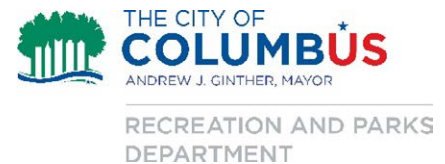


Scioto Trail–Fifth Avenue to Griggs Park Biking and Walking Study

April 2021

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Introduction

In 2020, Columbus Recreation and Parks led a study to consider options to address two aims. First, extend the Scioto Trail north from its current end at Fifth Avenue. This extension will improve connectivity to nearby communities, provide important regional connections to Quarry Trails Metro Park, Griggs Park, and future greenway trails planned to converge at Griggs Park. Second, consider options to improve mobility for those biking and walking and running in the Scioto River valley between Fifth Avenue and Griggs Park.

Study Area

The area studied is presented in Figure 1 below. Generally speaking, the area is bound by Fifth Avenue on the south to Dublin Road/Griggs Park on the north, McKinley Avenue and Dublin Road on the west to the US-33/Riverside Drive corridor on the east.

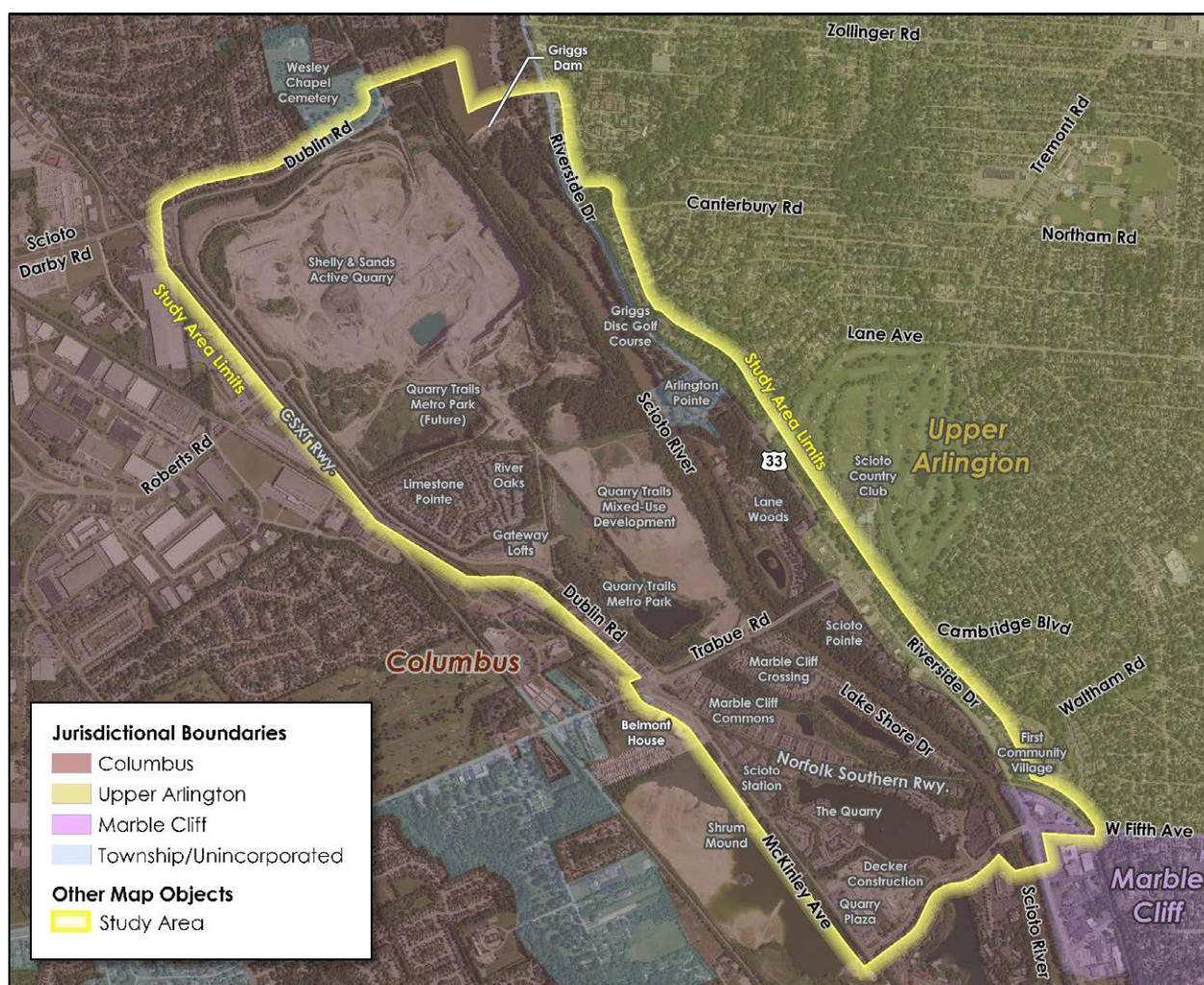


Figure 1 — Study Area

Background

The majority of the study area was at one point part of a limestone quarry, including open-pit mining areas, material processing and shipping facilities. In the past 50 years, about 40 percent of the area has

been redeveloped, predominantly into residential uses, another 40 percent is now being prepared for further redevelopment and the remaining 20 percent is still actively mined. With a few exceptions, area roadways generally do not have continuous sidewalk or sidepaths. Traffic speed and volumes on area roadways are too high for pedestrians and bicyclists to comfortably share the road. This combination of conditions discourages biking and walking, and makes it less safe for those who have no other choice.

Beyond these systemic issues, residents have long wanted an extension of the Scioto Trail, a regional Central Ohio Greenway (COG) trail, to Griggs Park, one of the major recreation greenspaces of Columbus. Today, the Scioto Trail's northern terminus is along Fifth Avenue, about 2-1/4 miles south of the park.

