

# Capital City <sup>to the</sup> Sea Trails

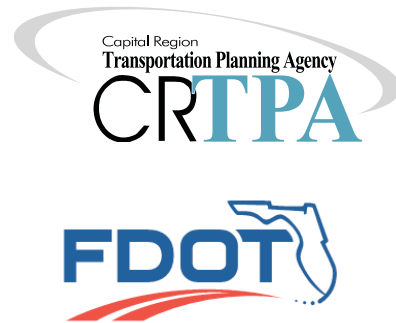
**CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACES**





# Capital City to the Sea Trails

The project team would like to thank everyone who contributed to the development of this Master Plan, including the following entities:



Additionally, the following entities were involved in the development of this Master Plan:

- City of Sopchoppy
- Big Bend Transit
- Apalachicola National Forest
- Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities
- Apalachee Regional Planning Council
- Florida Disabled Outdoors Association
- Commuter Services of North Florida
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Gulf Winds Triathletes
- Waterfronts Florida
- Tallahassee Museum
- Higher Ground Bicycle Company
- Sunshine Cycles
- Inovia
- Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation
- Florida State University Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee
- Visit Tallahassee
- Big Bend Scenic Byway CME
- Wakulla Historical Society
- Florida A&M University
- Bike, Eat, Shop Tallahassee - BEST
- TallahasseeTrails.com
- WFSUTV
- Florida State Dog Hunter's Association
- Gulf Specimen Marine Lab
- Ochlockonee Bay Alliance

# The Capital City to the Sea Trails Master Plan

Was Prepared For  
CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY



By  
KIMLEY-HORN AND ASSOCIATES, INC.



With assistance from  
AMEC, ATKINS, and SEIDLER PRODUCTIONS



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# INTRODUCTION and PURPOSE

## INTRODUCTION

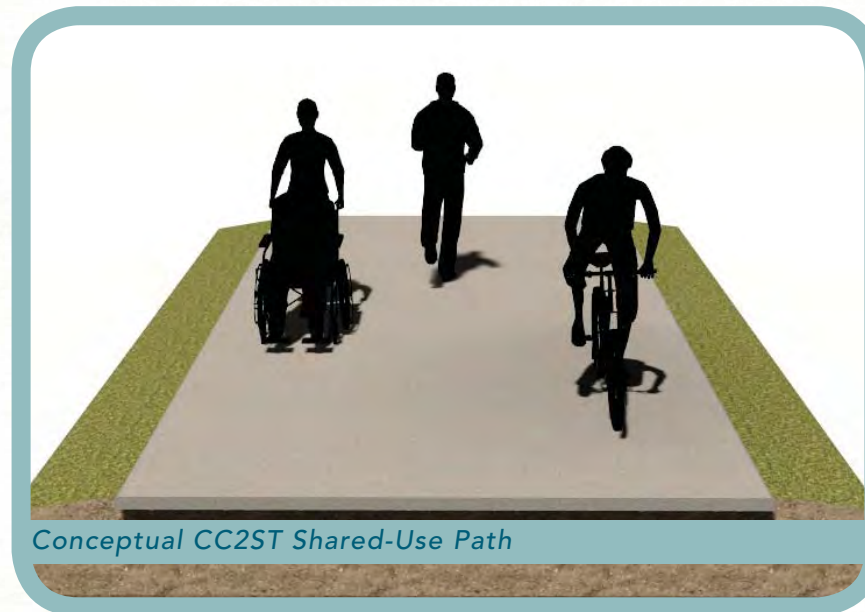
The Capital City to the Sea Trails (CC2ST) project is envisioned to be a series of shared-use paths (paved multi-use trails) that will connect various areas from Capital Cascades Park in the City of Tallahassee and extend all the way to the Gulf Coast. The trails are intended to provide better connectivity and mobility for residents and visitors traveling throughout Leon and Wakulla counties, and may eventually include Franklin, Gadsden, and Jefferson counties. CC2ST is envisioned to include the existing Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail; the abandoned Georgia, Florida & Alabama (GF&A) Railroad corridor; U.S. 98; and Ochlockonee Bay Trail, which is a funded project that is currently under construction.

CC2ST will be constructed as shared-use paths that will provide convenient transportation and recreation for many user types. The trails will be designed to have a minimum width of 12 feet to allow for movement in two directions and to accommodate the occasional maintenance vehicle. The trail design will allow for access to local streets, parks, and other facilities, and will minimize driveway cuts and roadways crossings to the extent possible.



Existing St. Marks Trail

Due to the extent of the CC2ST network detailed in this Master Plan, the project will be implemented over a multi-year planning horizon, based on the availability of funding. The adoption of this Master Plan coincides with the beginning of Project Development and Environment (PD&E) studies for a portion of the CC2ST network. Design, permitting, and construction will be phased based on funding following the PD&E studies.



Conceptual CC2ST Shared-Use Path

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this Master Plan is to document various aspects of the project, including the public involvement activities and the final project recommendations. This Master Plan includes a phasing plan that communicates the desired order of segment implementation and details the process for implementation, and discusses the roles and responsibilities of various agencies and departments. Milestones are identified and implementation performance measures are included so that implementation progress can be tracked over time.

To support the completion of the PD&E documentation that satisfies the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), this Master Plan defines the priority order and extent for the trail segments.



