

MANAGEMENT

TRAIL MANAGEMENT

The management of a shared-use path involves maintaining the overall condition of the facility and continually improving the user experience along the facility. These activities include construction, repair, and maintenance, as well as marketing, promotion, and fundraising. The entity responsible for these management activities may vary based on the jurisdictions where the facilities are located.

As shown in *Figure 66*, each organizational model for how shared-use path facilities are managed has advantages and disadvantages. To balance these advantages and disadvantages, a hybrid option is recommended for the CC2ST network.

LOCAL MANAGEMENT

Each local government has the option to manage the CC2ST segments within its jurisdiction. The local government departments responsible for management activities could include parks and recreation, conservation, transportation, or public works. This model of management gives the most autonomy to each local government, but could result in inconsistencies along the trail network, and uncoordinated maintenance and capital project efforts because of competing interests and differing priorities. Examples of local government management include the northern section (north of Capital Circle) of the St. Marks Trail and the Ochlockonee Bay Bike Trail.

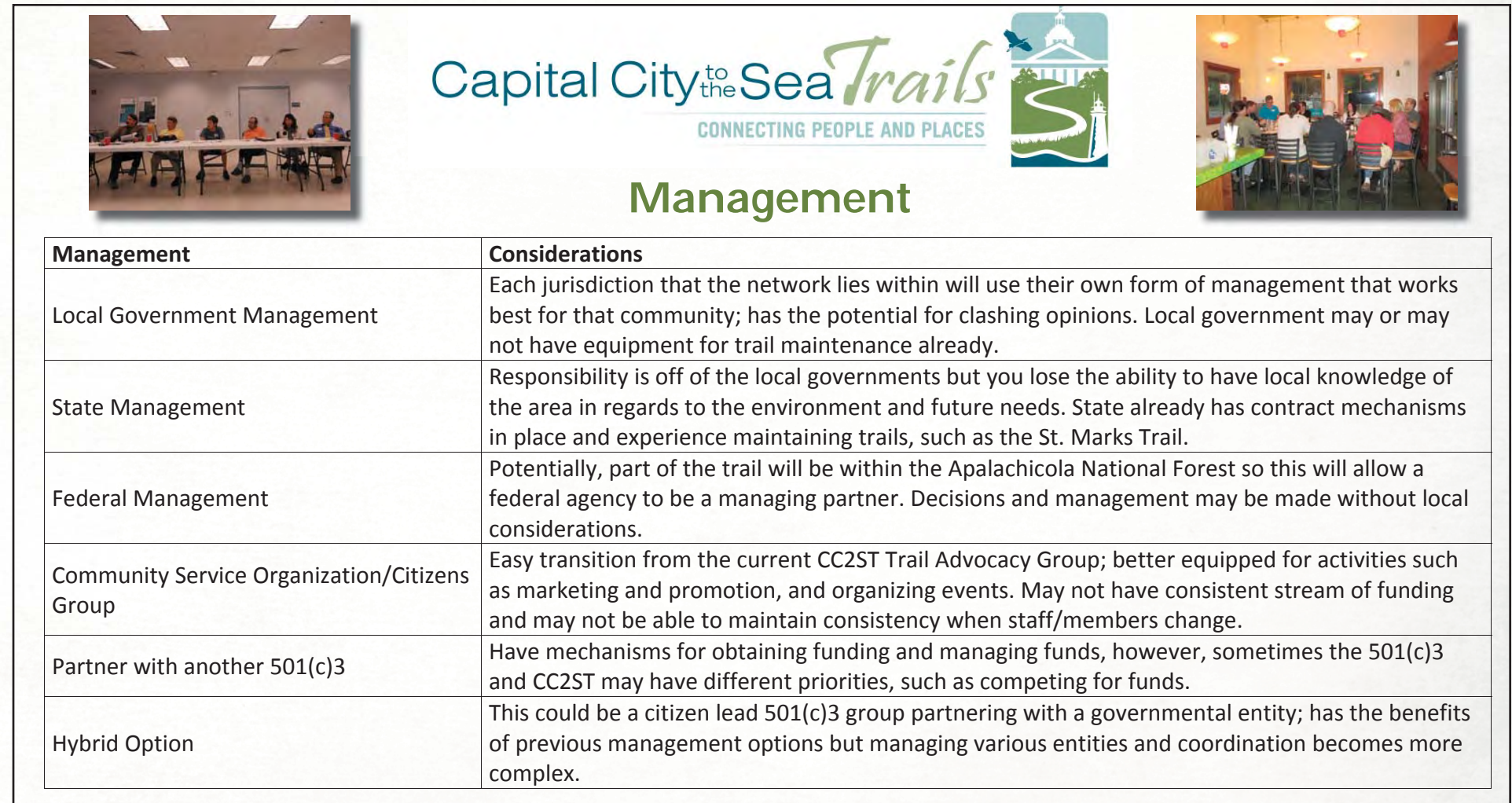
STATE MANAGEMENT

State management is an option for shared-use paths on state-owned lands. This model of management can provide for more consistency along longer trail segments, but can limit the ability of the local government to make decisions related to the facilities and how local businesses and private development access the facilities. The Tallahassee to St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail (from Capital Circle to the City of St. Marks), which is managed by FDEP, is an example of state management.

FEDERAL MANAGEMENT

While this form of management is less common, it should be noted that parts of the CC2ST network will traverse the Apalachicola National Forest. Thus, there is an opportunity for a federal agency to be a managing partner of the project, especially segments that are located within federally managed lands. State and federal lands may also be managed by local governments through contracts.

FIGURE 66: ORGANIZATIONAL MODEL FOR TRAIL MANAGEMENT



HYBRID COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT

