

Funding Pathways for Multimodal Trails | Miami-Dade County

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As multimodal trial projects grow in importance in Miami-Dade County, meeting their funding needs remains critical

- ▶ The Team identified and analyzed the landscape of funding pathways available to construct, operate, and maintain bicycle path/trail assets with Federal, State, and local monies.

Federal	State	Local
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation Alternatives • Highway Safety Improvement • Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program • RAISE Grant Program • Carbon Reduction Program • PROTECT Program • Safe Streets and Roads for All • Active Transportation Infrastructure • Earmarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SUN Trail Program • Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program • Florida Economic Development Transportation Fund • Strategic Intermodal System • Earmarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Obligation Bonds • PTP Surtax Funds • Local General Funds • Tourist Development Tax • Gas Taxes • Impact Fees • Special Taxing Districts • Improvement Districts and Tax Increment Financing • Naming Rights • Corporate Philanthropy

- ▶ In order to showcase the associated funding opportunities and costs of building and maintaining trails, the Team profiled four multimodal trial projects in Miami-Dade County (MDC).



Funding pathways at the Federal, State, and Local levels



Federal funding is available to fund the capital expenditures (Capex) of "shovel-ready" trail projects

- ▶ The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) expands funding opportunities for MDC's multimodal trails by:
 - ▶ Increasing funding amounts for long-standing programs;
 - ▶ Creating new programs; and
 - ▶ Enabling funds from some Federal programs to be credited towards the non-Federal share of others.
- ▶ In order to be competitive for these funds, projects need to be "ready", in terms of both planning and local funds secured to meet the non-Federal match.
- ▶ Most opportunities for funding at the Federal level cover capital expenditures, not operations and maintenance (O&M).

Landscape of Federal funding opportunities

Source of Funding	Description	Capex	O&M
Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program	Largest dedicated source of funding for trails nationwide. Provides funding for generally smaller-scale transportation projects and includes a set-aside for the Recreational Trails Program.	✓	✓
Highway Safety Improvement Program	Funds safety projects aimed at reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries.	✓	
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program	Provides a flexible funding source to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act through projects that improve air quality.	✓	
RAISE Program	Multimodal, merit-based, competitive discretionary grant program for surface transportation infrastructure projects with a significant local or regional impact.	✓	
[New] Carbon Reduction Program	Provides funds for projects designed to reduce transportation emissions.	✓	
[New] PROTECT Program	Grants for resiliency improvements at State and local levels.	✓	
[New] Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program	Competitive program to support infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives that prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets.	✓	
Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment	Competitive grants to construct eligible projects that provide safe and connected active transportation facilities in an active transportation network or spine.	✓	
Earmarks	Traditionally used by Congress as a tool to allocate directed Federal spending to locally supported priority projects.	✓	

State funding provides few funding opportunities for trail projects, mainly for Capex

- ▶ Although MDC has not historically benefitted from large amounts of State monies for trails, in recent years, several trails have received funding, mainly from the SUN Trail Program.
 - ▶ However, conversations with stakeholders indicate the SUN Trail Program is currently capped and any potential future expansion remains uncertain.
- ▶ Since MDC costs are likely to be higher than those in other parts of the State, MDC projects may be less competitive.
- ▶ Similar to programs at the Federal level, most funding available at the State level covers capital expenditures, not O&M.

Landscape of State funding opportunities

Source of Funding	Description	Capex	O&M
Shared-Use Nonmotorized (SUN) Trail Program	Provides funding for the development of a statewide system of interconnected paved multi-use trails (SUN Trail network) for bicyclists and pedestrians that are physically separated from the road.	✓	✓
Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program	Competitive, reimbursement-based grant program that provides financial assistance for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation.	✓	
Florida Economic Development Transportation Fund	An incentive tool designed to alleviate transportation problems that adversely impact a specific company's location or expansion decision. Targets projects that facilitate economic development by eradicating location-specific transportation problems.	✓	
Strategic Intermodal System	Florida's high priority network of transportation facilities important to the State's economy and mobility. In the past, SIS dollars have been used to build trails as part of broader road projects.	✓	
Earmarks	Can be very useful to fund a specific project which may not rate highly in the evaluation criteria of existing programs or to help jumpstart the development of a project.	✓	

Local funding – available for capex and O&M – is the most critical source of funding for trails

- ▶ Local funding is essential for the long-term successful implementation of trails as it can cover capex and O&M costs, while also unlocking other Federal and State sources of funding.
- ▶ MDC has a successful track record implementing innovative funding techniques at the local level. However, political support is key to unlocking local funding sources.
- ▶ Political support is often best won by helping to develop "grassroots" support for a trail, including in the areas adjacent to the trail.