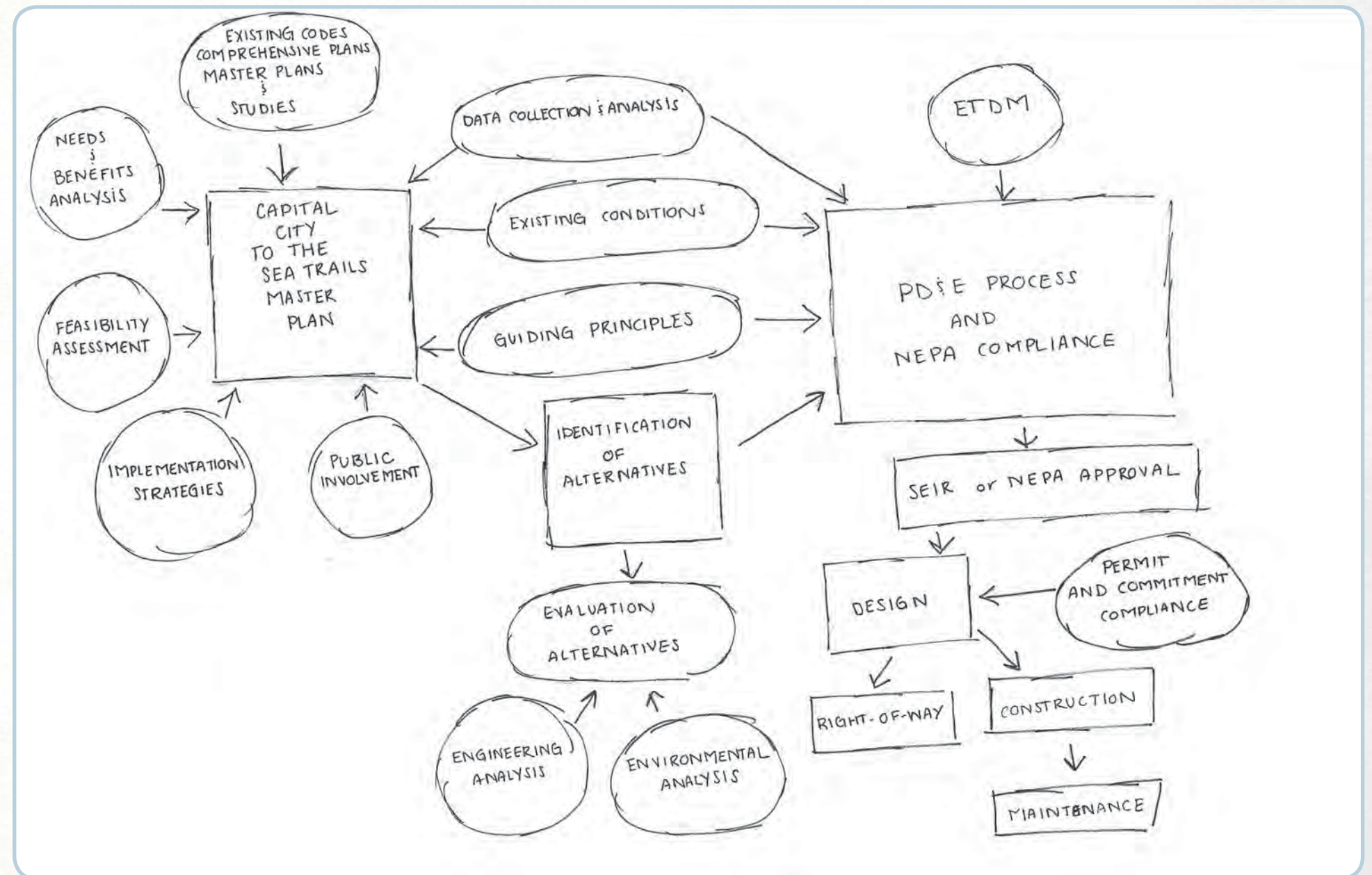
Existing Ochlockonee Bay Trail

# OVERVIEW of the PLANNING PROCESS

## THE PLANNING PROCESS

Given the size and diversity of the project study area and the numerous agencies, organizations, advocates, and individual stakeholders involved, the development of this Capital City to the Sea Trails Master Plan involved a comprehensive planning process. This planning process included a review of existing conditions and information, data collection and analysis, establishment of guiding principles and evaluation criteria, multifaceted public participation, evaluation and analysis of alternatives, creation of performance measures, estimates of project costs, and identification of an implementation strategy and funding options as seen in *Figure 1*.

FIGURE 1: MASTER PLAN WITH VARIOUS COMPONENTS



GF&A Corridor

# PROJECT GOAL and GUIDING PRINCIPLES

## PROJECT GOAL AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Associated with the Project Goal, a series of Guiding Principles was developed through a cooperative effort between the project's stakeholders, the public, and the project team, and was presented to the public during the first public workshops in Leon County and in Wakulla County. Based on public input, the Guiding Principles were refined. The Project Goal and associated Guiding Principles that were developed for the Master Plan will carry forward as part of the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) studies.

The following Guiding Principles were established to guide decisions in the development of the Capital City to the Sea Trails project:

- Connect People and Places
- Improve Quality of Life
- Improve Connectivity\*
- Provide Opportunities for Sustainable Economic Growth
- Increase Awareness of the Capital Region
- Minimize Environmental Impacts
- Develop a Maintainable Network
- Improve Safety
- Include Public Participation
- Develop Strategic Partnerships

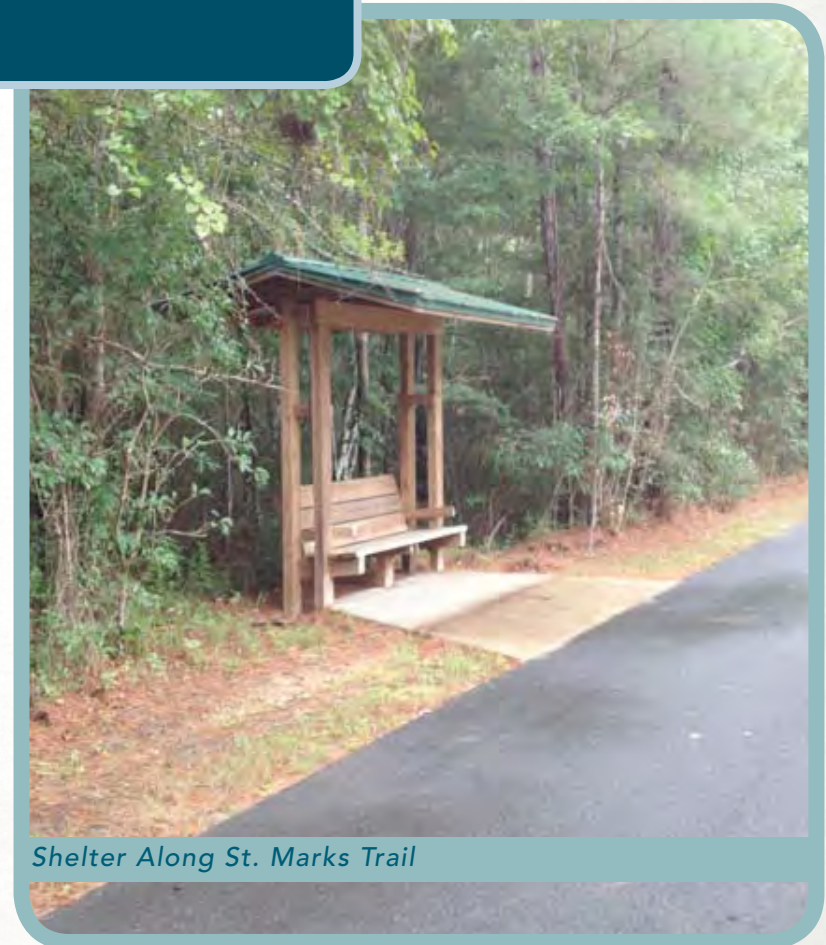
\*All facilities will be developed according to current applicable State and Federal design standards with the goal of providing universal accessibility