This study encompasses a large area, approximately 2.1 square miles, and the outcomes will directly impact over 15,000 residents within a 10-minute trailshed of the alignments considered. On a wider scale, thousands more residents will be impacted, as the area forms a unique “funnel” in the Scioto River greenway; a convergence of trails that stretching to Hilliard, Dublin, Upper Arlington, and Columbus, all through a one-half mile wide corridor between Fifth Avenue, Trabue Avenue, McKinley Avenue, and Riverside Drive. The reach of trail connectivity through this study area can ultimately tie together many miles of trail from downtown Columbus to the West Scioto communities; many disconnected neighborhoods, parks, and employment centers; and allow key tie-ins to developed trail networks in suburban communities.

Prior Studies and Plans—2012 to 2019

Prior studies have focused on options to connect the Scioto Trail to the Heritage Rail Trail (2012, Hilliard and Columbus), connect Upper Arlington neighborhoods to Quarry Trails Metro Park (2016, Upper Arlington), and connect the Dublin Road corridor to Quarry Trails Metro Park (2017, Hilliard). The focus of these prior studies has been feasibility and public input.

In addition, Columbus Recreation and Parks and partners including the COG board, Franklin County Engineers, Hilliard, Upper Arlington, Dublin, and Franklin County Metro Parks have long planned to extend the Scioto Trail up the Scioto River valley. This has been shown on several system plan exhibits as the primary way to connect northwest Franklin County neighborhoods, trails, and suburbs to downtown Columbus and the regional trails system.

Planning Focus

This planning study seeks to consider methods to achieve two goals.

- Goal 1:** Improve mobility for those biking and walking within the study area, and connectivity to the study area and adjacent, developed areas.
- Goal 2:** Connect the Scioto Trail at Fifth Avenue to future regional trails planned to converge near Griggs Park and to Quarry Trails Metro Park.

The outcome of this study is to identify which alignments will provide the most benefit considering the above aims and assist with identifying project partners who can play a role in developing a multi-agency combined network of trails.

