



Implementing a Rails-to-Trails Program Supporting Beneficial Reuse of Underutilized Properties

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- Rails-to-Trails (RTT) Background
- Overview of client's RTT Policy
- RTT Implementation Elements
 - Brownfield/Voluntary Programs
 - Site-Specific Risk Assessment
- RTT Program Highlights
- RTT Program Benefits



- Staggers Rail Act of 1980 – facilitated rail mergers
- In 1983, Congress amended the National Trails System Act [16 U.S.C. 1247(d)], allowing for alternative uses of former rail corridors (i.e. interim trail use or railbanking)
- Rail use may be reinstated at a later date
- The interim trail use of former rail corridors is administered by the Surface Transportation Board (STB)



- **Railroad Abandonments**
 - Railroads petition the STB to abandon a rail line
 - STB abandonment process allows for outside parties to request an interim trail use condition (Notice of Interim Trail Use or NITU)
 - Railroads must concur with the NITU request
 - Upon the Railroad's concurrence the STB typically grants the parties a 180-day negotiating period

- Notice of Interim Trail Use Condition (NITU)
 - Protects underlying title to corridor
 - Enhances value – contiguous corridor
 - Atypical to reinstate rail use on an NITU'd corridor, but possible



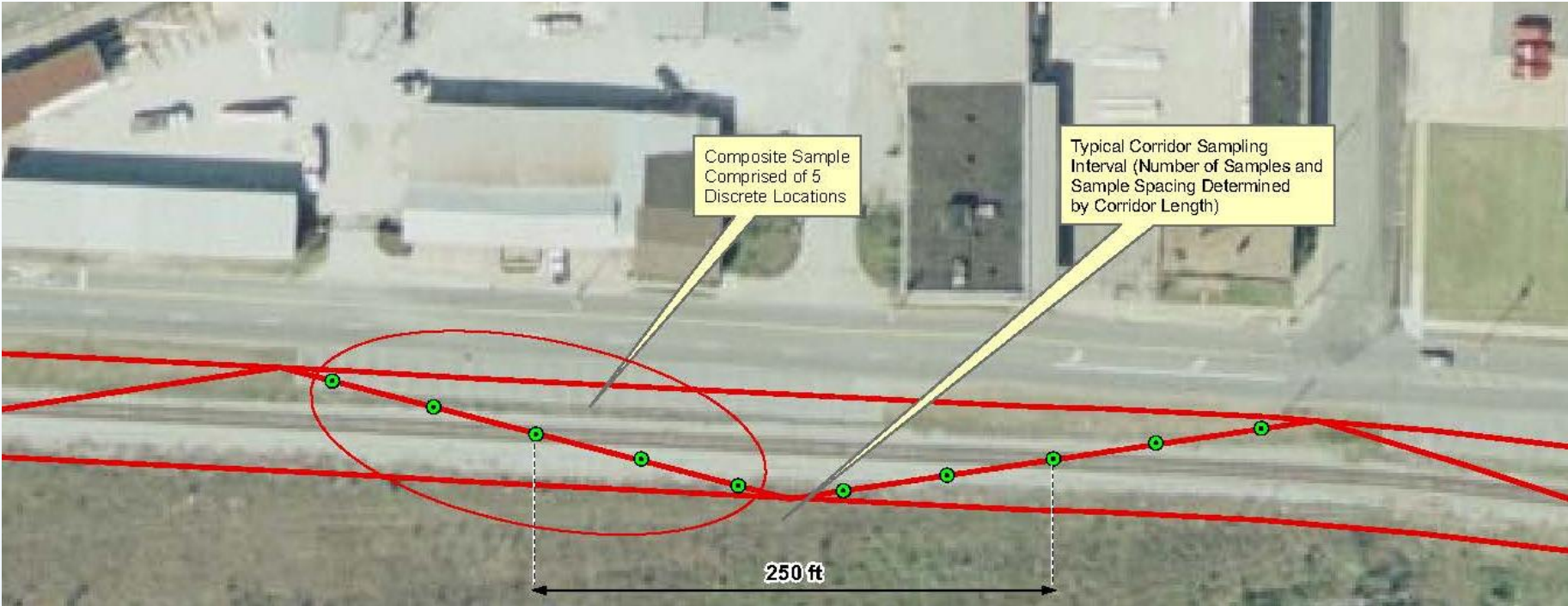
- Not all abandoned corridors are suitable candidates for Rails-to-Trails conversions, nor are all entities suitable buyers for Rails-to-Trails properties
 - Local or state regulations may not be conducive to a Rails-to-Trails conversion
 - Known soil conditions may not be conducive to a Rails-to-Trails conversion
 - A buyer may not have the resources to properly construct or maintain a trail