## Project Goal:

*Develop a series of shared-use paths that connect various areas from Capital Cascades Park in the City of Tallahassee all the way to the sea.*



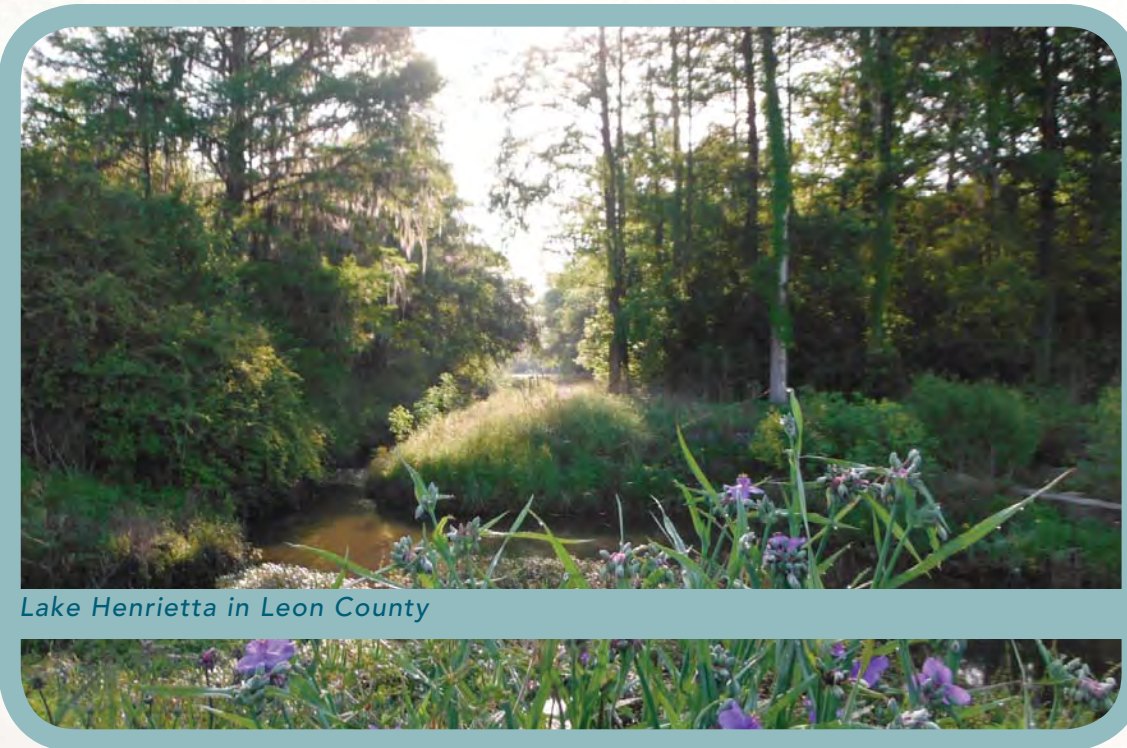
Old GF&A Rail Corridor



Shelter Along St. Marks Trail

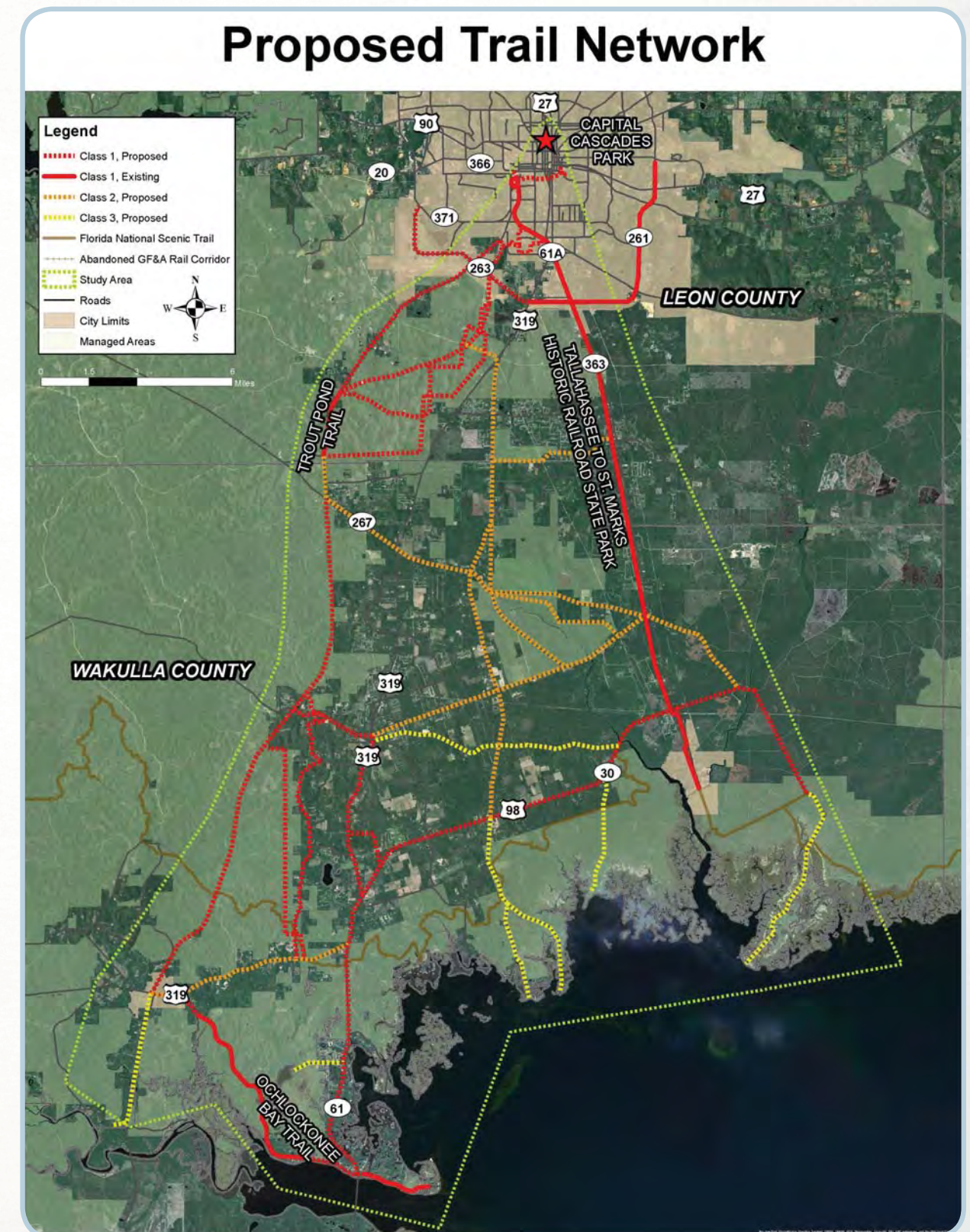
## STUDY AREA

The Capital City to the Sea Trails study area includes portions of Leon and Wakulla counties, connecting the State Capital to the City of Sopchoppy and the Gulf Coast. The study area also includes Capital Cascades Park, the Tallahassee to St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail, and the Ochlockonee Bay Trail. Although not a part of this Master Plan, it is anticipated that the CC2ST Trail Network will eventually extend to Franklin, Gadsden, and Jefferson counties. The project study area is shown in *Figure 2*.



Lake Henrietta in Leon County

FIGURE 2: CC2ST PROJECT STUDY AREA MAP





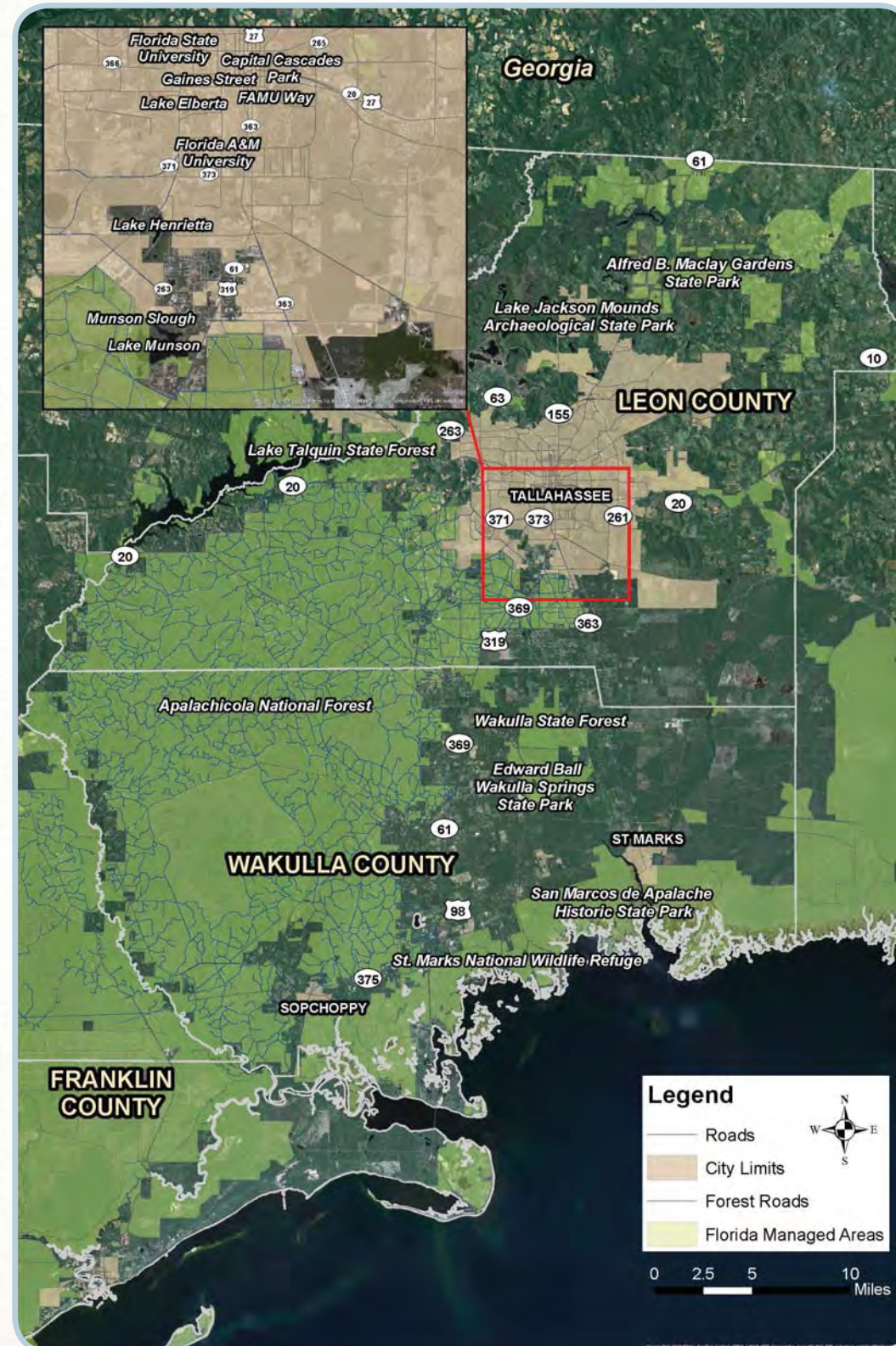
# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## GEOGRAPHY

### LEON COUNTY

Leon County is 702 square miles and is bounded by the State of Georgia to the north, Wakulla County to the south, Jefferson County to the east, and Gadsden County to the west. The northern portion of the County is characterized by rolling and wooded hills, with the highest elevation of 280 feet, while the southern portion is characterized by piney flat lands and karst features. The County has over 100,000 acres of conservation lands and open space, including the Apalachicola National Forest, Lake Talquin State Forest, Woodville State Forest, historical Indian Mounds, the San Luis Mission, Maclay Gardens State Park, numerous award winning Tallahassee and Leon County parks, conservation easements held by the Redhills Conservation Associations, and private plantations. An equestrian campground and additional trails are planned for Lake Talquin State Forest on the existing trail system. The County is laced with over 200 miles of trails, ranging from single track to off-highway vehicle trails to paved multi-use trails. The Capital Circle shared-use path, located along Capital Circle Southeast between Crawfordville Road and Hill Lane (just south of Apalachee Parkway), where it turns into an un-buffered sidewalk, is currently being extended along Capital Circle Southwest to Orange Avenue. There are no trailheads located along this shared-use path. The Munson Hills Off-Road Bicycle Trail is also located in Leon County and can be accessed by the Major Trailhead along the Tallahassee – St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail. The planned Capital Cascades Trail and the recently constructed FAMU Way offer trails in more urban parts of Tallahassee.