From a regional perspective, the study area is strategic for connecting hundreds of thousands of residents in northwest Columbus and Franklin County to downtown Columbus and the rest of the COG network. Further, the study area includes the only two roadway crossings along a five-mile stretch of the Scioto River. Providing bike/ped access to Quarry Trails Metro Park is a shared, regional priority. Realizing the regional significance of this project, Columbus has engaged area jurisdictions and agencies in the planning process. The goal: consensus on how to achieve the study's purposes to the benefit of all.

Further, the City recognizes the implementation of any alternative will result in various benefits and impacts. As such, the study team has engaged area residents and potential users to discuss the purposes of the study and listen to concerns and suggestions. Outreach efforts included small group meetings over the summer of 2020 and an online public open house meeting. These efforts occurred early in the process, allowing for consideration of residents' and users' concerns in developing and evaluating alternatives.

This document is the culmination of this planning process—serving as a framework plan for Columbus and partnering agencies, jurisdictions, and developers to work together to address needs within the study area.

Study Partners

This effort is being led by the City of Columbus through the Department of Recreation and Parks. The process is being coordinated with an advisory committee comprised of representatives from the cities of Hilliard and Upper Arlington, the Franklin County Engineer, Columbus Department of Public Service, and Franklin County Metro Parks.

Planning Context

Background

Over the past century, most of the 2.1-square-mile study area was part of an open-pit limestone quarry, and about 20 percent is still mined today. The area comprises the northwestern-most reaches of the Marble Cliff Quarry Company's Scioto River operation—a series of quarries stretching four miles from south of Grandview Heights to just southwest of Griggs Park. For much of this time, the area was a space between places, crisscrossed by rural roads, a railroad, and the Scioto River.

In the latter half of the 20th Century, fallow quarry lands started being redeveloped. By the mid-2010s, most of the study area south of Trabue Road was comprised of several large, gated multifamily developments, several single-family developments, and some commercial office, retail, and industrial uses. North of Trabue, about one-fifth had been developed by this time as several more multifamily communities and single-family neighborhoods. In the late 2010s, plans were announced to redevelop portions of the last 600 acres of quarry lands as Quarry Trails Metro Park and a companion mixed-use development also called Quarry Trails.

In spite of the redevelopment progress—the addition of over 3,000 dwelling units and over a hundred thousand square feet of commercial and other uses, most of the area still feels like a space between places. There are few public roads and, except for Fifth Avenue, all have high posted speed limits and traffic volumes and no continuous sidewalks or sidepaths. The lack of separated facilities is a particular need because traffic volumes and speeds are high enough to discourage most pedestrians and bicyclists from using area roads, and make it difficult for these users to safely share the road. And given the prevalence of barriers such as the railroad, a major river, disconnected or gated developments, these roads are the only way to legally travel within or through the study area.

Beyond these issues, there has been a long-standing desire to connect the Scioto Trail, a regional Central Ohio Greenway (COG) trail with other COG trails expected to converge near Griggs Park. These include the Heritage Rail Trail in Hilliard and a new east/west connector through Upper Arlington. Providing a connection to the Quarry Trails Metro Park is also a priority as it continues to develop into a popular destination for COG trail users.

Transportation

With exception to Fifth Avenue, Lake Shore Drive, and local streets in the Limestone Pointe and Marble Cliff Commons subdivisions, all other streets have 45 to 50 mph posted speed limits, high traffic volumes, and no continuous sidewalks or sidepaths. Figure 2 shows sidewalks and sidepaths, barriers to biking and walking, and area roadways with their posted speed limits. Figure 4 illustrates barriers within the entire study area. Further, the lack of an east-west route across the river near Griggs Park—the north end of the study area—is a barrier to local and regional travel.