- Evaluating Corridor Value
- Soil Sampling
- Soil Management Plan
- Capping
- Deed Restrictions
 - Restrict use to recreational trail

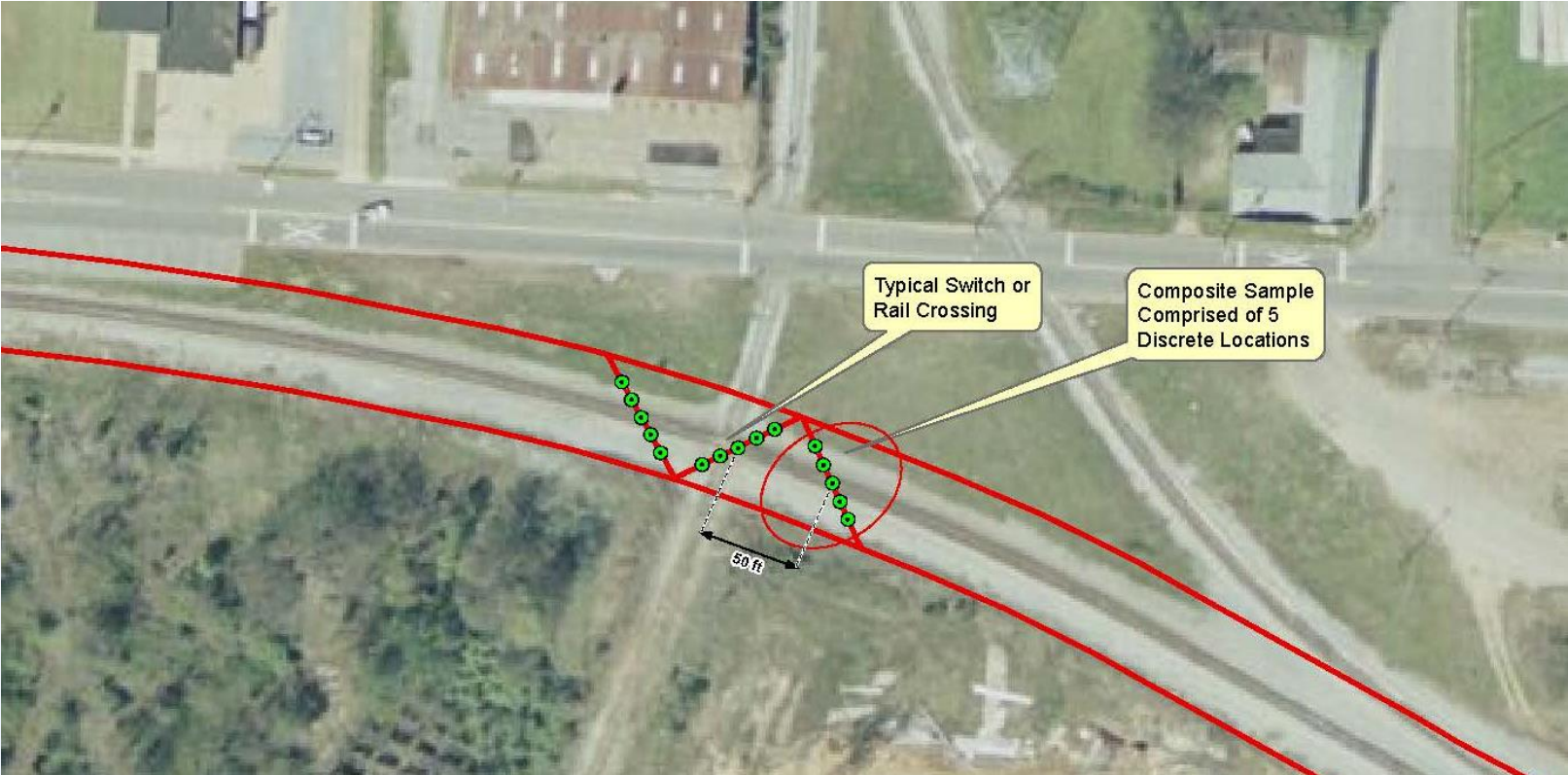


- **Soil Sampling**
 - Set frequency
 - Arsenic, Lead, PAHs
 - PCBs if electrified rail
- **Groundwater**
 - Not included in initial client-prescribed assessment protocol
 - Follow up based upon soil assessment and advancement in Brownfields program