FIGURE 3: MAP OF LEON AND WAKULLA FEATURES AND MANAGED LANDS



### WAKULLA COUNTY

The majority of the CC2ST study area is located within Wakulla County. This 606-square-mile coastal county is located directly south of Leon County in Florida's Big Bend Region, and offers a variety of natural, cultural, historical, and scenic resources to its residents and visitors. Approximately 238,943 acres of Wakulla County are considered conservation land and open space, including the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, Apalachicola National Forest, Wakulla State Forest, Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, San Marcos de Apalache Historic State Park, numerous local parks, and various other managed lands. Two incorporated cities, St. Marks and Sopchoppy, are located within Wakulla County, as well as various unincorporated communities such as Crawfordville, which is the County seat, Newport, Medart, Shell Point, Smith Creek, and Panacea. Wakulla County is home to both the nationally-designated Big Bend Scenic Byway and the Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail. The Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail is the largest existing shared-use path that connects Leon and Wakulla counties. The St. Marks Trail has two trailheads which include parking, restrooms, water fountains, mountain bike wash stations, and other amenities. There are no interstate highways in Wakulla County, though several major routes pass through, including U.S. Route 98 (Coastal Highway) and U.S. Route 319 (Crawfordville Highway). Other significant roads in the County include S.R. 267 (Bloxham Cutoff Road), S.R. 363 (Woodville Highway), and C.R. 365 (Spring Creek Highway). *Figure 3* shows the key features and managed lands in Leon and Wakulla County.

## SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY FEATURES AND EVENTS

### LEON COUNTY

Each year, the City of Tallahassee holds the Tallahassee Winter Festival and Springtime Tallahassee, two popular events for people all over the region to attend. Other events in Leon County include homecoming parades and activities for Florida State University and Florida A&M University, a Veterans Day Parade, monthly First Fridays, and Downtown Get Downs before each FSU home football game. The City is also host each year to the prestigious Red Hills Horse Trials (a national and Olympic equestrian qualifier).

### WAKULLA COUNTY

Wakulla County also hosts a variety of unique festivals and events, such as the Blue Crab Festival, Stone Crab Festival, Mighty Mullet Maritime Festival, Monarch Butterfly Festival, Wakulla Wildlife Festival, and the Worm Gruntin' Festival. Two of the region's primary natural attractions are found in Wakulla County, Apalachicola National Park and Wakulla Springs, which is one of the world's largest freshwater springs. Other natural attractions include St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge, St. Marks Lighthouse, Ochlockonee River State Park, and Fort San Marcos De Apalache.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### LEON COUNTY

As of 2012, Leon County's population was 277,670. The County has the highest average education level per capita in the state, and is home to three institutions of higher education: Florida State University, Florida A&M University, and Tallahassee Community College. Leon County contains 21 unincorporated communities that range in size from just a few households to the larger community of Woodville. The only incorporated city in the County is the City of Tallahassee, which is both the state capital and the county seat.

### WAKULLA COUNTY

Wakulla County's population was 30,771 in 2012. The unincorporated community of Crawfordville is the County seat and has the highest population density of all communities in the county. Wakulla County is located centrally in the Panhandle of Florida, bordered to the north by Leon County, to the east by Jefferson County, to the west by Liberty and Franklin counties, and to the south by the Gulf of Mexico. The County's jurisdictional area consists of 388,288 predominately rural acres or 606.7 square miles.

### Commute To Work

As the populations of Leon County and Wakulla County continue to increase, and as the current driving-age portion of the population rises, the demand for alternative modes of transportation may increase. Also, public transportation is not available for commuters in Wakulla County heading to work; the development of new trails may become useful to those residents who would have taken public transit if it were available. It is also important to note that there are many commuters who work in Leon County but live in Wakulla County. CC2ST will provide residents with new trails, which can be used to commute by walking, bicycling, rollerblading, or other non-vehicular modes of transportation.

### LEON COUNTY

According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, over 81 percent of Leon County residents over the age of 16 drove alone to work, 10 percent carpooled to work, 1.5 percent took some form of public transportation besides a taxi, 2.3 percent walked, 3.2 percent worked at home, and 0.6 percent used some "other" form of transportation such as bicycling (*Figure 4*).

### WAKULLA COUNTY

In Wakulla County, 81 percent of residents over the age of 16 drove alone to work, 13.9 percent carpooled to work, one percent walked, 2.6 percent worked at home, and 0.4 percent used some "other" form of transportation such as bicycling (*Figure 5*). Wakulla County does not currently have public transportation available as a means of traveling to work.

FIGURE 4: LEON COUNTY RESIDENTS' COMMUTES TO WORK

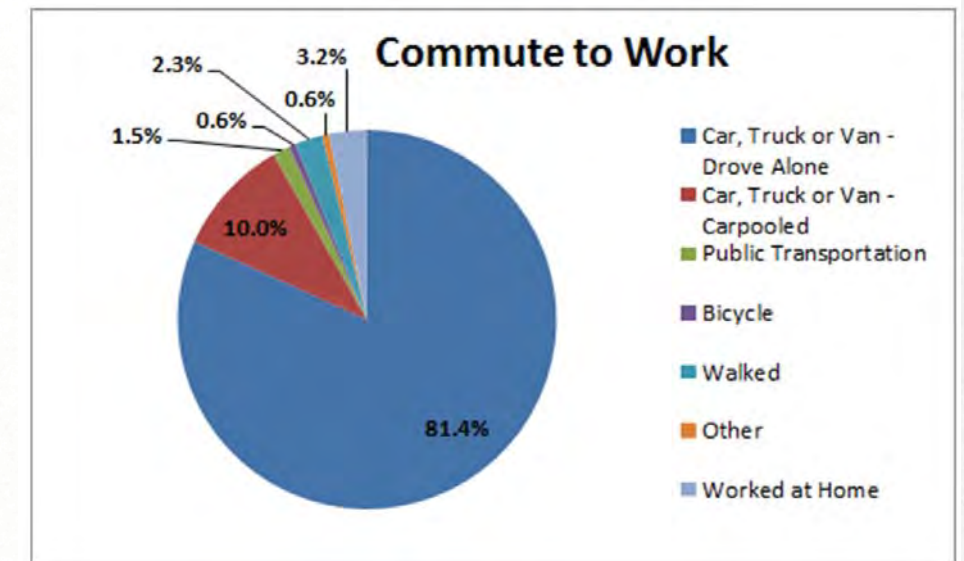
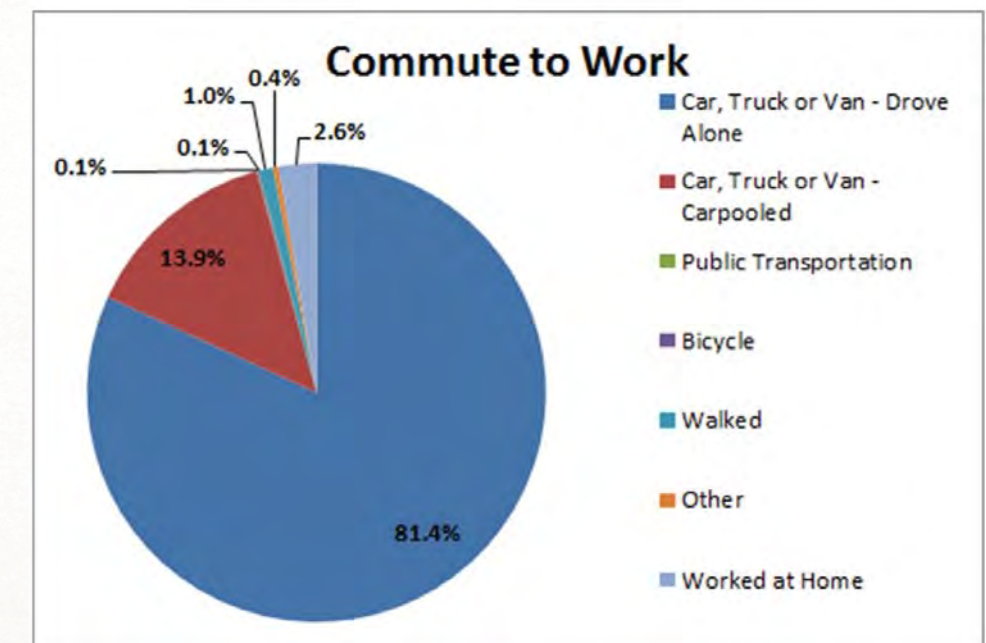