Landscape of Local funding opportunities (1 of 2)

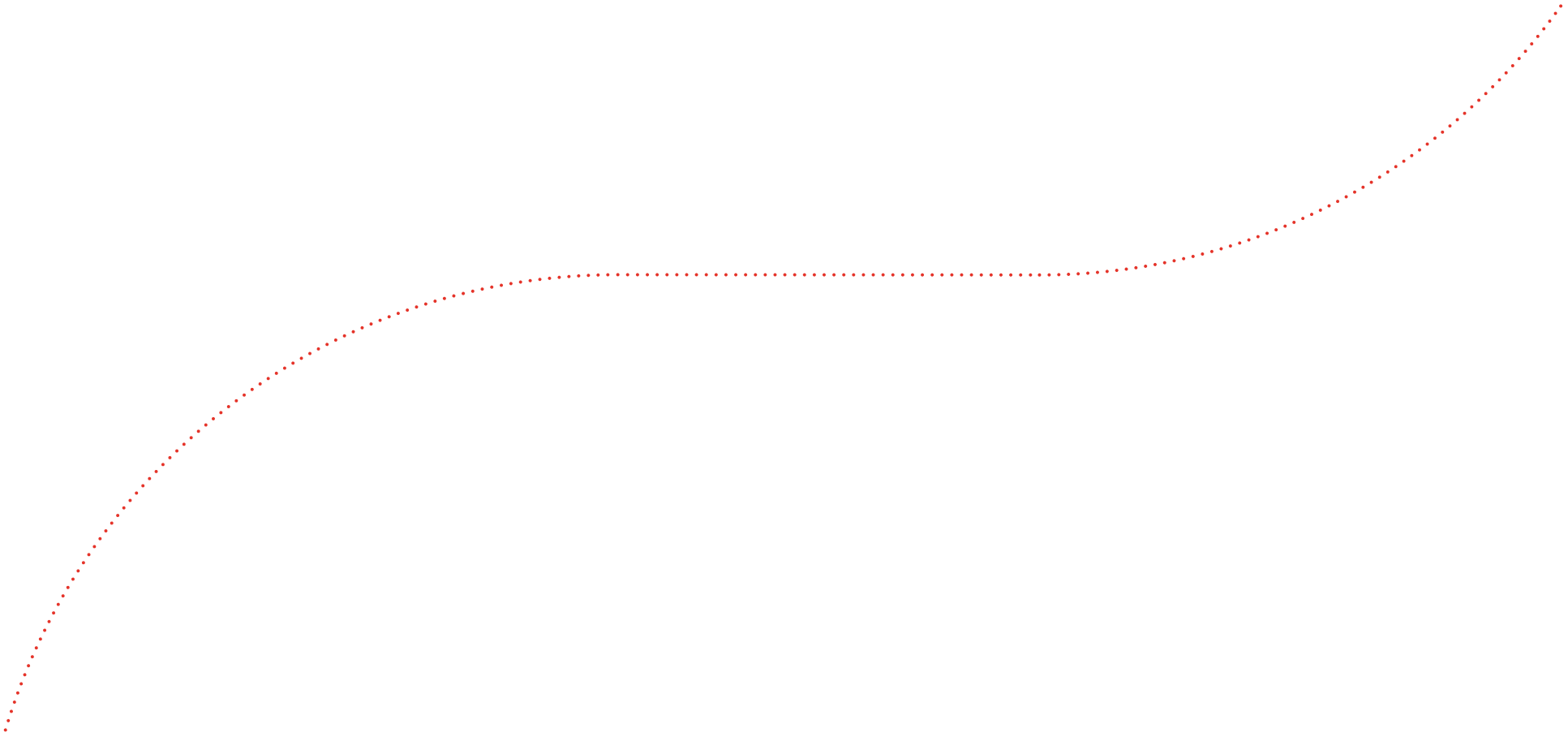
Source of Funding	Description	Capex	O&M
General Obligation Bond (GOB)	GOBs are general obligations of the County, payable from unlimited ad valorem taxes on all taxable real and tangible personal property within the County.	✓	
People's Transportation Plan (PTP) Surtax Funds	The State Legislature's House Bill 385 restricts MDC's ability to use Surtax proceeds for bike paths (with some exceptions if part of a larger project). However, municipalities can use Surtax funding for shared use paths.	✓	✓
Local Government's General Funds	General funds may provide a source of funding for capital projects and maintenance, including multimodal trails.	✓	✓
Tourist Development Room Tax	Levied and imposed throughout the incorporated and unincorporated areas of MDC. Tax collections are to be deposited in the MDC Tourist Development Trust Fund and used, among other activities, to fund tourist-related facilities.	✓	✓
Gas Taxes	Motor fuels taxes are collected at the Federal, State, and local level and are a cornerstone source of transportation funding. In MDC, there are at least six components to "gas tax" revenues, each of which have different allowable uses. Some include relatively little restriction in available legislation.	✓	✓
Special Taxing District	Funding technique under which a specific district is designated, and a fee is levied on property owners within that district whose properties are the primary beneficiaries of the infrastructure.	✓	✓