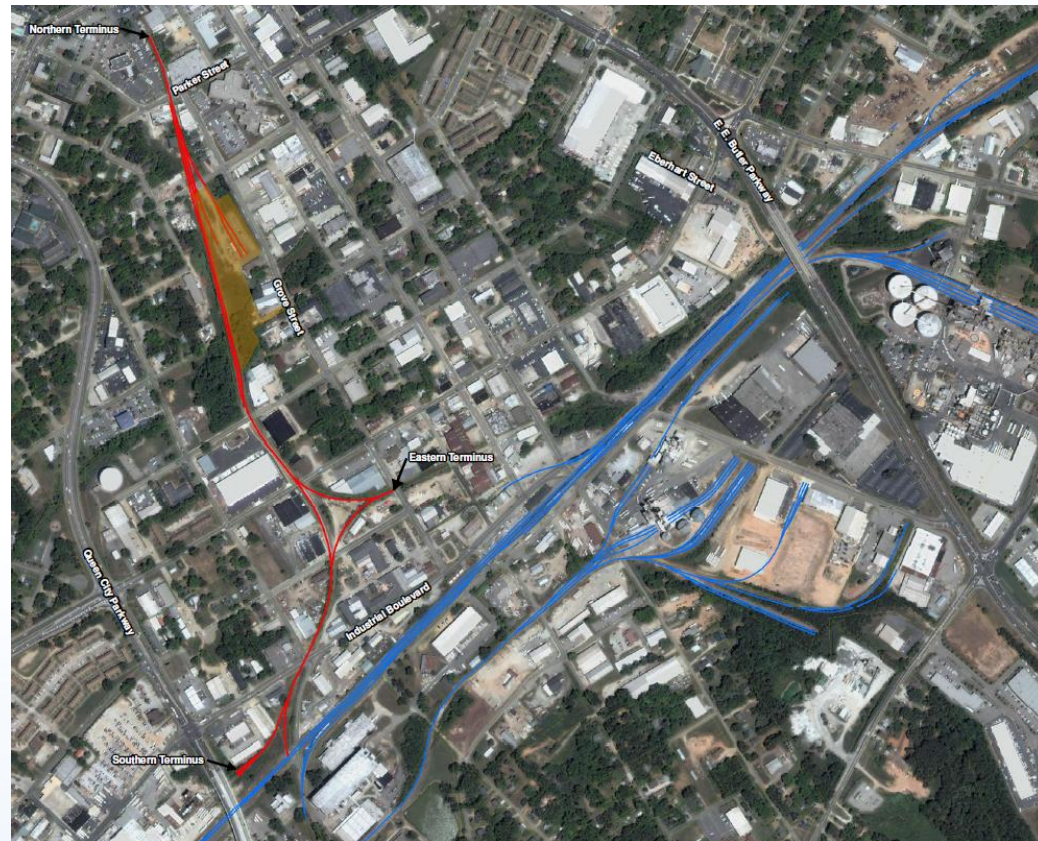




Sampling Approach (continued)



- A decommissioned rail line with a former maintenance area that is approximately 11.6 acres in size.
- The northern terminus of the former rail line is located in downtown Gainesville, Georgia.



- Risk Assessment
 - Trail scenario is unique
 - Non-residential land use scenario
 - Most sensitive receptor = adolescent recreator
- Residential Standards?
 - Too conservative
- Industrial Standards?
 - Based on adult exposure
- Site-Specific Standards
- The adolescent trail recreator risk scenario was the first of its kind approved by Georgia EPD



Gainesville RTT – Initial Site Conditions



Decommissioned Rail Line



Former Maintenance Yard

- 147 Surface soil samples, 40 subsurface samples, 12 groundwater samples were collected to evaluate the Site
- Three areas that required corrective action were identified



- In situ stabilization of lead in soil to render non-hazardous prior to disposal saved over \$100K
- Approximately 1,800 tons of soil impacted with lead, arsenic, and PAHs was excavated and disposed as nonhazardous waste.



