



Shelby County Trail Plan

Submitted to the Mississippi River Corridor–Tennessee

by the Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning
School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy
The University of Memphis

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The Mississippi River Trail (MRT)

The Mississippi River Trail is a ten-state scenic byway created during the mid-1990s in Memphis that offers bicyclists, as well as walkers and hikers, access to some of the nation’s most extraordinary natural habitats, scenic views, national parks, wildlife reserves, historical and cultural sites. Each year thousands of visitors take advantage of the 3,000 miles of paved surfaces comprising the Mississippi River Trail to explore the wonders of the American heartland.

The Shelby County Trail

Currently, a 32-mile segment of the Mississippi River Trail passes through Shelby County starting at the Tipton County border on the north traveling southwest through the County, exiting Shelby County for West Memphis, Arkansas via the I-55 Bridge. In the spring of 2010, the Mississippi River Corridor-Tennessee, a highly regarded environmental advocacy and planning organization working in six Tennessee counties on the Mississippi River was asked by members of their Shelby County Task Force to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the Shelby County Segment of the Mississippi River Trail in order to:

1. assess current physical conditions along the trail especially those relating to user safety;
2. identify possible improvements that might increase the number of Shelby County residents using the trail; and
3. develop strategies to encourage “through” riders using the trail to explore Shelby County’s many natural habitats, historical attractions, architectural sites, and cultural amenities.

See Appendix A: Existing Shelby County Trail Map

Establishing a New Research Partnership

With lead support from the Hyde Family Foundations and matching funding provided by the FedEx Corporation, John & Estie Sheahan, Shelby County Government and Sustainable Shelby, the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, under the leadership of their President, Diana Threadgill and Vice President, Glenn Cox, invited staff from the Memphis Regional Design Center and The University of Memphis to join them in creating an interdisciplinary team of architects, engineers, and planners to undertake the research required to prepare a detailed improvement plan for the Shelby County portion of the Mississippi River Trail.



During the past seven months, the following representatives of these organizations completed a wide range of primary and secondary research to prepare an improvement plan for the Shelby County Trail.

- Diana Threadgill, President, Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee
- Glenn Cox, Vice-President, Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee
- Chooch Pickard, Executive Director, Memphis Regional Design Center
- Robert Paulus, Architectural Intern, Memphis Regional Design Center
- Kasi Khrishna, Former Architectural Intern, Memphis Regional Design Center
- Kenneth Reardon, Professor and Director of City and Regional Planning, University of Memphis
- David Westendorff, Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning, University of Memphis
- Laura Saija, Visiting Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning, University of Memphis
- Antonio Raciti, Visiting Assistant Professor of City and Regional Planning, University of Memphis
- William Ferguson, AIA, Chairman – Memphis Regional Design Center
- Karen Thornton, Planning Specialist, University of Memphis
- Kwasi Agyakwa, GIS/Mapping Specialist, University of Memphis
- Jessica Buttermore, Administrative Assistant of City and Regional Planning, University of Memphis

Our Research Methodology

With the assistance and direction from the Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee’s Board of Directors, the Research Team for the Shelby County Trail devised the following research methodology to complete this project.

1. Archival Research- Review of past studies, reports, and plans chronicling the origins, evolution, current condition, and future development possibilities of the Shelby County Trail segment of the Mississippi River Trails;
2. Best Practices Research- Scan of the literature on best practices for urban trail systems;
3. Physical Conditions Survey- Inspection of the key physical elements of the 32 miles comprising the existing Shelby County Trail, including such variables as:
 - Type of land use (urban, suburban, rural, mixed-use)
 - Scenic quality
 - Road surface
 - Tree canopy
 - Riding difficulty (Elevation changes and frequency of turns)
 - Signage (Present in good condition, present but faded and/or obscured, missing)
 - User facilities
 - Attractions
 - Possible special interest loops and/or spurs
 - Problem areas
 - Other observations
4. Key Informant Interviews- One-on-one interviews with individuals representing organizations with long histories of involvement in local, regional, and state trail planning. Among the trail planning and biking advocacy organizations consulted were:
 - City of Memphis/Shelby County Office of Bikeway and Pedestrian Transportation Planning
 - Shelby County Park Planning Advisory Board
 - Harahan Bridge Project
 - DeSoto County Greenways- MS
5. Community Forums- Local environmental, recreational, neighborhood, civic, business and faith-based groups, as well as local appointed and elected officials were invited to a series of three community meetings organized to:
 - introduce local stakeholders to the Shelby County Trail;
 - elicit their input regarding ways the Trail could be improved;
 - identify local bike facilities, attractions, and problem areas Trail users should be aware of; and
 - explore possible side trails that could connect Trail users to some of the County’s most important and interesting natural, architectural, historical, and cultural sites.

Separate community meetings were held in December and January for local stakeholders living and/or working near the North, Downtown, and South Segments of the Shelby County Trail. More than one hundred Shelby County residents, business owners, institutional leaders, and appointed and elected officials participated in these meetings.