Landscape of Local funding opportunities (2 of 2)

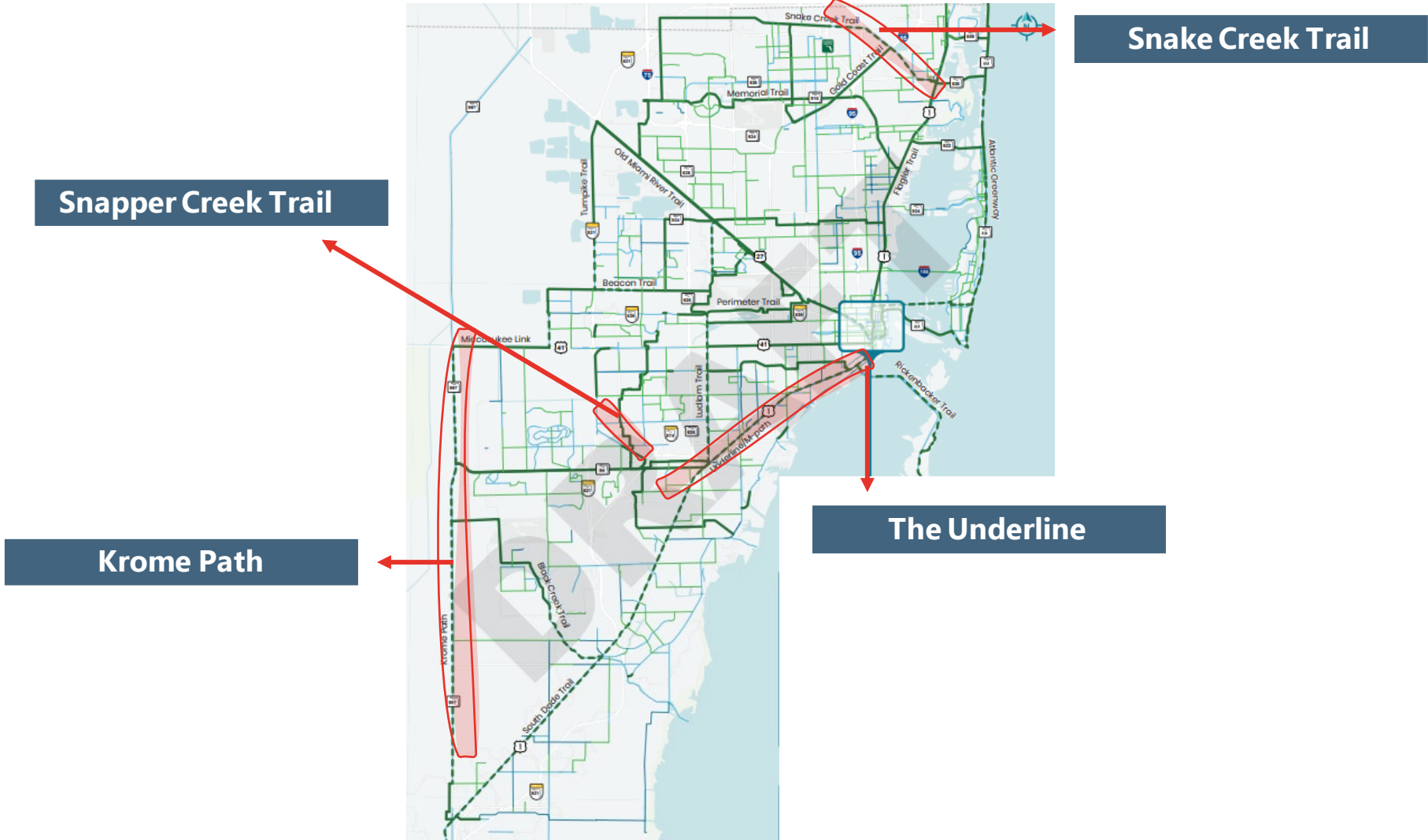
Source of Funding	Description	Capex	O&M
Improvement District & Tax Increment Financing	Improvement districts are established to guarantee that property tax revenue from rising property values (Tax Increment Financing, TIF) remain within the area to fund the development, construction, maintenance, and operation of infrastructure.	✓	✓
Impact Fees	One-time capital charge imposed on developers by municipalities to help fund the capital cost (and impact) of the additional public services, infrastructure, or transportation facilities necessitated by, and attributable to, new development.	✓	
Naming Rights/ Sponsorships	In a naming rights transaction, an agency sells the rights to name infrastructure to a private company in exchange for upfront or annual payments. Naming rights typically involve multi-year, fixed-price deals; funds generally charged on an annual basis.	✓	✓
Corporate Philanthropy	Philanthropic sources can complement but are not a substitute for public funding. It is generally more appropriate to seek private funding sources to cover a specific gap or activity rather than generalized project development needs.	✓	✓



