



Palmetto Trails NETWORK | PD&E STUDY



August 2026

Manatee County – FPID No.: 444857-1-22-01

PD&E STUDY COMPLETE

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, on behalf of Manatee County, conducted a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for a proposed shared use pathway through the City of Palmetto and Manatee County. The pathway is one of six transportation improvements proposed in Manatee County's BUILD* (now branded RAISE**) and T-HUD*** grant applications, known collectively as the Palmetto Trails Network Plan (PTNP). The purpose of the project is to reestablish multimodal, community connections throughout the City of Palmetto and Manatee County. Other goals of the project are to provide safe and viable travel options for the community to access area destinations and support quality of life and economic objectives of the surrounding area.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Palmetto Trails Network PD&E Study began in spring 2020 with an evaluation of the Middle Section, which includes trail connections between the Manatee County Area Transit Center, Palmetto Youth Center, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Trail, Lincoln Memorial Middle School, and Lincoln Park (Coach Eddie Shannon Park). The Study also evaluated the Northern Section, which proposes trail connections between Lincoln Park and Washington Park through neighborhoods east of U.S. 41. In summer 2024, the Study expanded to include the Southern Section, extending the Study network from the Green Bridge at U.S. 41 Business to Connor Park and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park ([see Figure 1](#)).

Originally focused on establishing the Middle and Northern Section trail alignments, the FDOT Study has since evolved to encompass nearly the entire network envisioned in Manatee County's federal grant applications. Once this Study is complete, Manatee County will take over the design, any right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the project. Following the County's successful T-HUD grant award, one of the first federally funded efforts is anticipated to be the design of key portions of the Middle Section near Lincoln Memorial Middle School, the Lincoln Tunnel, and Coach Eddie Shannon Park.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:



Michelle Rutishauser
FDOT Project Manager



Palmetto Trails Network PD&E Study
Florida Department of Transportation
Environmental Management Office
801 N. Broadway Avenue
Bartow, FL 33830



Michelle.Rutishauser@dot.state.fl.us



(813) 380-7121

For more information and to review all
Engineering and Environmental documents
developed during the Palmetto Trails Network
PD&E Study please visit the project website at:
swflroads.com/palmettotrailsnetwork

SCAN QR CODE
TO VISIT
PROJECT WEBSITE



***BUILD =**

Better Utilizing Investments
to Leverage Development

****RAISE =**

Rebuilding American Infrastructure
with Sustainability and Equity

***** T-HUD =**

Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

The Palmetto Trails Network PD&E Study was conducted through three parallel efforts: preliminary engineering and design, environmental analysis, and an extensive public involvement program. Together, these efforts, and the valuable input provided by local agencies, community stakeholders, and residents, helped shape the recommended alignment and facility alternatives for the Northern, Middle, and Southern sections (see Figures 2 - 4).

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Middle and Northern Sections

In early 2021, FDOT hosted a series of neighborhood focus group meetings to introduce the Study and gather local input. Four outdoor meetings were held at community locations including Eternity Temple First Born Church of the Living God, Mt. Raymond Full Gospel Baptist Church, the Palmetto Youth Center, and Lincoln Park (Coach Eddie Shannon Park) along with a virtual meeting to enable broad participation.

Building on these discussions, local elected officials and community leaders organized a series of community meetings to help shape the Northern Section alignment. At these meetings, residents shared their vision for a trail network that would better connect neighborhoods, parks, schools, and community resources while creating new opportunities for local youth. A second community meeting, held in December 2021, included elected officials who voiced their support for the Palmetto Trails Network and highlighted the importance of creating a connected trail system that could eventually span the length of Manatee County.

FDOT then hosted an in-person public workshop in January 2022 at the Palmetto Youth Center, along with an online workshop, to present preliminary trail alternatives based on the community meetings' alignment. Attendees reviewed exhibits, shared feedback, and used interactive software to compare potential trail concepts in real time. Public input, combined with engineering and environmental analyses, helped shape the recommended Middle and Northern Section alignments.

Southern Section

When the Study expanded to include the Southern Section in summer 2024, the collaborative planning process continued with input from partner agencies and the public. FDOT worked closely with the City of Palmetto, Manatee County, and other partner agencies through numerous coordination meetings to develop feasible trail alignments and low stress shared roadways (i.e., traffic calming, shared bicycle markings on the roadway) with sidewalk improvements.