These sessions began with a brief introduction to the historical origins and evolution of the Mississippi River Trail and a summary of the preliminary findings and recommendations generated by the Field Survey and Key Informant Research Activities.

Following a short question and answer period regarding these preliminary findings and recommendations, participants in these local Community Forums worked in small groups generating more than 200 discrete observations regarding current trail conditions and future development opportunities.

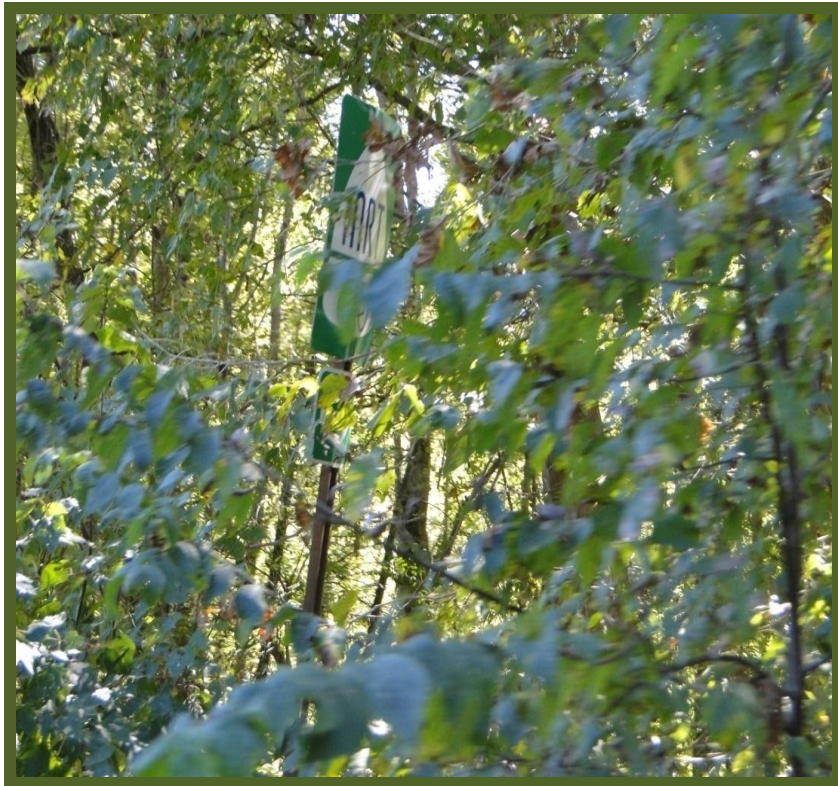


held to discuss the amended and new route that emerged from the Field Survey and Community Forum process. Those attending this meeting also had the opportunity to review the Major Findings and Trail Improvement Proposals that had emerged from the planning process. Hearing organizers were delighted that the final public presentation of major findings and recommendations for the Shelby County Trail generated more than an hour of community discussion and elicited nearly two dozen additional suggestions for further improving this important County amenity.