- Beneficial reuse of materials on site
 - Cut trees mulched and used for landscaping
 - Ballast used as sub-grade for trail bed



- Property owner utilized the Georgia Brownfield Program
- Adolescent trail recreator risk scenario first of its kind approved by Georgia EPD - eliminated need for remediation within ROW
- In situ stabilization of lead in soil to render non-hazardous prior to disposal saved over \$100K
- Georgia EPD issued limitation of liability, property sold, and redevelopment completed

Gainesville RTT Maintenance Yard



Gainesville RTT Maintenance Yard



Gainesville RTT – Redevelopment Following Georgia Brownfields Program

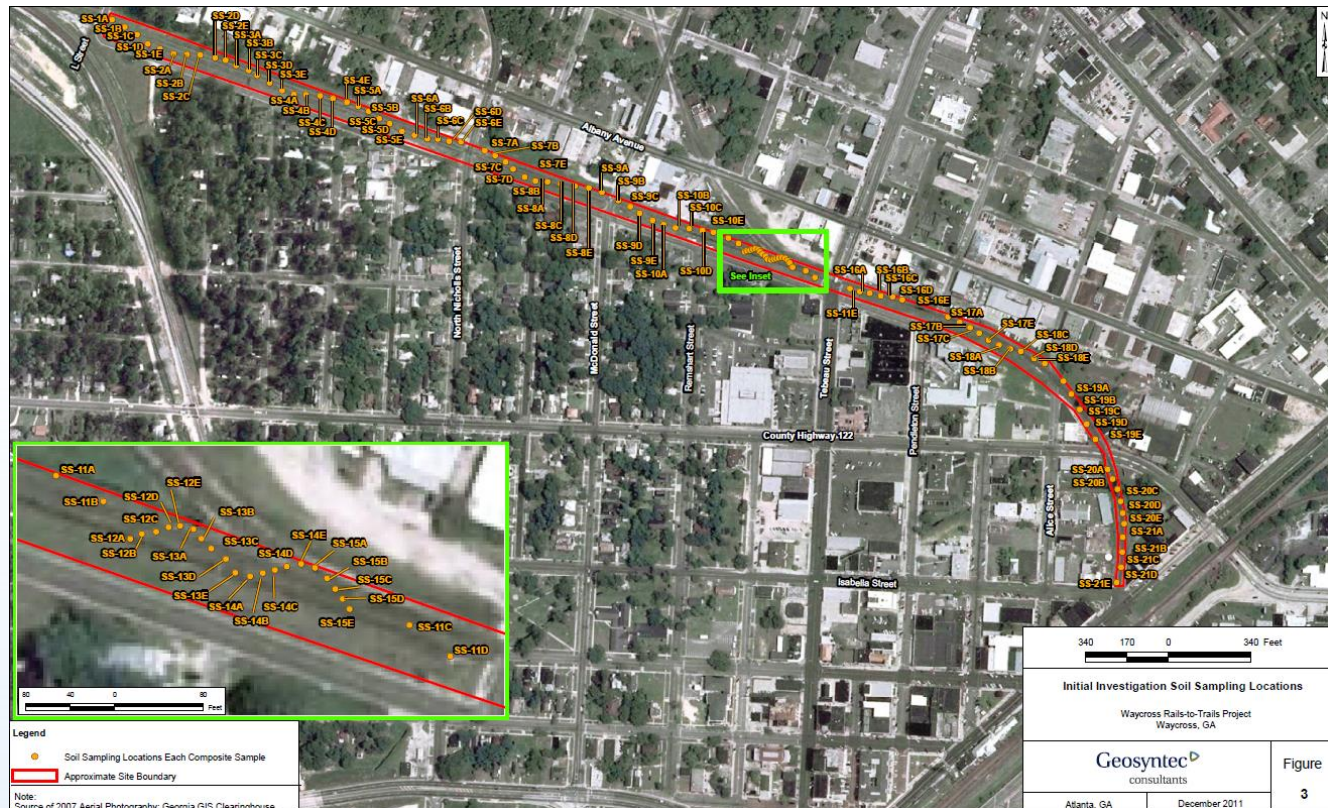


- The Waycross RTT site is approximately 20.3 acres in size and is approximately one mile long.
- The southern terminus of the rail line is in downtown Waycross, Georgia