Case Studies



Four multimodal trail projects were selected for review, reflecting MDC's socioeconomic and geographic diversity



The Underline

World-class, multimodal urban trail connecting from the Miami River (Brickell area) to the Dadeland South Metrorail Station. It is managed by The Underline Conservancy.

The Underline will be the County's first mobility corridor connecting all modes of transportation and providing accessibility to 8 Metrorail stations

Facts

- Expected completion: 2025-26
- Length: 10 miles
- Type: Urban trail

Amenities

- 10+ amenity spaces and full programming (transportation and recreational components)

Capex

- Cost: ~\$146M (Phases 1-3)
- Funding sources: Road Impact Fees, BUILD grant, GOB, others

Opex

- Cost (2022-50): ~\$316M
- Funding sources: TBD

Snake Creek Trail

Snake Creek Trail is a paved 6.5-mile route connecting North Miami Beach and Miami Gardens managed by the Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department.

Located along a mix of commercial and residential areas, the trail helps to meet the demand for recreational facilities, while also providing opportunities for “practical trips” for commuters.

Facts

- Status: Operational
- Length: 6.5 miles
- Type: Greenway/Non-Rail-Trail

Amenities

- Limited amenities, including bike and pedestrian path, small parks, fitness stations, picnic shelters.

Capex

- Cost: ~\$2.5M (3.4 miles)*
- Funding sources: Surface Transportation Program, GOB

Opex

- Cost (2022-50): ~\$6M
- Funding sources: TBD

*Based upon the Opinion of Probable Cost published by Miami-Dade County in the “Snake Creek Bike Trail Planning and Feasibility Study (2005)”.

Snapper Creek Trail

Snapper Creek Trail is a non-motorized trail located mainly within the Snapper Creek (C-2) Canal right-of-way.

The Trail has been divided into two segments:

- **Segment A:** Multi-use trail from the C-4 Canal to Kendall Drive.
- **Segment B:** Trail in suburban west-central MDC, connecting the eastern end of Segment A to the Red Road Linear Park.

Facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status: Operational • Length: 5.2 miles • Type: Suburban trail
Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited amenities, including connections with peripheral facilities, kiosks, shelters, benches.
Capex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost: ~\$5.7M (A); \$4.2M (B)* • Funding sources: GOB, Build Better Communities Bond, TAP
Opex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost (2022-50): ~\$1.7M-\$7.5M (A); \$3.2M (B) • Funding sources: TBD

*Based upon the Opinion of Probable Cost published by Miami-Dade County in the "Snapper Creek Trail Segment A Planning and Feasibility Study (2008)" and the "Snapper Creek Trail Segment B Planning and Feasibility Study (2018)".

Krome Path

In 2021, FDOT completed a roadway construction project on State Road 977/Krome Avenue from SW 136 Street to SW 8 Street/Tamiami Trail, which included the construction of Krome Path.

Krome Path is an 18.5-mile, dedicated multi-use path on the east side of the roadway. Krome Avenue is part of Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS).

Facts

- Status: Operational as of 2021
- Length: 18.5 miles
- Type: Suburban trail

Amenities

- Limited amenities.