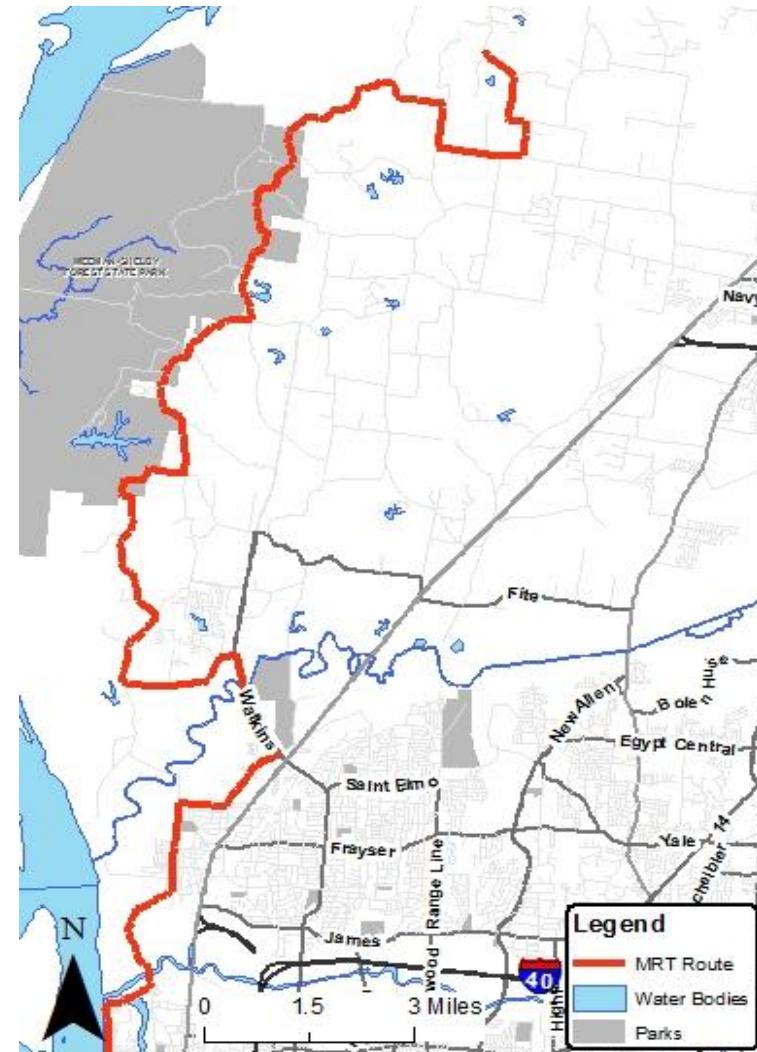


6. Public Hearing- On January 19, 2012 more than two hundred individuals representing local neighborhood groups, hiking and biking organizations, area businesses, and city and county offices attended a final public meeting

The following section of this report presents a summary of the major findings and recommendations that emerged from these research activities. It seeks to emphasize concrete short and long-term improvements that can be made to increase the number of individuals using the Shelby County Trail and the level of enjoyment they derive from the experience. Findings and recommendations are presented for the Northern (28 miles), Downtown (7 miles), and newly-proposed Southern (14 miles) Segments of the Trail.

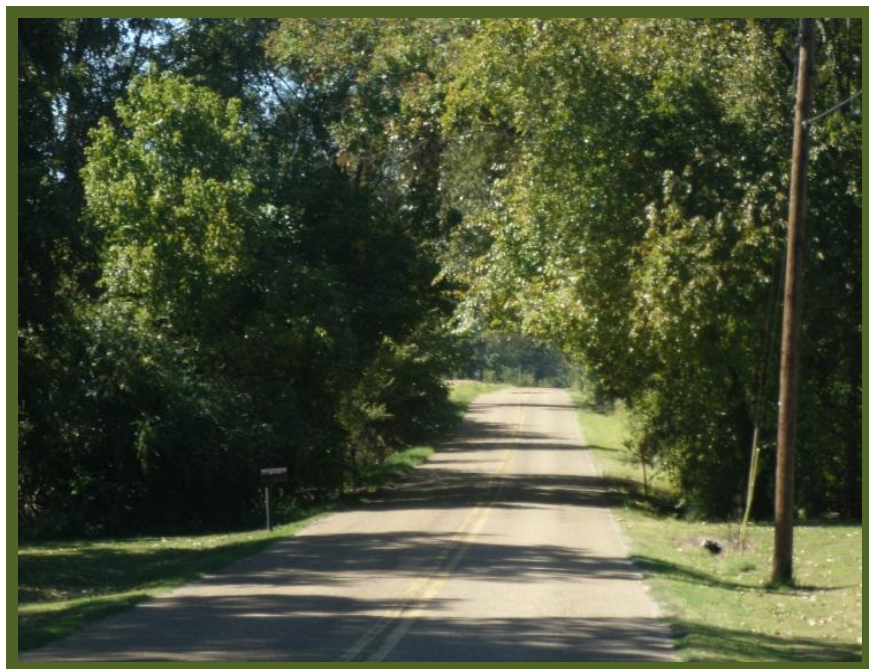


Northern Segment Research Findings



The Northern Segment of the Shelby County Trail originates in the northernmost portion of the County along the Tipton County

border. This Segment of the Trail begins southwest of the Village of Atoka traveling in a southwesterly direction through parts of Millington, the Meeman-Shelby State Park, and Northaven.



The Trail takes riders through one of the most scenic areas of the County exposing them to challenging hill climbs through heavily forested areas, less taxing farmlands, and the floodplains of both the Wolf and Loosahatchie Rivers.

The following set of tables provides a quick overview of current physical conditions along the Northern Segment of the Shelby County Trail. These tables display the number of miles of the specific condition compared to the number of miles of that condition within the entire route.

Land Use

	North #	North %	Total #	Total %
Rural	23	79	23	47
Suburban	4	17	17	35
Urban	0	0	3	6
Industrial	1	4	5	10
Park	0	0	1	2

As you can see, almost all of the Northern Segment of the Shelby County Trail is rural in character offering riders a beautiful and ever-changing series of natural and agricultural landscapes to experience and enjoy. It is only as one approaches the southernmost portion of this Segment that the dominant land use pattern begins to change from rural to suburban and, even industrial, in character.

Road Conditions

	North #	North %	Total #	Total %
Excellent	0	0	0	0
Good	16	55	21	42
Fair	11	41	25	51
Poor	1	4	3	6

Road conditions along the Trail's Northern Segment are generally very good. The roadways are well designed, constructed of macadam, and, in general, kept in good repair by Shelby County.

