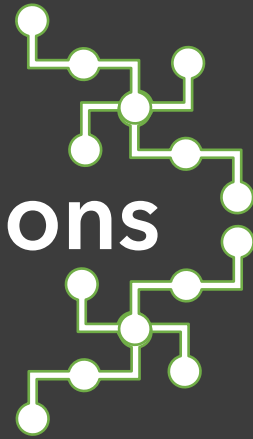


South Dade Trail Corridor Connections Feasibility Study



Fact Sheet

Introduction

The integration of bicycle and pedestrian trails within Miami-Dade County provides opportunities to not only enhance transportation options, but to create a healthier and more sustainable community. The South Dade Trails Corridor Connections Feasibility Study ('Study') focuses on the interconnectivity of bicycle and pedestrian trails within the South Dade Transportation Planning Area of Miami-Dade County to establish pathways that seamlessly intertwine with the vibrant fabric of the region.

Utilizing strategic planning methodologies, the Study assesses the viability, benefits, and challenges of future trail connections throughout the existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian network within South Dade. The results of the Study establish a foundation for an interconnected network that encourages active lifestyles, promotes equity, broadens transportation options, and enriches the quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study is to conduct a feasibility analysis on potential bicycle/pedestrian trail corridor connections in the South Dade area of Miami-Dade County.

Study Background

At the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Governing Board meeting of October 4, 2022, the Board requested the TPO Executive Director, through Resolution #38-2022, to prepare a scope of services and budget to conduct a feasibility study on trail corridor connections in South Dade.

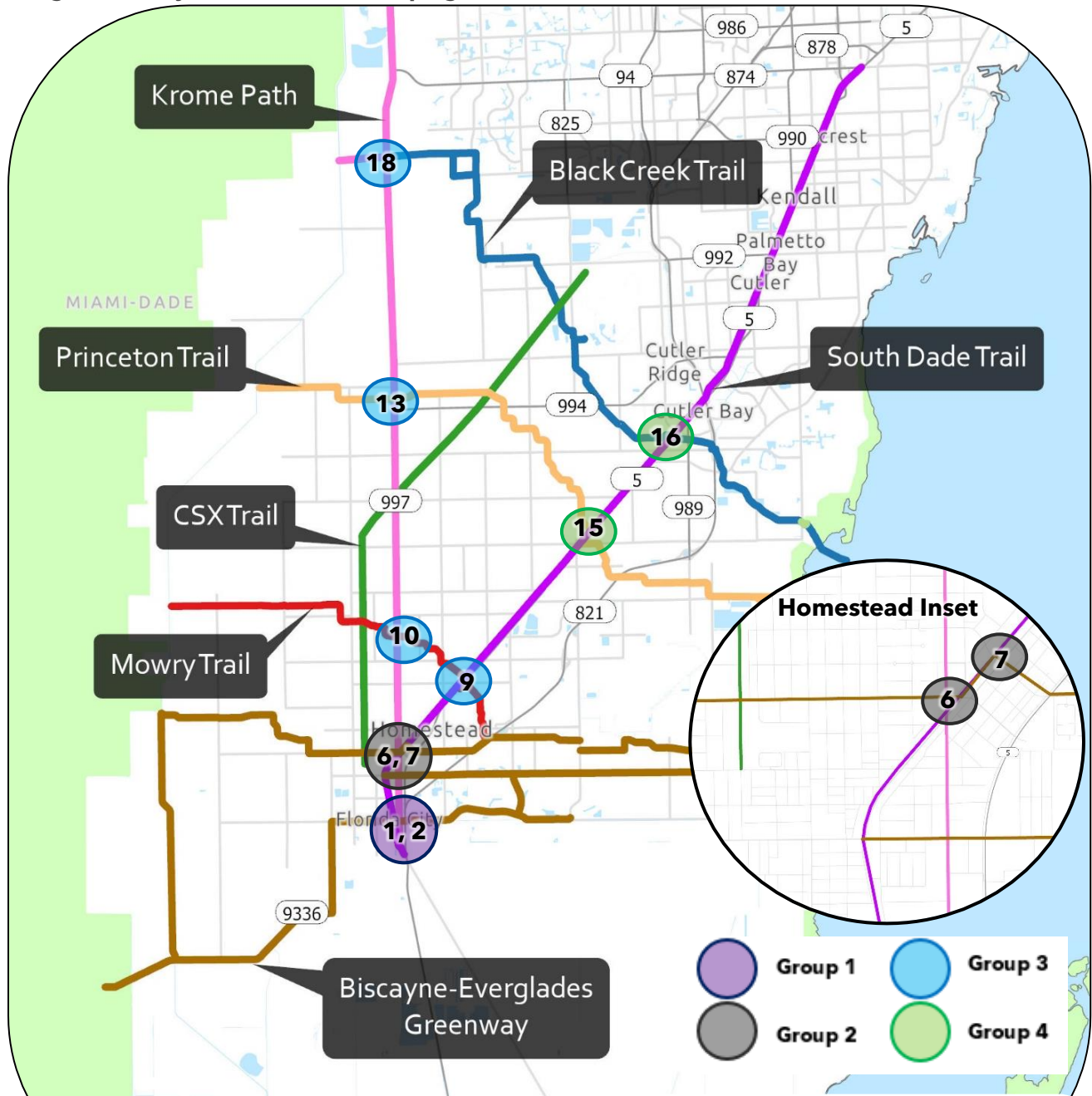
Study Area

The study area is concentrated on trails within the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS)¹ inside the South Dade Transportation Planning Area, which encompasses 233 square miles and is home to an estimated 450,000 residents. The study area includes the following municipalities: Florida City, Homestead, Cutler Bay, Palmetto Bay, Pinecrest, and Coral Gables.