Capex

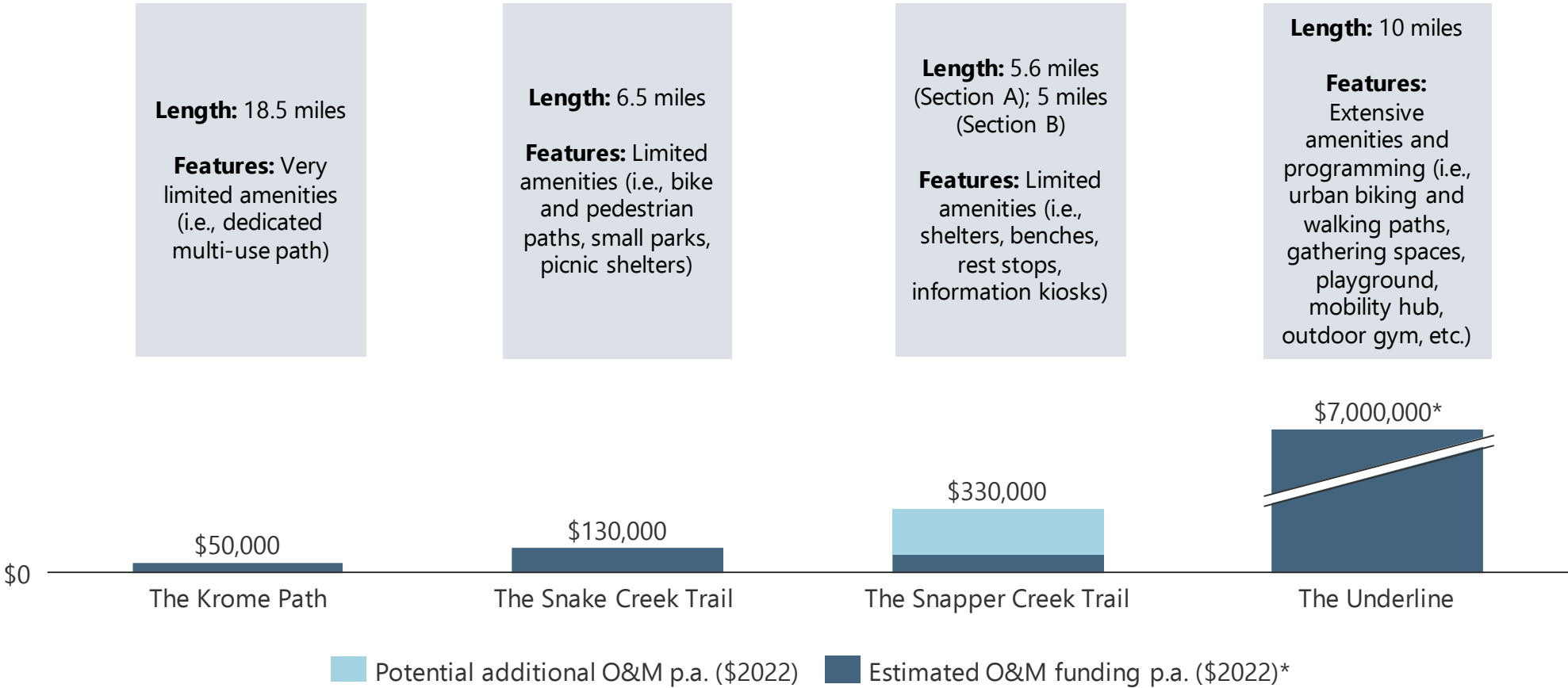
- Cost: ~\$1.86M*
- Funding sources: Strategic Intermodal System

Opex

- Cost (2022-2050): ~\$3M
- Funding sources: TBD

*Total costs are calculated based on the cost per mile estimate of \$100,540 provided by [The Miami Bike Scene](#).

Annual O&M costs can vary significantly depending on the project's length, features, and amenities