FIGURE 5: WAKULLA COUNTY RESIDENTS' COMMUTES TO WORK



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## RACE DISTRIBUTION

### LEON COUNTY

According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 63 percent of Leon County residents are white alone, 30 percent are black or African American alone, three percent are Asian alone, two percent are two or more races, and one percent is another race. *Figure 6* below shows the race distribution of Leon County residents.

### WAKULLA COUNTY

Over 80 percent of Wakulla County's population is white alone, 14 percent is black or African American alone, two percent is comprised of two races or more, and one percent is Asian alone (*Figure 7*).



FIGURE 6: LEON COUNTY RESIDENTS' RACE DISTRIBUTION

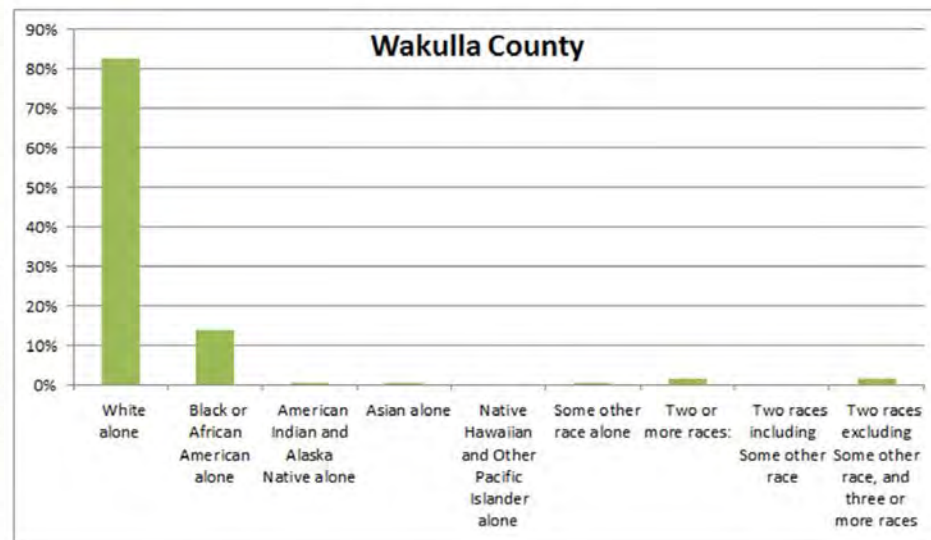
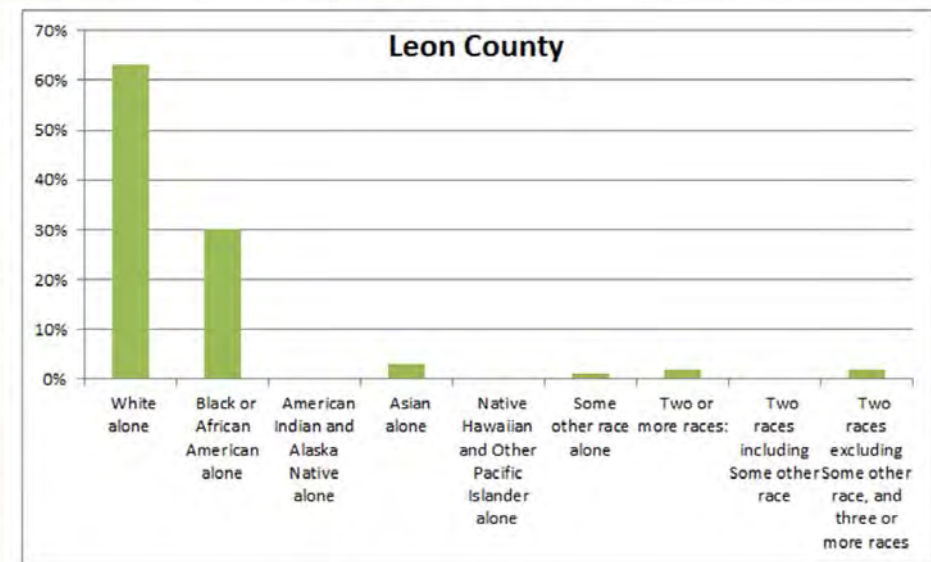


FIGURE 7: WAKULLA COUNTY RESIDENTS' RACE DISTRIBUTION



## AGE DISTRIBUTION

### LEON COUNTY

According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, 16 percent of Leon County's population are below the age of 14, 75 percent are between the ages of 15 and 64, and 10 percent are over the age of 65 (*Figure 8*). The under 14 and over 65 age brackets are relevant to the CC2ST Master Plan, because this shows the percentage of residents who are currently under the legal driving age and the age when some people may decide to use alternate forms of transportation because of reduced abilities. Of the 16 percent below the age of 14, five percent will likely be able to drive within the next five years. Those individuals in the 65 or above age bracket may experience a greater need for transportation options beyond personal cars.