An in-person neighborhood focus group meeting was held in October 2024 at Sutton Park to present information about the Southern Section of the project. Later, a public workshop, held in-person at the Manatee County Fairgrounds in January 2025 and online, gave residents additional opportunities to review preliminary concepts and provide input. Feedback from the public, together with coordination meetings involving City of Palmetto leadership, City Commissioners, and Manatee County Public Works staff, helped shape the alignment of the Southern Section and its Recommended Alternatives.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Through close collaboration with local agencies, community organizations, and residents, the FDOT's Study advances a connected network of multi-use pathways and shared use roadways with sidewalks linking Connor Park in the south to Washington Park in the north. Along the way, the network will connect key community destinations and resources throughout the City of Palmetto and Manatee County. Following this study, Manatee County will take over the design, any right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the project. Detailed project information, such as typical sections, can be found on the project website at swflroads.com/palmettotrailsnetwork.



FIGURE 1 - Palmetto Trails Network PD&E Study Limits



FIGURE 2 - Northern Section Recommended Alternative

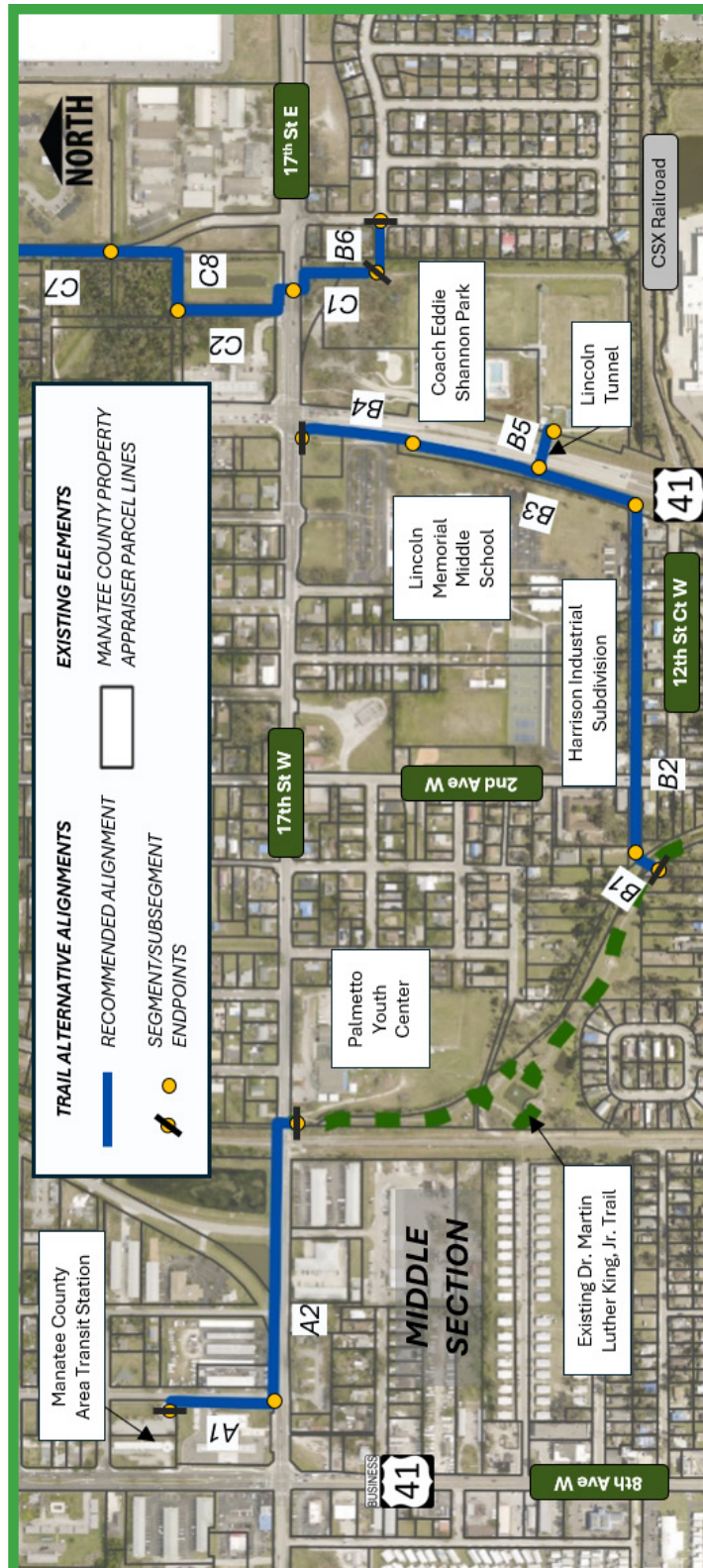


FIGURE 3 - Middle Section Recommended Alternative

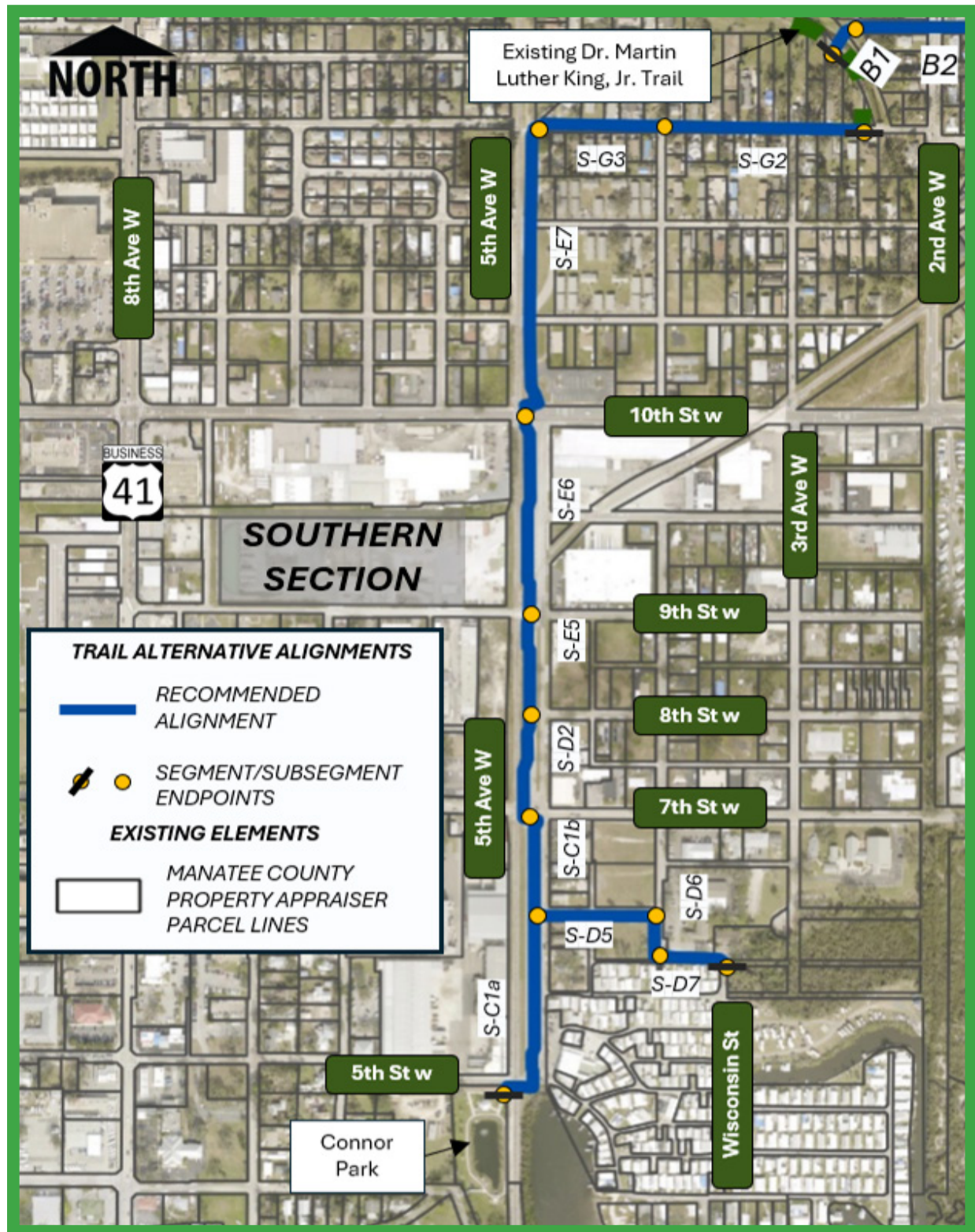


FIGURE 4 - Southern Section Recommended Alternative