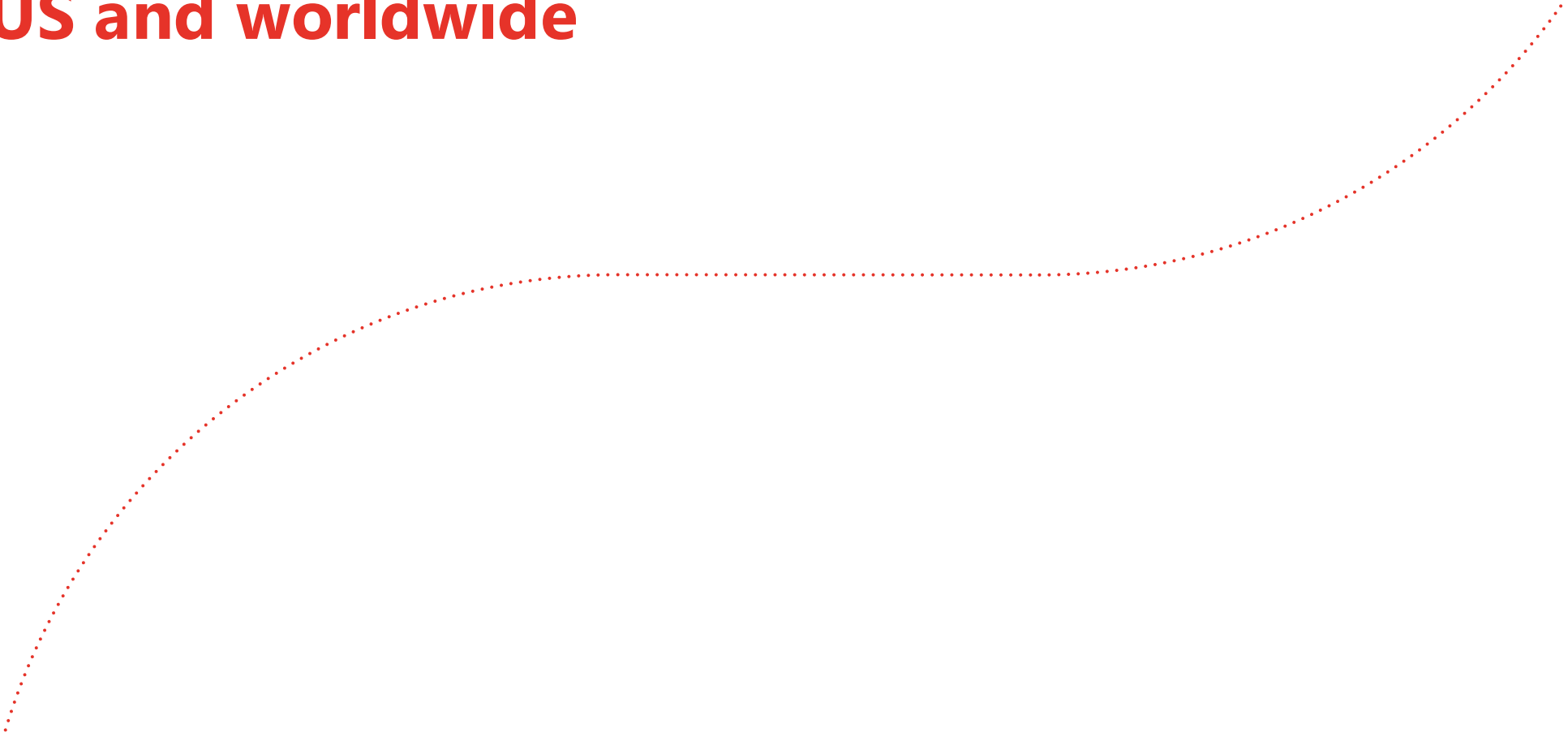


*Note: The Underline estimates are the expected O&M costs once all the phases of the Project are complete (2030). For the purposes of displaying prices in real numbers, we present the Projects' O&M costs after substantial completion in \$2022.





O&M funding models in the US and worldwide



Key takeaways on O&M funding models in the US

- ▶ It is common for agencies to fund bike path maintenance out of their O&M budget. However, this support is generally not enough to provide for long-term preventive maintenance.
- ▶ A review of non-profit parks, world-class recreational facilities, and trail systems across the US shows that, although O&M funding models vary widely, funding for O&M is typically covered by public sources.
- ▶ Securing public funding can be challenging; therefore, some entities such as the Atlanta BeltLine are exploring other models (i.e., conservatorship model). The other path is to work towards a committed public funding solution, recognizing the public value of these assets.

Overview of O&M funding models in the US

Atlanta BeltLine Atlanta

A sustainable redevelopment project, which includes approximately 32 km of bike lanes and walking trails along linear park, adjacent to future streetcar.

Funding Model

Theoretically, the City of Atlanta would cover the O&M cost. However, given that the department charged with this task is consistently underfunded, the BeltLine is evaluating other models, such as the conservatorship model used in NYC's Central Park.