### WAKULLA COUNTY

In Wakulla County, 18 percent of the population are under the age of 14 and 11 percent are over the age of 65 (*Figure 9*). Of those residents in the "14 or below" age category, close to eight percent will be able to drive in the next five years and it will be important to think about future transportation needs. In addition, residents over the age of 65 may experience a greater need for transportation options beyond personal vehicles more than other age groups. The remainder of Wakulla County's population (71 percent) is within the prime driving age range, but will also benefit from alternate transportation options. CC2ST serves as one means to plan for these future demographic adjustments by providing for non-vehicular means of transportation.

FIGURE 8: LEON COUNTY AGE DISTRIBUTION

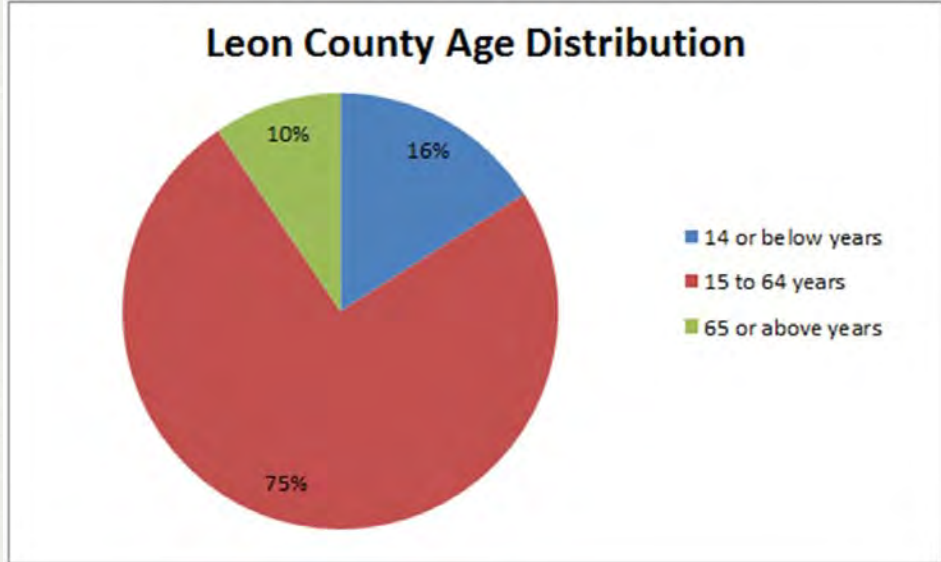
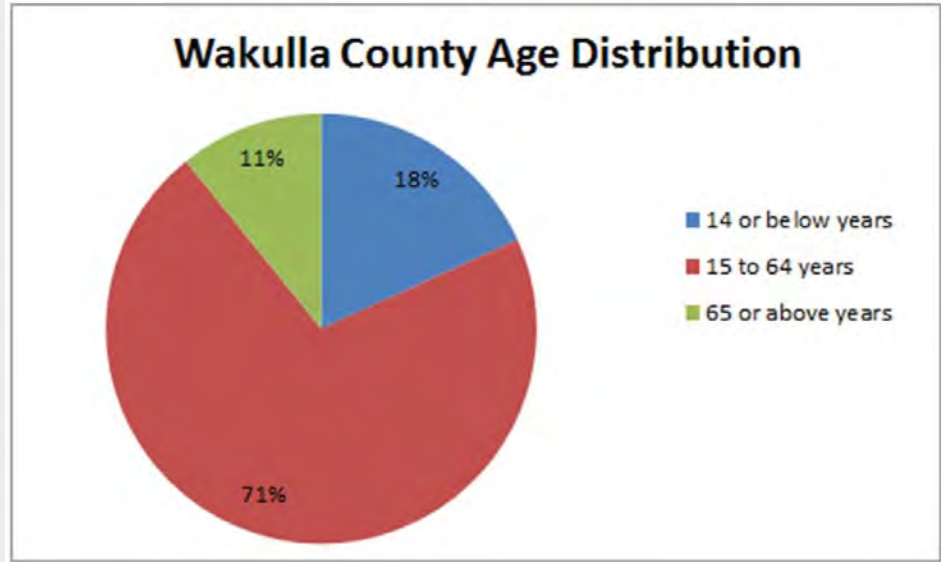


FIGURE 9: WAKULLA COUNTY AGE DISTRIBUTION



### MEAN INCOME

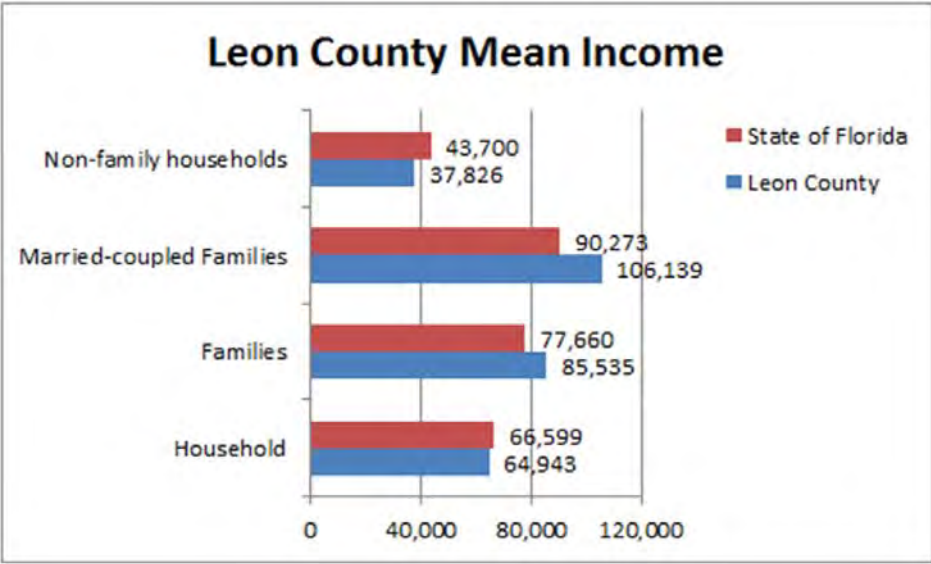
The American Community Survey uses the following definitions to classify population variables:

- Household:** includes all the people who occupy a housing unit.
- Non-Family Household:** Householder living alone or with non-relatives only.
- Married-Coupled Family:** A family in which the householder and his or her spouse are listed as members of the same household.
- Family Household:** A family consists of a householder and one or more other people living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

### LEON COUNTY

According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, the mean income over the past twelve months for Leon County was \$37,826 for non-family households, \$106,139 for married-couple families, \$85,535 for families, and \$64,943 for households. This is shown in Figure 10.