Degree of Difficulty

	North #	North %	Total #	Total %
Expert	0	0	0	0
Journeyman	13	52	19	39
Novice	15	48	30	61

While the views and vistas afforded walkers, hikers, and bikers along the Trail's Northern Segment are outstanding, this section of the Trail can be somewhat challenging for the novice rider because of its many hills and the route's frequent changes in direction. While less experienced hikers and bikers will be able to manage this Segment; it will require focused attention and more than a few stops for rest and re-hydration. Adults planning to pull their children behind their bikes in strollers should do so only if they are experienced bikers who are currently in excellent physical condition.

Aesthetic Quality

	North #	North %	Total #	Total %
Arresting	0	0	8	16
Interesting	25	89	33	67
Uninspired	3	11	8	16

The Trail's Northern Segment offers beautiful views of the rolling hills that unfold towards the Mississippi, Loosahatchie, and Wolf Rivers. As riders enter Shelby County from the north, they have the opportunity to take a scenic detour through Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park which offers some of the most breathtaking landscape and riverfront views found in Shelby County.

Tree Coverage (Road Canopy, percentage covered)

	North #	North %	Total #	Total %
>80%	12	41	14	29
40% < 80%	7	24	13	27
<40%	9	35	22	54

The Trail's Northern Segment offers riders significant protection from the sun as a result of very generous tree canopies. The leaves from these trees also help protect riders from airborne particulate matter that can be troublesome during long rides.

Available Shoulders

	North #	North %	Total #	Total %
Yes	0	0	12	25
No	28	100	35	75

The Northern Segment does not feature shoulders, requiring hikers and bicyclists to be very careful when stopping along this route for rest or bike repairs. Fortunately, traffic volume along this stretch of the Trail is quite low.

Signage

	North #	North %	Total #	Total %
Adequate	24	39	31	24
Inadequate	7	11	7	6
Needed	30	50	75	70

While many segments of the Mississippi River Trail in other states have not been formally designed and marked with appropriate signage; this is not the case for the Shelby County

Trail. As the table above indicates, the Trail’s Northern Segment is reasonably well marked by appropriate signage that is, with few exceptions, unobstructed and in good condition. However, our survey suggests that approximately 30 new signs are needed to either replace those in poor condition or to provide necessary wayfinding at important intersections that are presently not marked.

Facilities and Attractions

	North #	Total #
Facilities	12	21
Attractions	18	42

The Trail’s Northern Segment offers riders many conveniently located hiking and biking facilities providing water and toilets. The Northern Segment also provides a wide range of attractions from beautiful natural areas (Meeman Shelby Forest State Park), interesting local eateries (The Shelby Forest General Store), and wonderful examples of vernacular architecture (Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church). The exact location and brief description for more than a dozen of the North’s bike facilities and nearly two dozen local attractions can be found on Appendix B: North Segment Facilities and Attractions Map.

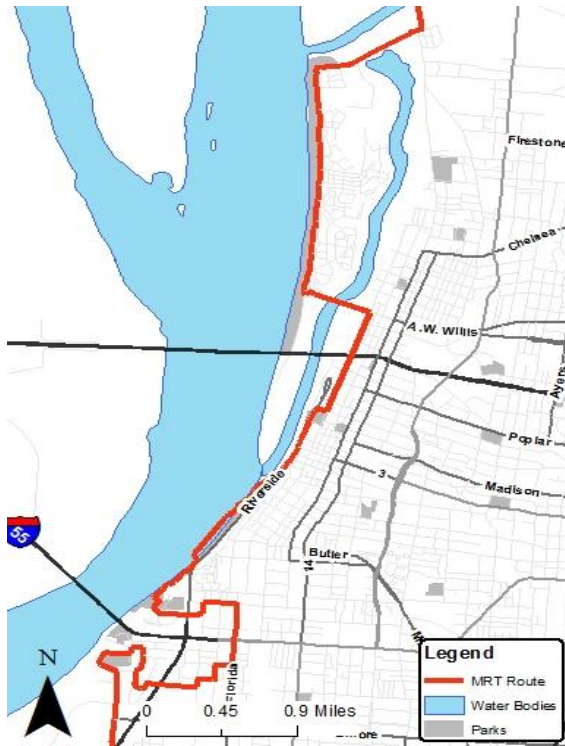
Problems Areas

	North #	Total #
Active Drives	1	1
Busy Intersections	2	11
Odors	2	2
Other	3	4

The Trail’s Northern Segment presents riders with few real challenges save a few wind and weather exposed sections of the roadway that are susceptible to icy conditions in unusually cold winter weather. There are also isolated areas where small creeks can, during periods of unusually heavy rainfall, overflow their shallow banks obstructing the main Trail. Finally, as hikers and bikers approach the southernmost segment of the Northern Segment of the Trail they will pass by an active landfill, a lumber mill, and several areas where wood is sometimes burned which may, during the dead of the summer, present some olfactory challenges.