East Bay Regional Park District San Francisco Bay Area

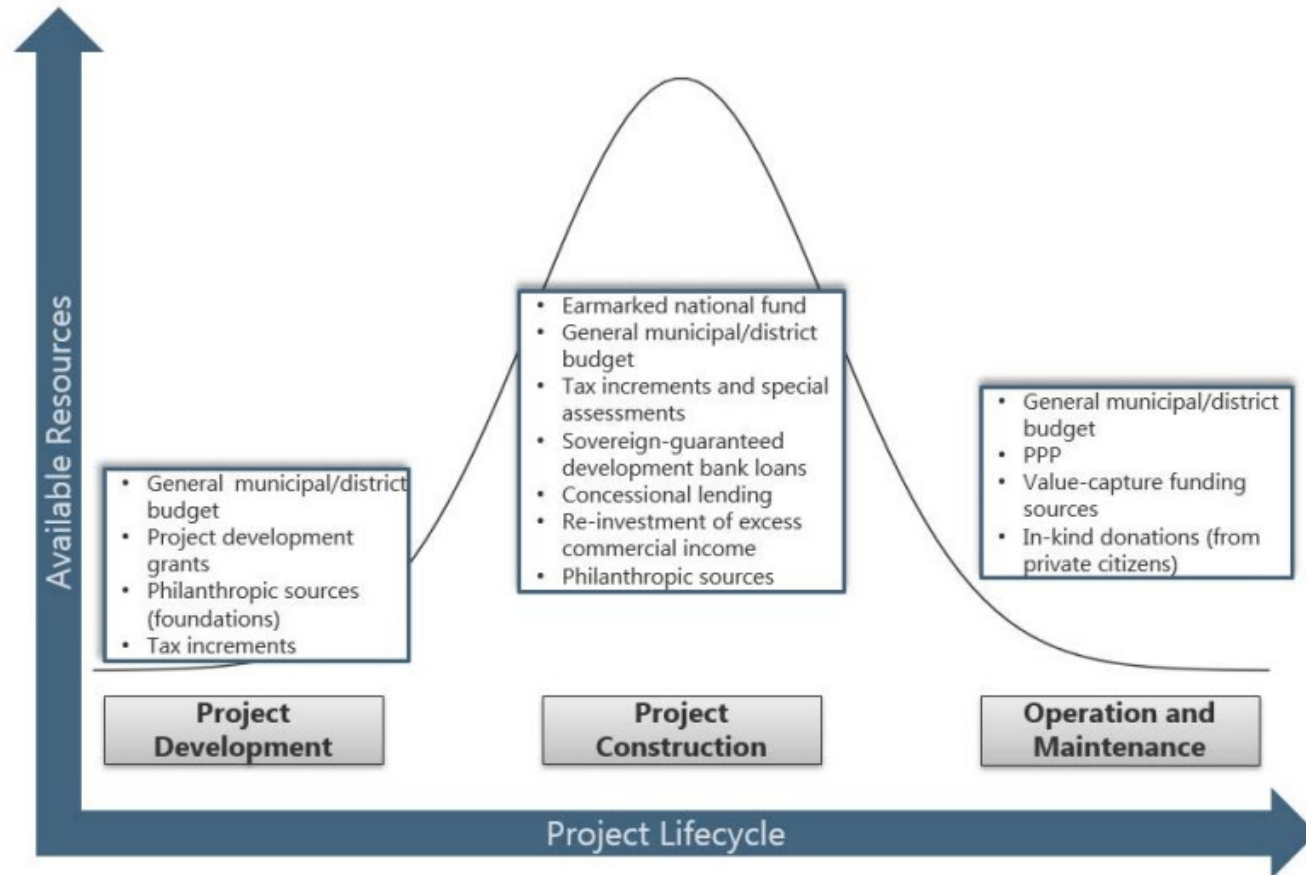
A special district, which maintains and operates a system of regional parks. It is the largest urban regional park district in the US and manages over 100,000 acres in 65 parks, and 1,200 miles of trails.

Funding Model

The District spans two counties and is funded by a special property tax applied to each property, which generates about 65% of the District's \$190M operating budget per year.

Key takeaways on O&M funding models worldwide

- ▶ Across the Global North and Global South, it is common to find that funds for ongoing O&M have often not been explicitly factored in for most projects.
- ▶ Bike/ped projects face challenges compared to motorized transportation projects, which typically have a dedicated O&M funding source (i.e., fuel taxes or tolls pay for capital, operating, and maintenance costs).



Overview of O&M funding models across the globe

Hart van Zuid Rotterdam

An area development on the south bank of Rotterdam, which includes redesign of the public space to prioritize pedestrians and cyclists.

Funding Model

Hart van Zuid is an integrated public-private partnership (P3) where the private partner designs, finances, constructs, maintains, and operates walking and biking infrastructure.