A community service organization (CSO) is a volunteer organization where local residents and other interested coordinate and oversee the management responsibilities of a trail system, such as CC2ST. The three main purposes of a CSO are: fund raising; maintenance; and promotion. The CC2ST Trail Advocacy Group (TAG) was developed to provide input and guidance for the development of the Master Plan. The TAG is the project's steering committee and is comprised of representatives from local cycling, running, and equestrian clubs; local bicycle shops; existing trail and byway advocacy groups; and local enthusiasts. The TAG is responsible for advocating the CC2ST project to the public, as well as providing input to the project team that best represents the overall interests of the community. Once the CC2ST Master Plan project is completed, the TAG could become the managing entity by evolving into a nonprofit, community service organization (CSO)/citizens group. This group could coordinate efforts with local, state, and federal entities, capitalizing on the advantages of these organizational models for management while minimizing the disadvantages.

Transitioning from the TAG to a CSO would require interested TAG members to volunteer as board members. The board members would be responsible for any managerial responsibilities, such as maintaining a CC2ST records book; updating the goals, objectives, and strategies, and action plan; providing community outreach and educational workshops; and advocating for the CC2ST. The CSO would also be responsible for managing and implementing future projects that protect, preserve, and enhance CC2ST in coordination with governmental agencies at the local, state, and federal level.

Community Service Organization as a 501(c)3

Once a community service organization is established for the CC2ST, the group can qualify as a 501(c)3 for tax exemption opportunities. A 501(c)3 is a nonprofit, charitable organization that is eligible for federal tax exemptions and, in the State of Florida, is also eligible for sales and property tax exemptions.

Applying for 501(c)3 status requires the following steps:

1. Becoming a corporation, trust, or unincorporated association
 - ◇ Choose a CSO name and check for availability at www.sunbiz.org
 - ◇ Create an employer identification number with the IRS and the State of Florida

2. Holding an organizational meeting
 - ◇ Appointing a board of directors with at least three directors
 - ◇ Drafting the bylaws
 - ◇ Determining an annual budget
 - ◇ Creating a records book for meeting minutes and financial statements
 - ◇ Creating a mission statement
 - ◇ Opening a bank account