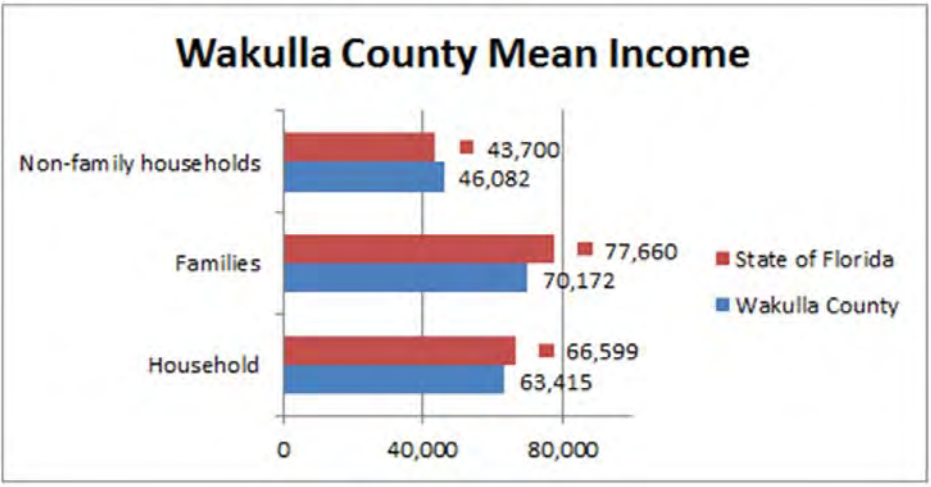
FIGURE 10: LEON COUNTY MEAN INCOME



### WAKULLA COUNTY

The mean income for Wakulla County residents over the past twelve months was \$46,082 for non-family households, \$70,172 for families, and \$63,415 for households (Figure 11). There was no available data for married-couple families in Wakulla County.

FIGURE 11: WAKULLA COUNTY MEAN INCOME



# EXISTING CONDITIONS

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

### LEON COUNTY

According to the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), the 2012 population estimate for Leon County is 277,670 (Figure 12). The 2020 population projection is 298,400 and the 2030 population projection is 322,900. Based on this, the population for Leon County is projected to increase over the next 17 years by almost 45,000 people.

### WAKULLA COUNTY

The current 2012 BEBR population estimate for Wakulla County is 30,771 (Figure 13). The 2020 population projection is 34,800 and the 2030 population projection is 39,800. Based on this, Wakulla County's population is estimated to increase over the next two decades by adding close to 10,000 people.

FIGURE 12: LEON COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS

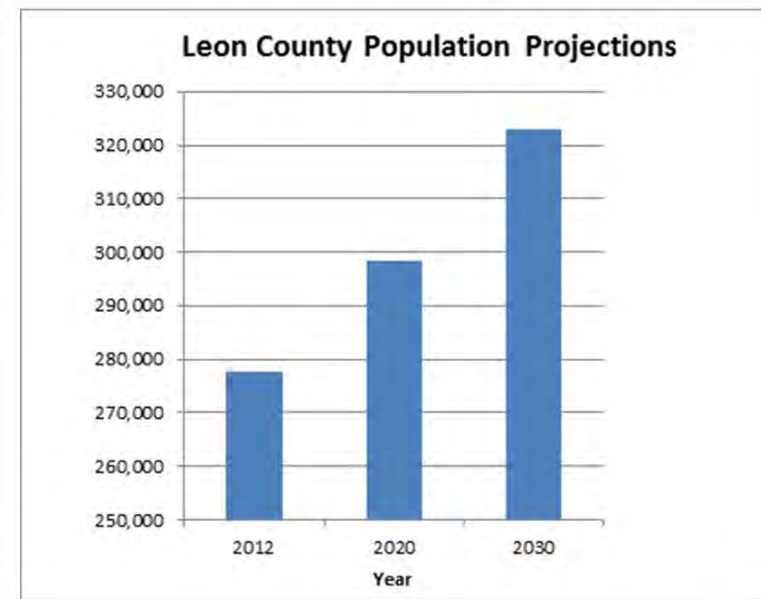
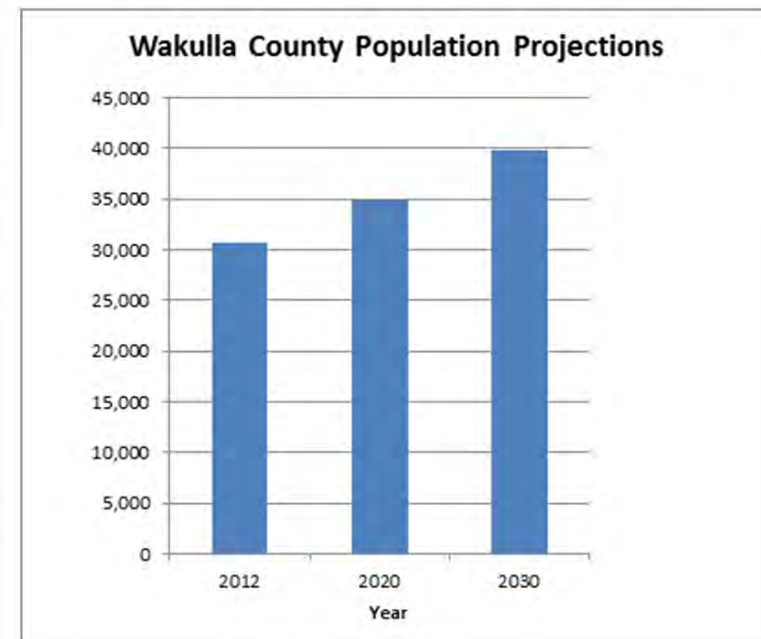


FIGURE 13: WAKULLA COUNTY POPULATION PROJECTIONS



## SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

An assessment of the existing conditions and population projections in the CC2ST study area indicates that there are sectors of the population that currently rely on alternative modes of transportation. There are also numerous destinations and recreational opportunities in the study area. As the population of both counties increases, there will be a larger demand for connectivity for both transportation options and recreational options. CC2ST will provide transportation trails for a variety of user types, and will be able to provide more safe and environmentally conscientious options for travel, as well as recreational opportunities, to support health and quality of life.



Capital City to the Sea Trails

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