

## 74A - Oconee Rivers Greenway Implementation Project

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**Original Project Total Cost: \$ 28,714,000**

**Total Operating Cost: \$ 266,000**

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**Alternate Project Total Cost: \$ 12,500,000**

**Alternate Total Operating Cost: No change**

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**Project Description:** The Oconee Rivers Greenway Commission is substantially reducing our original SPLOST 2020 request of \$28.7 million to \$12.5 million for the continued expansion and improvement of the Oconee Rivers Greenway trail network. The reduced funding will not cover the total cost of the three high priority representative projects in our original request. Therefore, we propose the highest priority for greenway SPLOST 2020 project funding be applied to the extension of the North Oconee River Greenway (NORG) Trail from the vicinity of Sandy Creek Nature Center (SCNS) to connect to the Holland Youth Sports Complex. This is an essential opportunity to connect the underserved youth and families of north Athens-Clarke County with the natural amenities of the greenway and Sandy Creek Nature Center. This corridor would provide environmentally sensitive and safe pedestrian and bicycle access from the sports complex and adjoining neighborhoods to downtown Athens and the UGA campus. The NORG Trail extension would alleviate the lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along Newton Bridge Road. Additionally, owners of the planned "General Time Athens" residential/mixed use development are advertising a future connector to this segment of the NORG Trail.

We anticipate the majority of the \$12.5 million will be expended on the NORG Trail project. Any remaining SPLOST 2020 project funds would be used to continue to implement the trail proposals in the approved Greenway Network Plan 2016 Update. Potential projects would include the construction of the Middle Oconee River Greenway segment between Ben Burton Park and the ACC's Matthews Motors property adjacent to Beech Haven and the completion of the Pulaski Heights Connector between Dougherty Street and the NORG Trail at Martin Luther King Parkway. This alternate proposal was developed in consultation with ACC Leisure Services and the Sustainability Office.