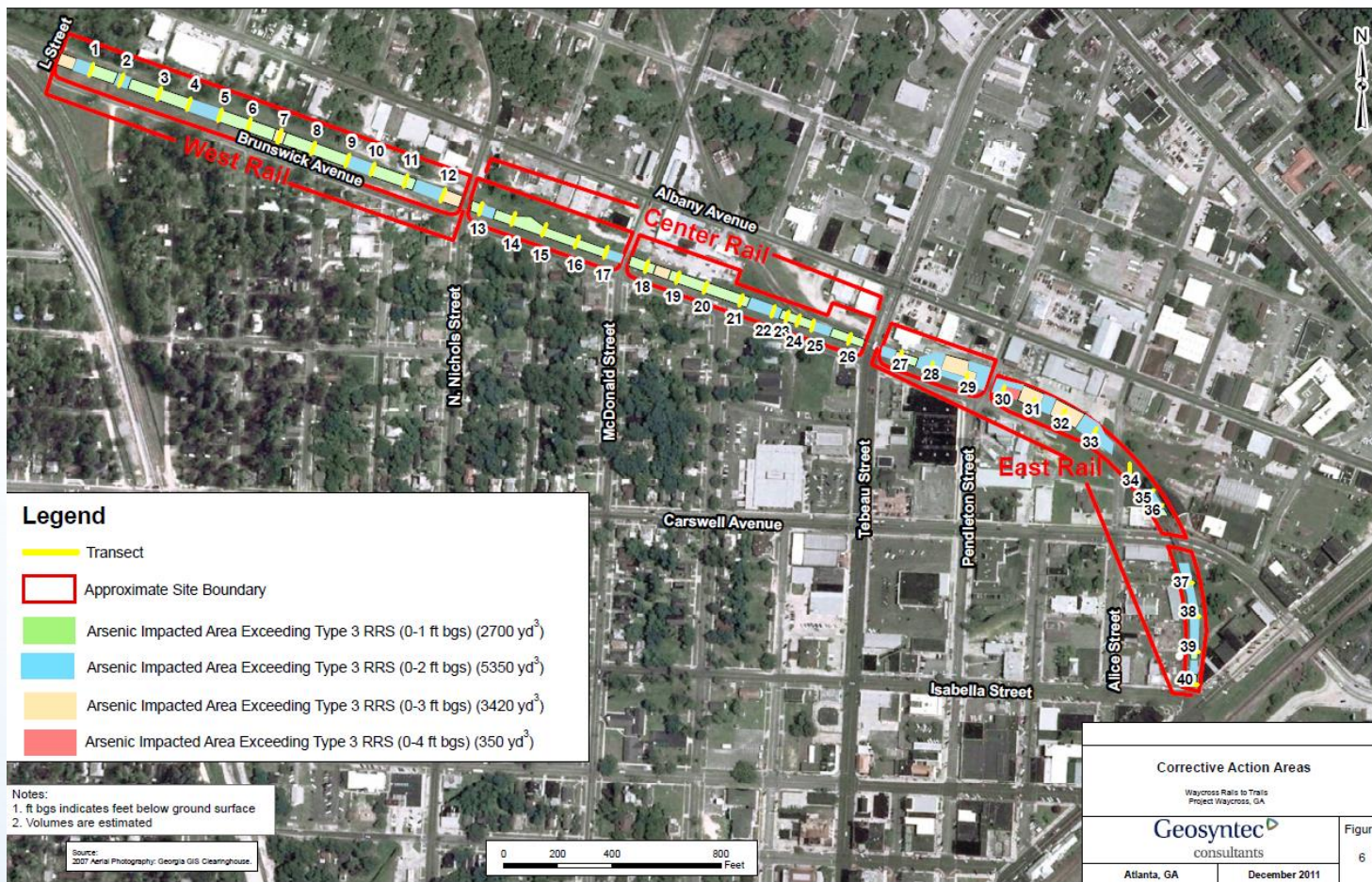


Waycross RTT – Soil Sample Location

- 345 surface soil, 88 subsurface soil, and 7 groundwater samples were collected to evaluate soil and groundwater.



Waycross RTT – Areas of Corrective Action



Waycross RTT – Soil Remediation



Approximately 25,500 tons of arsenic impacted soil and ballast were excavated and disposed as nonhazardous waste.

Waycross RTT – Initial Site Conditions



Decommissioned Rail Line



Decommissioned Bridge



- Decommissioned railroad bridge was removed and a multi-use trail was installed.

- Over \$84M in income since 2003
- Community Improvement
 - Community Redevelopment
 - Wildlife conservation
 - Historical Preservation Corridors
 - Stimulate local economies
 - Safe and accessible commuting
 - Promotes active lifestyles



- 23 Completed RTT Projects
 - 92 miles of rail-trails
- 9 current projects
 - 170 miles of potential rail-trails
- The Chief Ladiga
 - Anniston – GA State Line
- \$15,903,966 Available Funding

railstotrails.org



Chief Ladiga Trail | Photo by Tom Dulaney