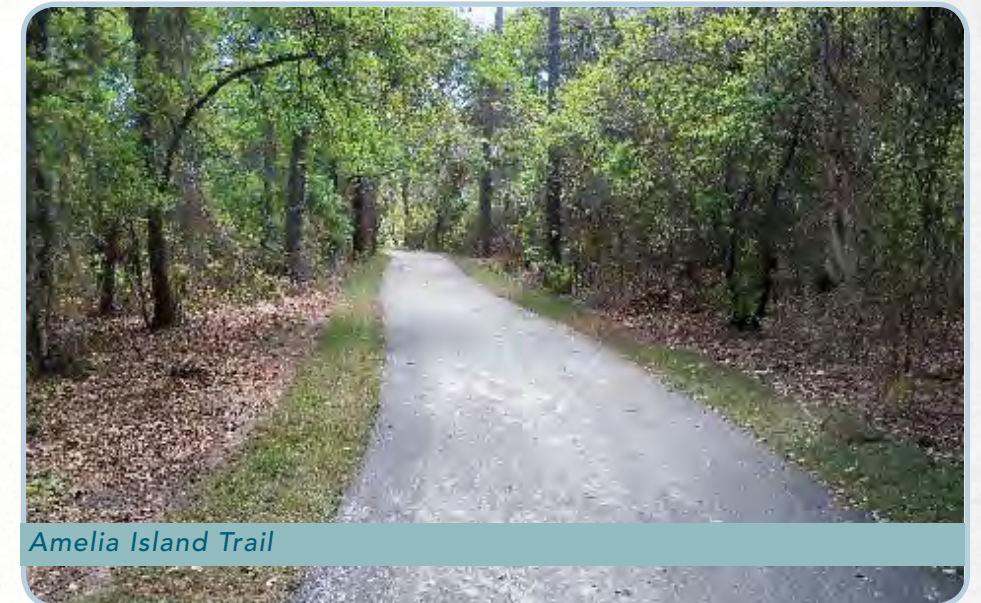
Obtaining this status would provide the opportunity for the CSO to apply for grants and collect donations. The CSO could also partner with an existing nonprofit organization for these purposes until the steps can be taken for the CSO to become a 501(c)3 organization itself. This type organizational model allows efforts to be divided up among various entities while still being coordinated. Governmental entities can be responsible for construction and maintenance activities, while the CSO is responsible for marketing, promotion, fundraising, and coordinating with the various governmental entities to promote consistency along the network.

PARTNERSHIP WITH ANOTHER 501(C)3

A partnership with an existing 501(c)3 allows the managing entity to oversee agendas, projects, and maintenance, while the existing 501(c)3 is responsible for the accounting and funding duties. This type of management is ideal in the initial stages after project completion if the process to become a 501(c)3 takes longer than expected. It also allows the managing entity to become accustomed to its new responsibilities without having the accounting responsibilities as well. This type of management can become difficult if the two managing entities have different priorities, such as competing for funding.

PRIVATE-PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNERSHIP

This form of management establishes a partnership between a public agency and a private organization, such as a citizen group or a company, within the community. The private-public sector partnership could utilize the "Adopt-A-Trail" program or low-risk inmates from the local prisons for trail maintenance, while the government agency oversees the administrative and accounting responsibilities. This form of management has the benefits of local knowledge along with the experience of maintaining a trail.



Amelia Island Trail

Source: Friends of Amelia Island Trail

TRAIL MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY: AMELIA ISLAND TRAIL

A nearby example of nonprofit trail management can be seen with the Amelia Island Trail. The 6.2-mile, shared-use path is supervised by the *Friends of the Amelia Island Trail*, a nonprofit organization with trail advocating, managerial, and maintenance responsibilities. *Friends of the Amelia Island Trail* is also classified as a 501(c)3, which enables the charitable organization to receive funds from donations, grants, and contracts, as well as be eligible for federal and state tax exemptions.

MAINTENANCE

MAINTENANCE

The trail segments, trailheads, and amenities along the CC2ST network will require regular maintenance. It is important to note that the maintenance needs will vary based on many factors. The following are maintenance activities (Figure 67) that will need to be implemented to support the CC2ST network:

FIGURE 67: TRAIL MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES

Task	Frequency
Litter/Trash Removal	Weekly/bi-weekly before mowing
Sweeping of debris off path	Weekly or as needed
Mowing grass surrounding path	Every *10-14 days (March - November)
Herbicide Application along path	Minimum of once per year during the summer
Tree/Shrub Pruning to avoid debris falling on path	Once per year in January or February
Trailhead Maintenance	Mow and sweep weekly; trash pick-up bi-weekly; restroom cleaning bi-weekly
Site Inspections to make sure all amenities are working properly	Each visit to trail and trailhead for maintenance needs/work orders
Repairs, Replacements, Painting of amenities at trailheads and along the path	As needed
Graffiti Clean-Up	As soon as possible
Sign Repair/Replacement at trailheads and along the path	As soon as possible
Inspections (Bridges, Drainage, etc.)	Annually



Walkers Utilizing Lake Henrietta Trail

BEST PRACTICES

The following measures should be taken during the design stage, construction, and after construction for the trails to help reduce maintenance needs and costs.

