

Johnson City
MTPO

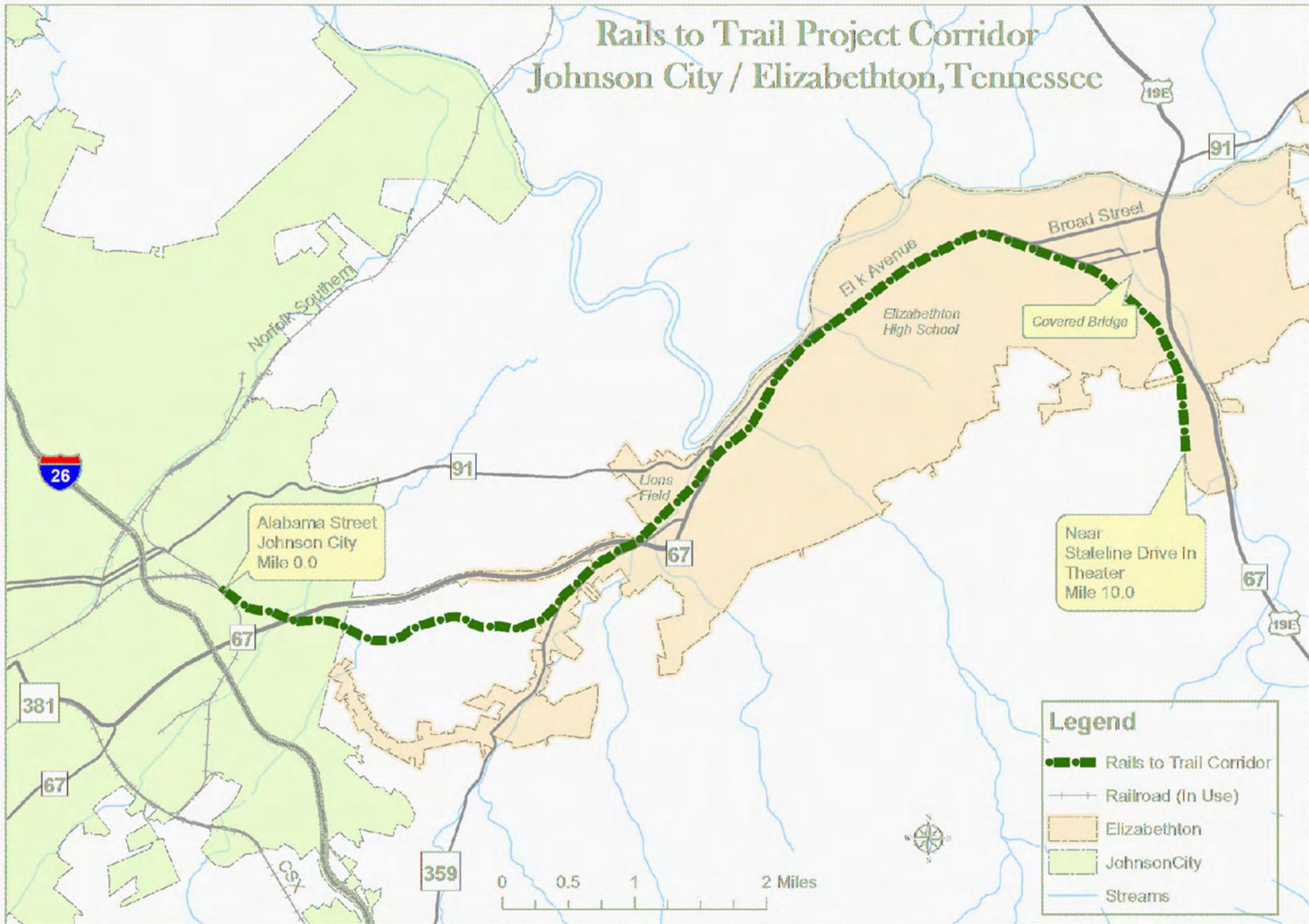
“Rails to Trail”

Our Region...

Mountains of Northeast Tennessee



Rails to Trail Project Corridor Johnson City / Elizabethton, Tennessee



Length: 10 Miles

History: Formerly part of the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina Railroad

Brief History / Whose Idea ...