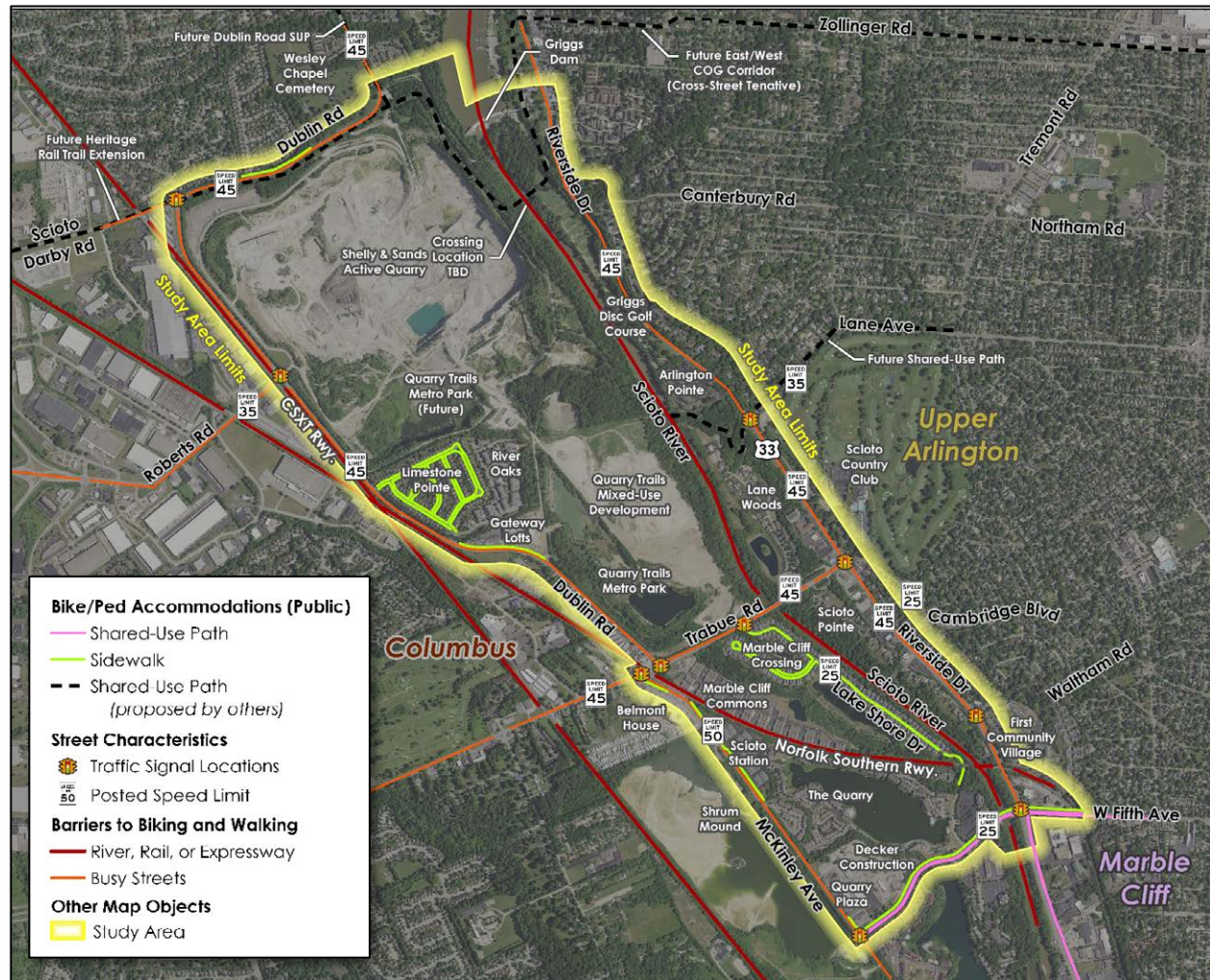


Figure 2 — Biking/Walking Network

Beyond the lack of bike/ped accommodations, a number of area roadways and intersections are congested. Traffic volume forecasts show this will continue to get worse over time. An increase in background traffic volumes combined with new traffic from area developments are expected to worsen congestion in the area, predominantly on US-33 (signed as Riverside Drive) and Trabue Road. As such, conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists will continue to decline until improvements are made.