At the Design Stage

- Use the Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principals to reduce future problems and maintenance by providing clear views through trailheads and along trails, provide emergency information, ensure high maintenance standards, and eliminate hiding spots for criminals.
- Plan sight distance clearing to be done during construction.
- Plan for low water crossings rather than culverts.
- Use thickened edge asphalt paving specifications for all trail crossings of roads, driveways, trail heads, and trail outside edges.
- Raise and crown the trail surface above all intersections with non-paved roads and driveways to prevent erosion of sand, dirt and gravel onto the trail. Redirect water flow with the trail, not across it, in these locations. A major maintenance problem is cleaning up sand/dirt from erosion, plus these deposits are a safety hazard for bicyclists, especially the road bikes.
- Specify 95 percent proctor compaction of base material for trail and shoulder areas.
- Specify a one to two percent cross slope or crowned surface of trail for drainage.
- Design hardscapes under trail side amenities to eliminate need for mowing, trimming, and keep turning radius of mowers in mind to reduce hand work.
- Limit trail side amenities to reduce need for hand work.
- Eliminate inside corners and other debris traps to reduce blowing time.
- Use the new solar powered LED lighted road signs to alert drivers to upcoming trail crossings and buttons for trail users to switch on the crossing lights as needed.
- Consider raised trail crossing platforms 12 foot wide, flat topped (like speed bumps)

During Construction

- Place 911 decals with GPS chips every quarter mile on trail surface for reporting emergencies and location with Smart Phones.
- Use sustainable building materials and local sources.
- Use geo textile under the paving to provide more strength and reduce cracking, lifting, root penetration and weeds. Some fabrics include an herbicide to deter root penetration of the fabric.
- Install vertical root barrier fabric outside trail edges in areas that have trees within 10 feet of the trail to prevent tree root damage to trail.
- Remove roots from trail base area during construction.
- Use local contractors to build trail and for on-going service as needed.



Trail Maintenance Equipment

MAINTENANCE

After Construction

- Have ongoing service providers under contract to provide labor, materials to maintain/repair trail and amenities in emergencies if needed. i.e. tree work, building repair, sign work, plumbers, electricians, and carpenters.
- Use Universal Trail Assessment Program (UTAP) providers to assess the trail after it is built and provide signage design for points of entrance to the trail that inform users about what they can expect to encounter on the trail i.e. grade, slopes, cross slopes, amenities, distances, obstructions. Note: This is a requirement for all new trails if Recreational Trail Program (RTP) grants are used for construction.
- Provide maintenance policies, procedures, standards, specifications for all tasks, and schedules in writing to all workers, volunteers, and contractors for continuity of operation in case of emergencies, changes in personnel, and for day to day operations.
- Utilize volunteers, advocacy organizations, service clubs, community service workers, and clean up campaigns to reduce the cost of trail maintenance. These resources are best utilized for short-term projects instead of long-term, ongoing tasks.
- Train and manage volunteers as if they are staff.
- Bid out specific tasks that can be scheduled in advance, such as mowing, blowing, herbicide application, and resurfacing. Utilize local providers when possible. The average cost for sweeping a trail, per mile, per trip is \$4.50.
- Use non-profits, 501(c)3 organizations, and trail advocacy groups for fund raising, promoting, lobbying, planning, and providing a sounding board for the trail agency.
- Provide signage with contact information so users can report needed maintenance.
- Use herbicides to control vegetation encroachment on edge of trails. Blade edgers and weed whips can damage the asphalt edges and create grooves in the soil that allow water to drain into the trail base, and weaken.
- Resealing the trail surface will extend the useful life of pavement. Reseal, depending on the surface conditions, every five to seven years. Resurface when the trail starts lifting, spalling, and edges start breaking. The expected life span for a trail in north Florida is 15-17 years.

Examples of Trail Management Techniques Throughout Florida

- Withlacoochee State Trail: This trail is managed as a state park. Weed and grass encroachment on the trail is controlled by an annual application of herbicide along the edge of the pavement.
- Palatka to Lake Butler State Trail: Sweeping of debris off the trail is performed every 10 days throughout the year and following every mowing. Vegetation around mile markers, signage, and other amenities is trimmed with a string trimmer weekly.
- West Orange County Trail: This trail has a detailed land management plan with schedules and standards for maintenance. All maintenance functions are performed by contractual labor.
- Tallahassee to St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail: The annual budget for maintenance is \$6,938 per mile. Trash pickup is completed daily and sweeping is weekly, or more when necessary. Trailhead maintenance at Wakulla Station, Capital Circle, and Woodville is conducted daily or more if needed.
- Sanibel Island Trail: Maintenance funding for this trail is provided by public works and volunteers from the local bike club work at the visitor center.
- Amelia Island Trail: This trail maintenance is provided by Nassau County Parks and Recreation through contractors and by volunteers from the Friends of Amelia Island Trail.