- David Ornduff, City of Elizabethton – 1991 Protect the corridor
- ***Steve Darden, Mayor of Johnson City – 2005 , 2007**
- Congressman Phil Roe, Mayor of Johnson City – 2007 to 2009
- Jane Myron, Mayor of Johnson City – 2009 to 2011
- **Pete Peterson, City Manager of Johnson City**
- **Charlie Stahl, Assistant City Manager of Johnson City**
- Steve Nelson, Johnson City Planning Department
- Phil Pindzola, Johnson City Public Works Director
- Various private citizens... “I had the idea way back when...”
- The list goes on, and on, and on.

***Instrumental People in the Trail**

History – Early Beginnings

- 2003 East Tennessee Railway saw a decline in customers
 - North America Rayon
 - Inland Container Corporation
 - Blossman Propane
 - Alcoa Aluminum
 - Elizabethton Herb and Metal (Recyclers)
- Business either closed or switched to trucking
- 2005 - Genessee & Wyoming rail road(G&W) purchased East Tennessee Railway (Rail Management Corp).
- 2006 – G&W approached Johnson City and other to purchase the rail line (real estate and salvage material).



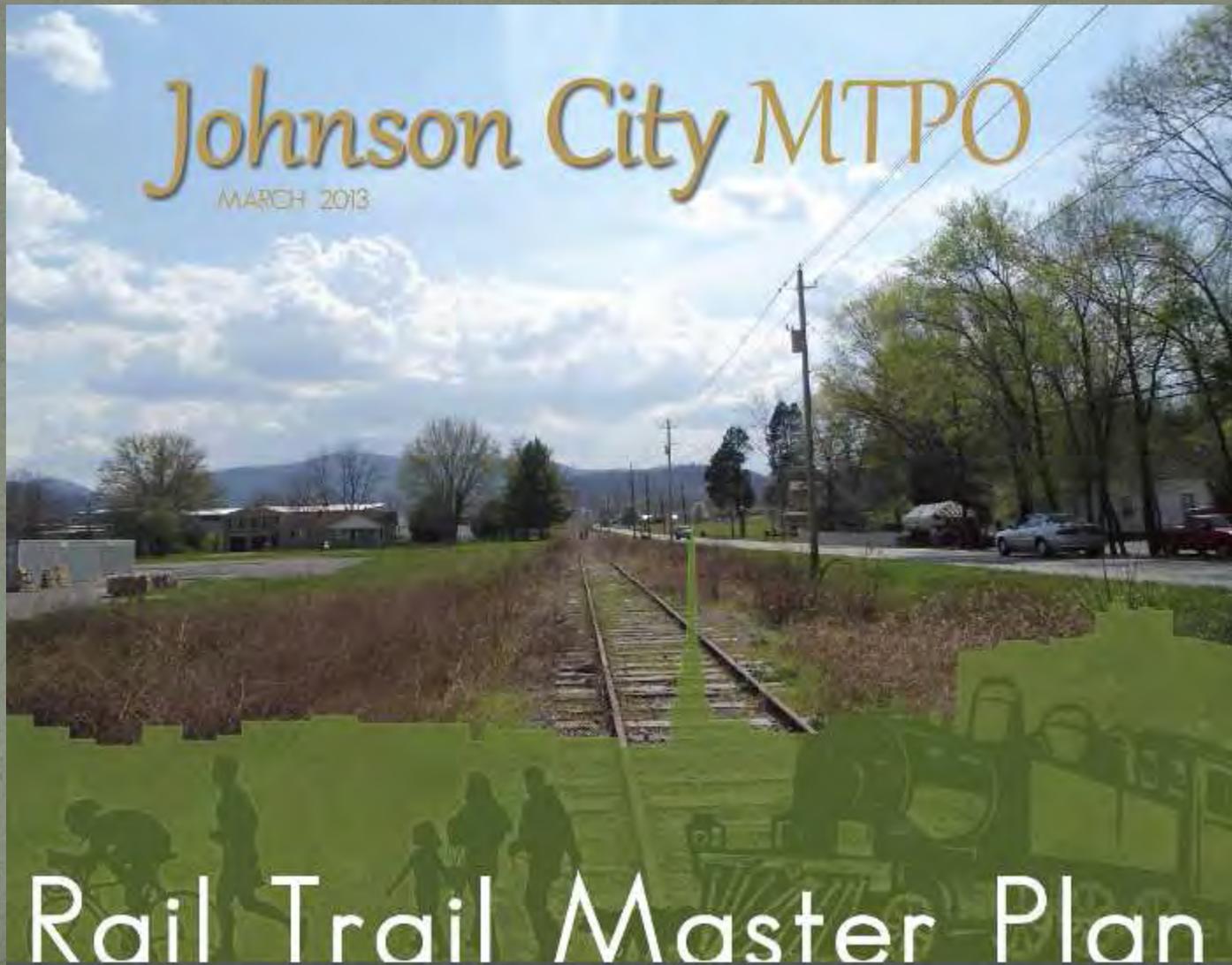
History – Early Beginnings

- 2006 ...“Bidding War” between Johnson City and Elizabethton
 - Lot of press and public debt
 - Historical Railroad Society
 - Local “Friends of the Tweetsie”
 - “Excursion / Tourist Service”
 - “French Fry Express”
 - Save the Depot (CC&O)
 - Rail vs. Trail
 - Rail with Trail
- 2007 -
 - G&W changed the terms of sale to real estate only.
 - City Mayor Steve Darden contacted Attorney Charles Montange, Seattle Washington and Johnson City retained his services for the rail banking process.

History – Early Beginnings

- Genesee and Wyoming LLC
 - City of Johnson City
 - Purchase Price \$600,000
- Railroad has 2 years from June 27, 2011 to remove
 - Rails
 - Spikes, bolts, plates
 - Ties
- The line *was not abandoned*
 - Surface Transportation Board approved “Rail Banking” with interim use as a Trail
- TDOT Commissioner – “Forgiveness on previous grants” - 2011

Why waste time with a plan?



Bringing our communities together...

Guiding Principles of the Plan

- Offer a safe route for pedestrian and bicycle travel as a transportation alternative
- Provide outdoor recreation to residents and visitors
- Attract tourism and stimulate the regional economy
- Attract and retain employers and new businesses as well as their employees

Bringing our communities together...

Guiding Principles continued...

- Increase adjacent property values
- Revitalize neighborhoods along the corridor