See Appendix B: North Segment Facilities and Attractions Map

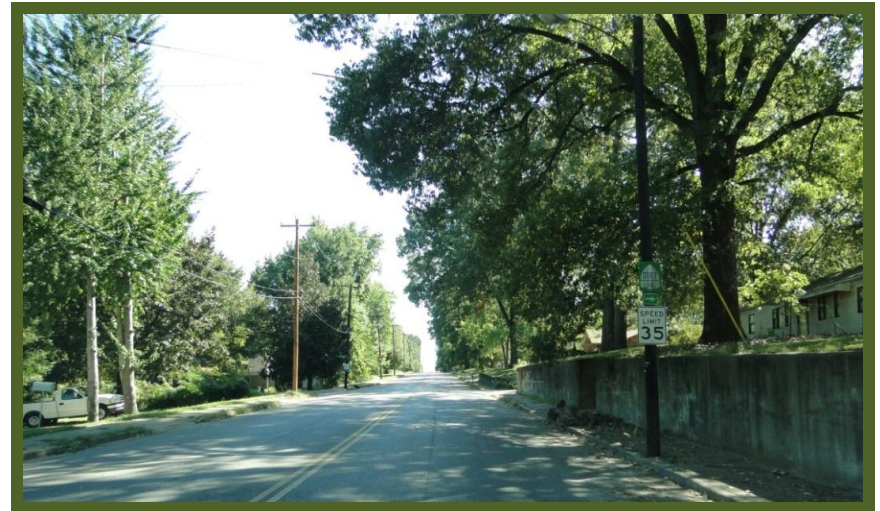
Downtown Segment Research Findings



The Trail's Downtown Segment begins in Northaven traveling southwest over the Wolf River to Mud Island. It then moves south at the Mississippi River providing hikers and bikers with an unparalleled view of "The Big Muddy" for more than a mile before turning east at the approach to the A.W. Willis Bridge. Following the eastern descent from the A.W. Willis Bridge, the trail proceeds south onto Front Street offering users a great view of Downtown Memphis. At Jefferson Street, the Trail turns to the west to the Mississippi River at Tom Lee Park. For the next several miles, users get to enjoy fabulous views of the Mississippi as well

as the I-55 Memphis-Arkansas Memorial, Frisco, and Harahan Bridges. The originally routed MRT brought riders from the water's edge at Tom Lee Park to high upon the bluff at Martyrs Park and then along several quiet side streets to a very busy and exposed entrance to the I-55 Bridge. Here, riders would proceed along the southern sidewalk of the bridge where they would exit the Tennessee section of the Trail to West Memphis, Arkansas.

After carefully surveying the entrance to the I-55 Bridge and the many nearby architectural, historical, and cultural assets of nearby South and Southwest Memphis, the MRC-T Survey Team decided to recommend the first major change in the MRT's Shelby County Trail since its establishment. The Survey Team recommended an alternative to the current I-55 to West Memphis portion of the trail, due to serious concerns regarding traffic safety in favor of a new Southwest Memphis Segment.





Land Use

	Downtown #	Downtown %	Total #	Total %
Rural	0	0	23	47
Suburban	2	28	17	35
Urban	3	44	3	6
Industrial	2	28	5	10
Park	0	0	1	2

The land uses along the Trail's Downtown Segment change quickly from rural and suburban to urban. However, it is important to remember that 2 miles of the Trail that are designated as urban offer riders uninterrupted views of the Mississippi from a distance of less than 50 yards.

Road Conditions

	Downtown #	Downtown %	Total #	Total %
Excellent	0	0	0	0
Good	2	28	21	42
Fair	5	72	25	51
Poor	0	0	3	6

Road Conditions are, in general, quite good along most of the Trail's Downtown Segment. There are, however, three minor Road Conditions-related challenges facing hikers and bikers. First, Trail users must share the sidewalk that runs north/south along the Mississippi River Greenbelt Park and the Tom Lee Park with pedestrians. Second, they must be prepared to ascend the A.W. Willis Bridge when traveling between Mud Island and the Downtown. Third, the Trail crosses over the tracks of the Riverfront Loop of the Downtown Trolley in two spots that must be managed with great care.

Degree of Difficulty

	Downtown #	Downtown %	Total #	Total %
Expert	0	0	0	0
Journeymen	4	57	19	39
Novice	3	43	30	61

While the Trail's Downtown Segment requires hikers and bikers to manage a few significant elevation and numerous directional changes, it also exposes Trail users to significant increases in automobile and pedestrian traffic while traveling along Front and Jefferson Streets and South Riverside Drive.

Aesthetic Quality

	Downtown #	Downtown %	Total #	Total %
Arresting	3	43	8	16
Interesting	4	57	33	67
Uninspired	0	0	8	16

The Trail's Downtown Segment offers more than two miles of riverfront access featuring fabulous views of the Wolf and Mississippi Rivers as well as Downtown Memphis.

