND

NETWORK OF DESTINATIONS

FORSYTH COUNTY

GWINNETT COUNTY

HALL COUNTY

LAKE LANKER

GWINNETT COUNTY
THANK YOU!