Pasig City Metro Manila, Phillipines

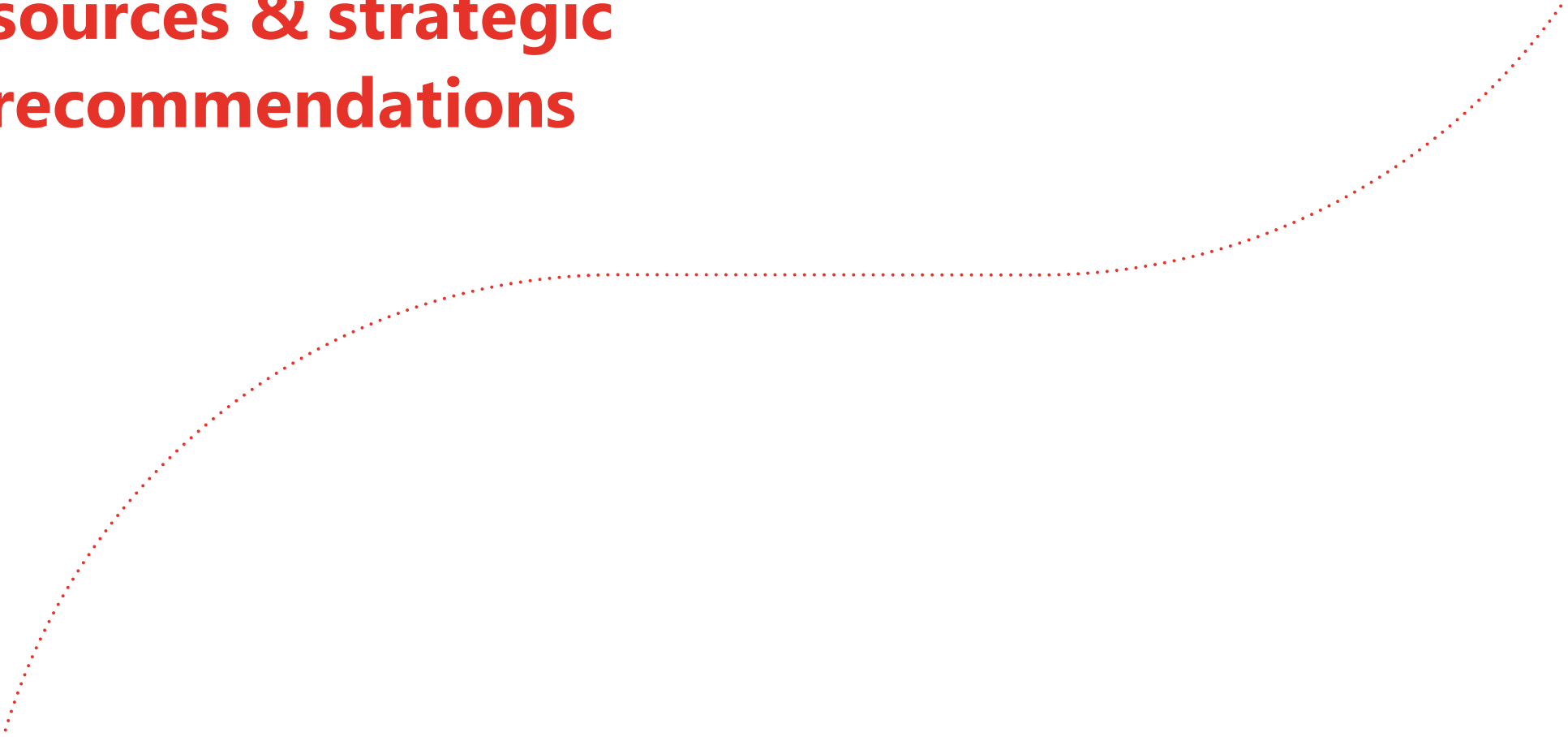
22 km of protected bike lanes, bike parking, and critical intersections facilitating safe walking and cycling facilities that have become permanent infrastructure.

Funding Model

Although the cost of operations and maintenance are not yet factored into the investment cost, this is expected to come from the Pasig City budget.



Overview of O&M funding sources & strategic recommendations



As all projects studied face O&M funding gaps, the Team identified funding sources to meet these needs

Funding Source	Type	Magnitude of Funding	Frequency	Political Feasibility
Recreational Trails Program	Federal	Up to \$500,000	●	●
SUN Trail	State	Data Unavailable	●	●
Special Tax District	Local	Millions	↻	●
PTP Surtax Funds	Local	Thousands - Millions	↻	●
Local Sales Tax (Non PTP)	Local	Millions	↻	●
General Funds	Local	Millions	↻	●
Gas Tax	Local	Millions	↻	●
Naming Rights/Sponsorships	Local	Millions	●	●
Corporate Philanthropy	Local	Thousands – Millions	↻	●
Private Donations	Local	Thousands	↻	●

Ongoing funding = ↻ One-time funding = ● | Political Feasibility = ● (most); ● (possible); ● (challenging)

Moving forward, the Team recommends...

1

MDC should consider developing multimodal trail projects as a “program” or interconnect “system” rather than as stand-alone projects.

2

To increase the likelihood that multimodal trails are competitive for Federal and State funding, projects should be “shovel-ready” and demonstrate “transformative impact”.

3

Project managers should proactively incorporate O&M funding into multimodal trail project funding plans at an early stage.

4

Although politically challenging, trails should consider strategies to pursue local funding pathways, including general funds and gas tax revenues, as these provide a critical avenue to cover both Capex and O&M.

5

Municipalities currently have greater flexibility than the County in the use of Surtax funds and should consider using these monies for multimodal trail projects.

Moving forward, the Team recommends...

6

Trails should pursue private donations and philanthropic funds as complementary funding pathways to the local options (i.e., The Underline).

7

Trails should leverage value capture funding techniques to fill O&M funding gaps, particularly as studies by universities, local governments, and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy indicate that, overall, landowners adjacent to bike trails typically feel the trail has no effect on or has increased the value of their property.

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