Several projects are in the planning stages along Trabue Road. These include a replacement of the Trabue Road bridge over the Scioto River (Franklin County Engineer) and the potential for future improvements to accommodate development and background traffic volumes in the area. At present, the scope of improvements for the bridge replacement project includes widening of the bridge and adding a sidepath and a sidewalk. Adjacent to the bridge, a new traffic signal is planned at the intersection of Lake Shore Drive and Trabue Road, improving access in and out of the Quarry Trails Metro Park and a large new mixed-use development. Given the amount of development proposed in the area, Columbus Department of Public Service is doing a larger-scale traffic study of the Trabue Road corridor.

With respect to long-term planned greenway corridors, the following projects are planned or in the development stages within the vicinity of the study area.

- Columbus Recreation and Parks is actively studying a regional trail extension from Fifth Avenue to Trabue Road.
- An extension of the COG Heritage Rail Trail is planned along the Scioto Darby Road corridor with the intent of connecting it to the Scioto Trail.
- A new east-west facility is planned through Upper Arlington, potentially along Zollinger Road, with the intention of connecting it to the Heritage Rail Trail and an extension of the Scioto Trail near Griggs Park.
- Upper Arlington is also looking at adding a sidepath along Lane Avenue, from US-33/Riverside Drive east to Tremont Road, and has considered additional connections at Canterbury Road, Cambridge Boulevard, and Zollinger Road to connect to Quarry Trails Metro Park.
- Hilliard has considered opportunities to add a shared use path along Dublin Road north of Griggs Park in partnership with Columbus and the Franklin County Engineer.
- Franklin County Metro Parks is developing the regional trail within the Quarry Trails project, from Trabue Road to Scioto Darby/Dublin Road.

Property Rights and Jurisdictional Boundaries

The entirety of the study area lies within Franklin County. Further, most of the study area falls within the City of Columbus, with the remainder within the City of Upper Arlington and small portions of Perry, Norwich, and Franklin townships.

Besides roadway right-of-way, there are a number of publicly owned properties or easements which may possibly be used for the conveyance of trail facilities. South of Trabue, these include Columbus' 50-foot bikeway easement along the Scioto River within the Scioto Pointe subdivision, and a former quarry-turned-impoundment landfill for water treatment byproducts along McKinley Avenue. North of Trabue, such properties may include Quarry Trails Metro Park, potential future open space contributions as part of the Quarry Trails mixed-use development, and potentially the Columbus-owned Griggs Park Disc Golf Course.

Land Use

Today, the study area is comprised of a combination of land uses and development patterns as shown in Figure 3 on the following page.

The area south of Trabue and west of the US-33/Riverside Drive corridor is nearly completely developed. Multifamily developments include The Quarry, Scioto Station, and Marble Cliff Commons—all gated communities. Single family developments include Marble Cliff Crossing and Scioto Pointe, the latter of which is also a gated community.

About one sixth of the area north of Trabue and west of the US-33/Riverside Drive corridor was developed by early 2021, including the River Oaks and Gateway Lofts multifamily developments and the Limestone Pointe single family development. Of the remainder, about half is comprised of the

Quarry Trails Metro Park and companion mixed-use development—currently under construction. The remaining 250 acres is still an active quarry, currently operated by Shelly Materials.

East of the Scioto River, from Fifth Avenue north to the vicinity of Trabue Road, uses include the First Community Village senior care facility, a number of offices and restaurants on the west side of the street and generally single-family homes on the east side of the street. North of Trabue, the west side of the street includes the gated Lane Woods residential development, Arlington Pointe apartments, and the Griggs Disc Golf Course—operated by the City of Columbus. On the east side, Scioto Country Club and a number of single and multifamily dwellings line US-33/Riverside Drive.