Tree Coverage (Road Canopy, percentage covered)

	Downtown #	Downtown %	Total #	Total %
>80%	0	0	14	29
40% < 80%	6	86	13	27
<40%	1	14	22	54

The Trail's Downtown Segment offers relatively short distances with significant Tree Canopies. Hikers and riders traveling this segment of the Trail should be careful to stay hydrated and use appropriate sun block. Fortunately, this segment has numerous bike facilities and retail stores where these items can be purchased.

Available Shoulders

	Downtown #	Downtown %	Total #	Total %
Yes	3	43	12	25
No	4	57	39	75

Less than half of the Trail's Downtown Segment has adequate shoulders. Hikers and bikers must, therefore, exercise caution when stopping for water or bike repairs.

Signage

	Downtown #	Downtown%	Total #	Total %
Adequate	7	25	31	24
Inadequate	0	0	7	6
Needed	21	75	75	70

The Trail's Downtown Segment features many well-placed signs that are, with few exceptions, in excellent repair. However, the number of turns which the Trail's Downtown Segment requires suggests the need for a significant number of new signs.

Facilities and Attractions

	Downtown #	Total #
Facilities	5	63
Attractions	12	42

Those traveling the Trail's Downtown Segment will find numerous public and private facilities offering water and restrooms, these include Miss Cordelia's Market on Mud Island, the Mud Island River Park and Museum, and the Tennessee

Welcome Center. In addition, Trail users will also be able to visit, while on the Trail or by traveling less than ten city blocks from the Trail, the following Downtown attractions:

- Mud Island River Park and Museum
- Fire Museum of Memphis
- Main Street Trolley
- Orpheum Theatre
- Gibson Guitar Factory
- Rock n' Soul Museum
- South Main Arts District
- Memphis Riverboats
- Beale Street Entertainment District
- Belz Museum of Judaic Asian Art
- FedEx Forum
- Robert Church Park
- Clayborn Temple
- National Civil Rights Museum
- Slave Haven Underground Railroad Museum
- The Cotton Museum at the Memphis Cotton Exchange
- The Center for Southern Folklore

See Appendix C: Downtown Facilities and Attraction Map

Problems Areas

	Downtown #	Total #
Active Drives	0	1
Busy Intersections	6	11
Odors	0	1
Other	0	4

While the Trail offers riders a terrific introduction to the many wonders of the Wolf, Loosahatchie, and Mississippi Rivers as well as the excitement of Downtown Memphis; it does present hikers and riders with a few challenges of which they should be aware. Among these are:

Second Street Alternative Route- Initially proposed as an alternative to the proposed Mud Island route, this alternative was eliminated because of this street's industrial traffic volume.

A.W. Willis Bridge- Currently, this bridge serves as the primary connector between the Mud Island and the Trail's Downtown Segment. This bridge features a rather significant and rapid ascent and descent that hikers and bikers should be prepared to complete.

I-55 Bridge Entranceway- One of the most dangerous lengths of the original MRT Shelby County Trail was the section between Martyrs (Rivermont) Park and the I-55 Bridge Entranceway. Due to a lack of waterfront access to the Bridge, hikers and bikers had to take a circuitous route on city streets in order to circumvent the barrier created by I-55 and the active rail lines just north of it in order to safely cross Crump Boulevard. Once south of Crump Boulevard, riders had to enter Crump Park carrying their bike up twenty steps on the south side of the I-55 Bridge to gain access. As they entered the main roadway heading west over the Bridge to West Memphis, Arkansas, hikers and riders were exposed, in a completely unprotected manner (no separating guard rail), to fast moving, oncoming traffic dominated by 18 wheeled trucks. The survey team was unanimous in their recommendation to develop an alternative route that would avoid exposing hikers and bikers to this unnecessary risk.



While planned improvements to the I-55 roadway in Memphis will feature a roundabout designed to safely accommodate pedestrian and bicyclist traffic, dramatically improving future traffic safety, the current situation makes the present route unsafe.

Future plans by the Harahan Bridge Project to repurpose the historic cantilevered roadway on the northern side of this structure and to provide a waters' edge promenade allowing north/south hikers and bikers to gain safe access to this walkway represent an inspired solution to many of the current traffic safety issues that make the I-55 Bridge crossing unacceptable, the University of Memphis Survey Team strongly encourages rides to use the newly designed route connecting Memphis to Mississippi and their new Mississippi River Trail segment, until the abovementioned improvements are completed.

Southern Segment Research Findings



The Southern Segment of the Shelby County Trail does not currently exist, except in the imagination of the project's various consultants. A new nineteen mile section of the MRT's Shelby County Trail is being strongly recommended for the following four reasons.