- Improve quality of life through healthy and active living
- Enhance local natural and cultural resources
- Create an off-road connection between downtown Johnson City and downtown Elizabethton

Field Work



Potential Sections

- “Natural Trail” from Johnson City to Elizabethton (Lions Field)
- “Urban Trail” through Elizabethton to Downtown
- “Natural Trail” from Downtown Elizabethton to US 19E
- Connection to existing Linear Trail in Elizabethton at Sycamore Shoals Complex

The Trail – Building on past achievements



Previous Conditions...



Track removal – Cedar Grove Road



Scenic views



Safety Concerns – Potential Overlook



Lions Field in Elizabethton First Destination – Existing Facility



“Urban Trail” Historical Treatments



Downtown Elizabethton within 600 ft. or less of the proposed trail...



Sycamore Shoals Hospital & Sycamore Shoals State Park Access



Coordination with
TDOT

New Traffic
Signal

Improvements
Sidewalk

“Urban Trail” – Downtown Elizabethton



Transitions back to “Natural Trail” Hattie Ave. to U.S. 19E



Linkages to Sycamore State Park Shoals Area

Fort Watauga



Franklin Wellness Center



Linkages to ETSU via State of Franklin Multi-Use Trail Phase II





Infrastructure – bridges



“Proximity to Neighbors...”



Mitigate their concerns

- Privacy
- Safety and Security



Safety & Security

- Managing litter/dumping
- Public Art/Murals
- Seating/Amenities
- Wayfinding
- **Mile markers**



Safety & Security

- Community Engagement
- Fencing
- Managing graffiti/vandalism
- Vegetative buffers
- Lighting



Trail Phasing

Phase 1: Johnson City to Lions Field (4.5 miles)

Phase 2: Lions Field to EHS (2.25 miles)

Phase 3: EHS to Hattie Street (1.25 miles)

Phase 4: Hattie Street to State Line Road (2.5 miles)



Estimated Development Costs

- PHASE 1: \$2,116,765.00
- PHASE 2: \$822,682.00
- PHASE 3: \$374,768.00
- PHASE 4: \$840,245.00

- **TOTAL: \$4,154,461.00**



Rails to Trails Master Plan



- Project Started... March 20, 2012
- 9 to 12 month time frame
- City of Johnson City - MTPO
- Completed March 15, 2012

Next Steps to Implementation

1. Complete a survey of the corridor
2. Establish typical cross section of trail
3. Contract with consultant for structural improvements
4. Coordinate roadway bridge crossing requirements with TDOT
5. Meet regularly with JC public works, establish project schedule
6. Meet with affected property owners
7. Begin construction

Next Steps

- Johnson City Mayor Banyas

Establishment a Railway Task Force
for funding and development of the trail