¹ The Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) maintains the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS), which is a statewide interconnected trail system.

Figure 1 Study Trails and Trail Groupings



Group 1 - Florida City
 The intersections of the South Dade Trail, Biscayne-Everglades Greenway, and the Krome Path along West Palm Drive.

Group 2 - Homestead Trail Confluence
 The intersections of the South Dade Trail, Biscayne-Everglades Greenway, and the Krome Path along Mowry Drive.

Group 3 - Canal Crossings
 The intersections of the Krome Path with the Mowry, Princeton, and Black Creek canals and trails.

Group 4 - US 1 Commercial
 The intersections of the South Dade Trail with Princeton and Black Creek trails along US 1.

Recommendations

The final phase of the study process was to develop recommendations for each of the final groups and for the future of the CSX linear park. To accomplish this, a set of enhancements was developed for each group with the premise that the same type of enhancements could be applied to all of the trail connections within the group.

The recommendations were developed using best practice reference documents for bicycle, pedestrian, and trail infrastructure connection enhancements including documents from: **AASHTO, FDOT, FHWA, ITE's, NACTO**, and the **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's (RTC)**.

Overall, the customized recommendations for each group were designed with scalability in mind, ensuring that the enhancements could be consistently implemented across trail connections within the group. The table below provides a summary of recommendations by typology group. Renderings for each group are provided in the final document.

Enhancement Group	Enhancement	Group 1: Southern Terminus	Group 2: Homestead Confluence	Group 3: Canal Crossings	Group 4: US 1 Commercial
Protected Intersection Designs	Corner Refuge Islands	✓	✓		✓
	Setback Crossings	✓	✓		✓
	High Visibility Crosswalks	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Path Markings Through Intersection	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Green Painted Bike Lanes	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Pedestrian Refuge Islands	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Protected Bike Lanes	✓			
	Bike Lane/Path Transition	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Raised Intersections or Crossings	✓	✓	✓	✓
Traffic Signal Enhancements	Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs)	✓	✓		✓
	Bicycle-Specific Traffic Signals	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lighting and Visibility	Enhanced Lighting	✓	✓	✓	✓
	In-Pavement Lighting Systems	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wayfinding	Trailhead Signage	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Directional Signage Along Trail	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Digital Integration	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trailhead Design	Parking Area	✓	✓		
	Restroom Facilities	✓	✓		
	Recreational Amenities	✓	✓		
	Environmental and Aesthetic	✓	✓		
Canal Crossings	New Bike/Ped Bridge			✓	
	Trail Underpass			✓	

CSX Linear Trail Recommendations

The proposed alternatives for the CSX rail line through the City of Homestead focus on revitalizing the corridor while balancing transportation needs and community benefits. The proposed alternatives include: Rail-with-Trail, a linear park concept, trail relocation, improved sidewalk connections, and an enhanced maintenance agreement.

Rail with Trail

One key alternative is the rail-with-trail concept, which envisions a multi-use path running alongside the rail line, preserving the corridor for potential future passenger rail service. This approach would enhance mobility by providing safe, accessible spaces for pedestrians and bicycles without compromising the rail infrastructure.

Linear Park

Another alternative is a linear park concept detailed in the *Homestead Parks Master Plan*. This concept could be executed through either an interim agreement between CSX and the City of Homestead, or through an outright purchase of the corridor. This option would focus on transforming the existing rail line into a public green space, potentially with trails, landscaping, and recreational amenities.

Trail Relocation

A third alternative under consideration is relocating the trail to a parallel road, such as SW 187th/14th Avenue, instead of using the CSX rail corridor. This option would place the trail in an area that may be easier to develop and maintain, while still providing connections across the CSX corridor.

Improved Sidewalk Connections

A fourth and potential short-term alternative involves improving existing sidewalk and desire path connections across the currently underutilized CSX tracks. This option would focus on creating safer, more formalized pedestrian and bicycle crossings by upgrading informal pathways that have already emerged through community use.

Enhanced Maintenance Agreement

A final alternative is to negotiate an enhanced maintenance agreement with CSX to ensure better upkeep of the area surrounding the tracks. A formal agreement for CSX to regularly maintain the vegetation, remove litter, and address safety hazards would significantly improve the aesthetic and safety of the corridor, even without additional infrastructure.

All of these alternatives aim to enhance community connections across the CSX corridor, transforming a blighted and underutilized space into a valuable public asset. Each option offers distinct benefits, from preserving future rail service to creating immediate recreational opportunities, ensuring the revitalization of the corridor meets both transportation and community goals.



Frisco Trail in Arkansas with fencing, lighting, and narrow setbacks.
Image Source: [Rails with Trails: Best Practices and Lessons Learned](#).