1. To reduce future Trail users' exposure to potentially dangerous traffic conditions crossing I-55 north/south near the approach to the I-55 Bridge to Arkansas;
2. To introduce future Trail users to the many historically and culturally significant communities and sites in South and Southwest Memphis, including South Parkway, the historic Soulsville, USA District, the Marine Hospital and Ornamental Museum near DeSoto Park, Martin Luther Riverside Park, T.O. Fuller State Park and the C.H. Nash Museum at the Chucalissa Archaeological Site;
3. To encourage further utilization of these two important Native American and African American cultural and recreational facilities; and,
4. To provide a new connection between Meeman-Shelby Forest and T.O. Fuller State Parks in Shelby County

The proposed route would begin at the National Ornamental Metal Museum and DeSoto Park and travel south along Riverside Boulevard offering the cyclist an expansive view of the Mississippi River. It would then move south along Riverside Boulevard through a significant portion of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park east along Mallory and south on New Horn Lake Road to Rivergate. The route then moves west on Rivergate to Riverport and through a large portion of T.O. Fuller State Park along Boxtown Road. The final segment of the Trail's Southern route moves east on Shelby Drive, passing Dalstrom Park to the south, and making a final turn south on Horn Lake Road to the DeSoto County border of northern Mississippi.

Land Use

	South #	South %	Total #	Total %
Rural	0	0	23	47
Suburban	12	86	17	35
Urban	0	0	3	6
Industrial	2	14	5	10
Park	0	0	1	2

The Trail's newly-proposed Southern Segment exposes hikers and bikers to a variety of land uses. The northernmost section of this Segment is suburban in nature featuring a mix of institutional, industrial, park, and medium density residential areas. The middle and final portion of the Southern Segment offers a mix of suburban landscapes with single-family homes, industrial complexes, public parks and playgrounds, with a few semi-rural areas near the Nonconnah Creek.

Road Conditions

	South#	South%	Total #	Total %
Excellent	0	0	0	0
Good	1	7	19	39
Fair	12	86	30	61
Poor	1	7	0	0

Road conditions along the Trail's newly proposed Southern Segment are, for the most part, fair. Hikers and bikers must exercise caution traveling south along Riverside Boulevard adjacent to Martin Luther King Jr Riverside Park where traffic is often heavy. They may also find the section of the Trail along Riverport and Rivergate roads challenging due to the large number of trucks using this portion of the route. Fortunately, the shoulders

of the road along this section of the route are very generous allowing Trail users to keep a safe distance from fast-moving automobile and truck traffic.

Degree of Difficulty

	South#	South%	Total #	Total %
Expert	0	0	0	0
Journeyman	0	0	19	39
Novice	14	100	30	61

The Trail's proposed Southern Segment does not present particular challenges to hikers and bikers in terms of radical changes in elevation and/or the frequency and intensity of turns. However, there are sections of the route, which we have already mentioned, that are heavily traveled by motorists and truckers requiring special care by hikers and bikers.

Aesthetic Quality

	South#	South%	Total #	Total %
Arresting	2	14	8	16
Interesting	7	50	33	67
Uninspired	5	36	8	16

The Trail's Southern Segment offers several areas that are quite lovely, including a portion of the route just south of DeSoto Park that offers compelling views of the Mississippi, delightful landscapes within MLK Riverside Park, and exposure to a variety of natural habitats in T.O. Fuller State Park.

Tree Coverage (Road Canopy, percentage covered)

	South#	South%	Total #	Total %
>80%	2	14	14	29
40% < 80%	5	36	13	27
<40%	7	50	22	54

While the northern portion of the Southern Segment has limited tree canopy offering hikers and bikers protection from the sun and other elements, the remainder of the route features generous tree canopies providing Trail users protection from the elements.

Available Shoulders

	South#	South%	Total #	Total %
Yes	4	39	12	25
No	10	71	39	75

Less than half of the Trail's Southern Segment is served by shoulders that offer users safe places to stop and, if necessary, complete repairs.

Signage

	South#	South%	Total#	Total%
Adequate	0	0	31	18
Inadequate	0	0	4	4
Needed	24	100	43	78

As a newly-designated route the entire Southern Segment requires new signage.

Facilities and Attractions

	South#	South%	Total#	Total%
Facilities	3	20	21	33
Attractions	12	80	42	67

Similar to the Trail's Northern and Downtown Segments, the Southern Segment is well served by public and private biking facilities. As already noted, the Southern Segment is also home to a number of significant architectural, historical, and cultural institutions that will be of great interest to both local and through hikers and bikers. Among these are the Marine Hospital, DeSoto Park, National Ornamental Metal Museum, Martin Luther King, Jr Riverside Park, T.O. Fuller State Park and the C.H. Nash Museum at the Chucalissa Archaeological Site.

See Appendix D: South Facilities and Attractions Map

Problems Areas

	South#	South%	Total#	Total%
Active Drives	0	0	8	24
Busy Intersections	2	67	6	18
Odors	0	0	17	50
Other	1	33	3	8

As already noted, the only three Problem Areas along the proposed Southern Segment is the busy stretch of Riverside Drive running alongside the northern portion of MLK Park and the Rivergate and Riverport sections of the route.