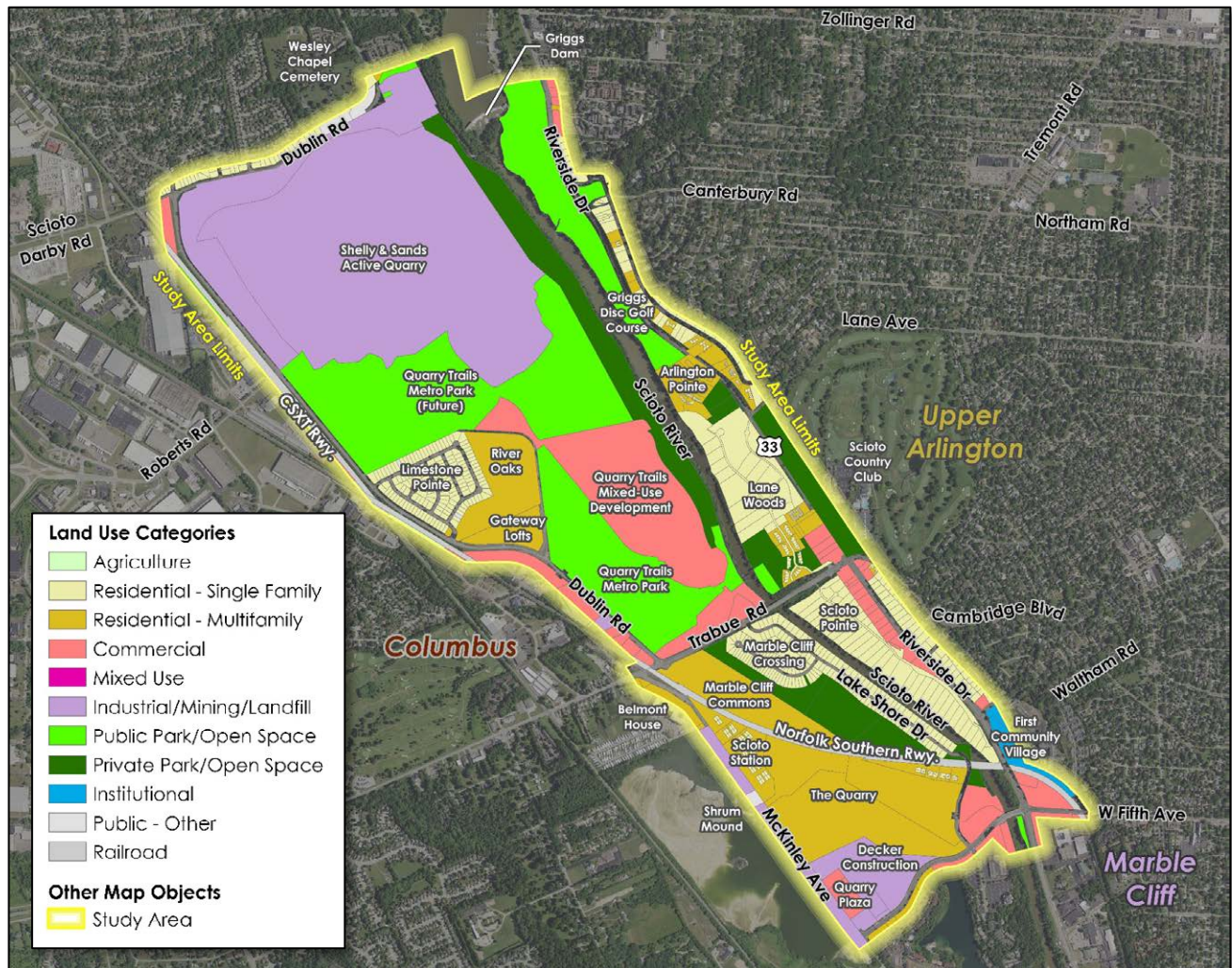


Figure 3 — Land Use

Alignment Options

With consideration to the study's two main goals and study area conditions, 14 alignments were identified and presented to the public. The alignments include a mix of sidepaths along roadway corridors as well as independent stand-alone trail alignments. Further, all of the alignments fall within two distinct portions of the study area: areas *south of* and *north of* Trabue Road. It is assumed a path or some other type of facility will eventually be built along Trabue Road, allowing connections between alignments south or north of Trabue.