Final Recommendations

The Trail-related data collected and analyzed by the Mississippi River Corridor-Trail Survey Team serves as the foundation for the following short and long-term recommendations to improve the appearance, functionality, and use of the MRT's Shelby County Trail.

Short-Term Proposals

- Due to concerns for personal safety, riders are strongly encouraged to follow the newly-designed Southern Segment to Mississippi in lieu of the existing route over the I-55 Bridge to Arkansas. The Southern segment will take users through 16 miles of South and Southwest Memphis close to many of the City's most important archeological, historical, and cultural sites connecting riders to the newly-designed Mississippi River Trail in North Mississippi.

See Appendix E: Proposed New Shelby County Trail Route Map

- Work with local environmental, hiking, biking, youth, faith-based and civic organizations to mobilize volunteers to clean and remove shrubbery obscuring the Trail's existing MRT signs; and to keep the shoulders clear of glass and other debris;
- Collaborate with the Mississippi River Trail, local, state, and federal legislators to secure funds to replace existing signs that are damaged and to install new signs where needed, especially along the newly-proposed South Segment;

- Cooperate with Memphis Heritage, Memphis Music Foundation, National Civil Rights Museum, Downtown Memphis Commission, and the University of Memphis to add short side spurs and loops connecting trail users to a number of the City's and County's most significant historical and cultural assets. Among the special interest trails we are recommending are:

- Shelby Forest Northern Nature Trail
- Downtown History and Architecture Trail
- Civil Rights Trail; and the
- South Memphis Soul Music Tract.

See Appendix F: Proposed Special Interests Loops and Spurs Map

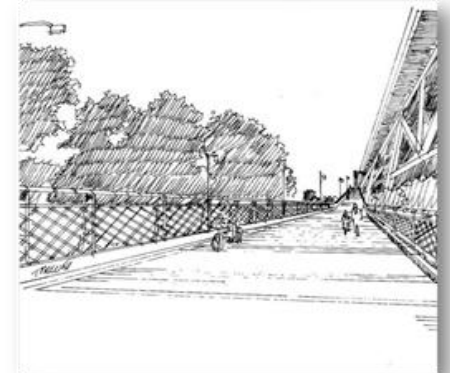
- Raise additional funds to enable the Mississippi River Corridor-Tennessee organization to establish an interactive website for trail planning and for the production of an informative and elegant information brochure describing the Trail's many unique features, facilities, and attractions;
- Engage the State of Tennessee Department of Motor Vehicles and Safe Routes to School Program, the Memphis Police Department, and the Shelby County Clerk's Office to devise an educational campaign to assist drivers in safely sharing the roadway with pedestrians and bicyclists. This program should be incorporated into the regular process of renewing one's automobile registration or driver's license. For example, as one waits in line in the Clerk's Office there might be a series of short video's briefing automobile drivers on the ABC's of sharing the road with others;

- Identify a corporate sponsor interested in funding the design and installation of an interpretive center honoring and celebrating the trail in the Greenbelt Park parking lot on Mud Island just west of Tug's Restaurant. This location attracts many visitors and is close to the halfway point along the Trail's Shelby County segment;
- Seek support to install appropriate Shelby County Trail Signs (Logo) at places along the Trail where it intersects with officially designated Shelby County Trails, as discussed by the Greenway Alliance, to encourage Trail users to comfortably shift to one of the local trails (i.e. Shelby County's version of the uniform Interstate Highway signs);

See Appendix G: Intersecting Urban Trail Map

Long-Term Proposals

- Support the funding and implementation of the recently-developed proposals for improving the Harahan Bridge by creating a walking and biking deck that would allow individuals to safely cross over into Arkansas and West Memphis. Additionally, advocate for the construction of a lower-level boardwalk that would allow individuals travel north/south along the edge of the Mississippi River to access this important river crossing without confronting the I-55 traffic at the Memphis entranceway to the bridge;



- Seek funds to construct a pedestrian and bicycle bridge over the Loosahatchie River on Benjestown Road replacing the former automobile bridge that failed in the early 1960s;



- Extend the existing Shelby County Trail through South and Southwest Memphis along a path closer to the river, via Riverport following the completion of road work that is currently being completed near the entranceway to President's Island;
- Secure funding to fill in missing sections of the hiking and biking trail within Martin Luther King Jr. Riverside Park to allow hikers and bikers to enjoy the beauty and serenity of this City Park thereby reducing the time they will be forced to spend navigating the City's many busy streets;
- Organize bike to school and work days within neighborhoods located along the new MRT Shelby County Trail to increase the number of users taking advantage of this great urban trail system; and,
- Seek a local corporate sponsor to inaugurate a Tour de Shelby bicycle race and fun ride to coincide with the last day of the Tour de France to promote biking, as an important example of healthy living, and to bring additional visitors to our County where they can take advantage of our County's many natural, architectural, historical cultural, and retail opportunities/

For More Information

Please contact

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