Alignments—South of Trabue Road

Seen in Figure 4, nine alignments, A through I, were initially considered south of Trabue.

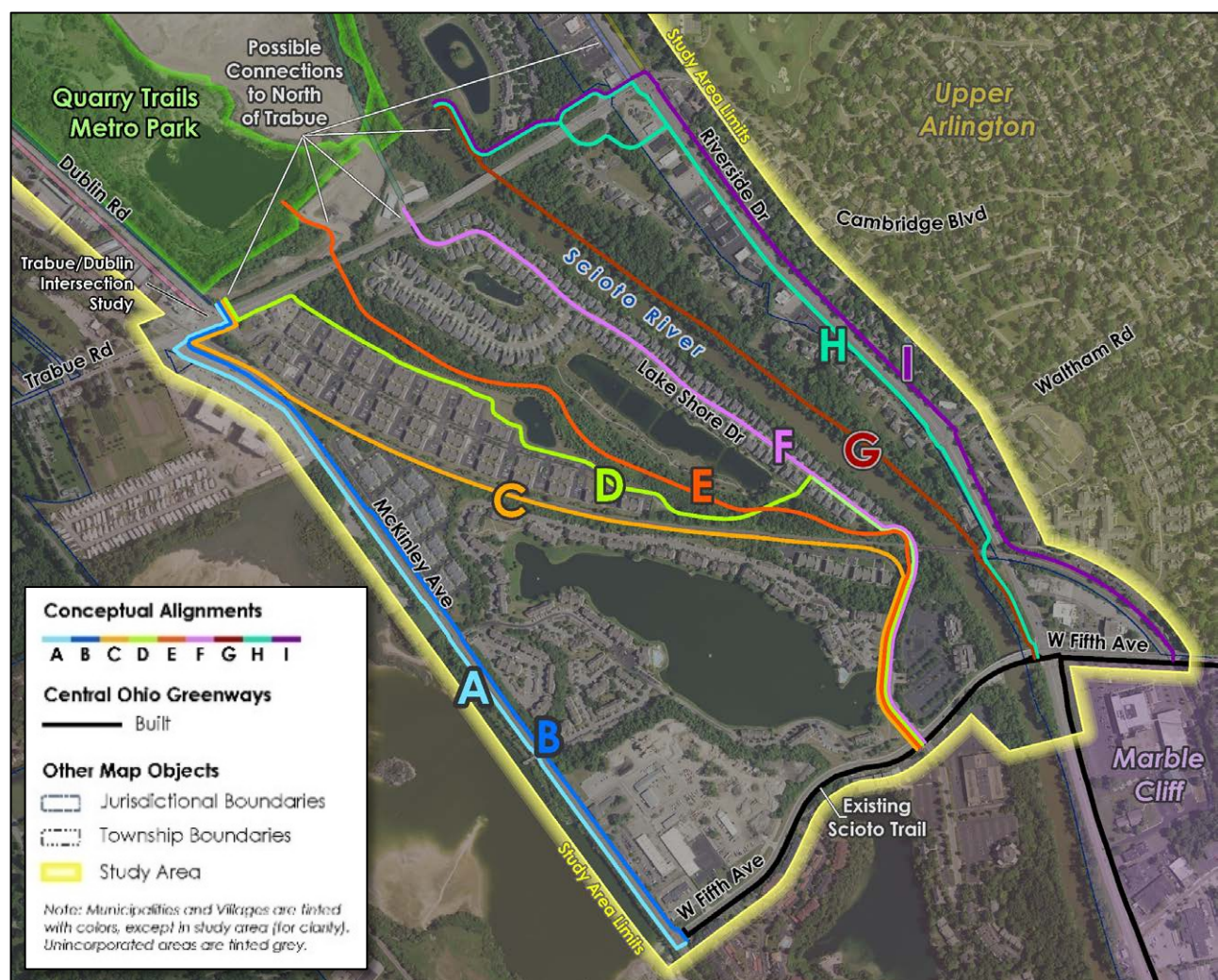


Figure 4 -- South of Trabue Conceptual Alignments

Alignment A follows the west side of McKinley Avenue. Potential challenges along this route include Shrum Mound, a historical landmark, and the alignment's proximity to the quarry wall to the west. Assuming it can be built at-grade between the quarry wall and street, this route is expected to have a relative ease with right of way and constructability. Even so, the route is not particularly scenic, noisy, generated by high-speed truck traffic on McKinley Avenue, and forces users to cross the congested Trabue, Dublin, and McKinley intersection via two or three crosswalks. As an extension of the Scioto Trail, this alignment is less direct than others to connect to Quarry Trails and the northern terminus.

Alignment B follows the east side of McKinley Avenue. This alignment will likely require the purchase of right-of-way along some sections of the corridor. Impacts to private landscaping in front of the residential and commercial developments are possible, though some of these improvements are within existing right-of-way. Similar to Alignment A, the route is similarly lacking in scenic appeal, exposes users to noise generated by high-speed traffic on McKinley Avenue, forces users to cross two crosswalks at the congested Trabue, Dublin, and McKinley road intersection, and is less direct than some of the other alignments being considered. Like for Alignment A, as an extension of the Scioto Trail, this alignment is less direct than others to connect to Quarry Trails and the northern terminus.

Alignment C travels along Lake Shore Drive from Fifth Avenue to the Norfolk Southern rail line and then follows the rail corridor along its west side to Trabue Road. Coordinating with the railroad is very difficult, takes a long time, and ultimately relies upon the willingness of the railroad owner to share the right-of-way. Oftentimes trails along active rail lines are prohibited by the owning rail company. If agreeable, the alignment is still challenging as there is limited space between the tracks and substantial grades and sheer cliffs, requiring retaining walls and fall-protection fencing. Beyond the railroad, some additional right-of-way impacts are expected. The route is comparatively more scenic and less noisy—except when trains use this stretch of tracks, which is currently an uncommon event. This route requires users to cross Trabue and Dublin roads. As an extension of the Scioto Trail, this alignment is more direct than others to connect to Quarry Trails and the northern terminus.

Alignment D starts similarly to Alignment C, traveling along Lake Shore Drive from Fifth Avenue until reaching a private trail access point within the Marble Cliff Crossing single-family residential development, then proceeding west through a Marble Cliff Crossing HOA reserve area until it reaches and generally follows an existing abandoned haul road within the Marble Cliff Commons multi-family development to Trabue Road, where it requires an at-grade crossing near/at the Dublin Road signal. About half of this alignment would be in close proximity to single-family and multifamily housing units, with the remainder predominantly along streets and a small stretch within open space. This route requires right-of-way from the Marble Cliff Crossing HOA and Marble Cliff Commons. As an extension of the Scioto Trail, this alignment is more direct than others to connect to Quarry Trails and the northern terminus. The route is relatively quiet but may require design enhancements to improve aesthetics and address privacy concerns where the path may be close to dwelling units.

Alignment E, like C and D also follows Lake Shore Drive but pulls away from it near south of the existing railroad bridge, crosses under the rail viaduct via an existing tunnel, and proceeds north west through Marble Cliff Crossing HOA open space until it reaches Trabue Road. This entire trail alignment would be a separated, more typically designed 'greenway'. Unlike Alignment D, the trail

would not be on Lake Shore Drive as it passes under the railroad trestle, but over 30' up slope on a separated pathway underpass. Over half of this route is well buffered from adjacent development, making it quiet and scenic. One of the challenges of this alignment would be crossing Trabue Road. This alignment could cross under Trabue Road via a new tunnel or could connect to a path along Trabue and cross at signals at Dublin Road or Lake Shore Drive. Up to Trabue Road, construction costs are expected to be relatively low. If the underpass is pursued, it will add a substantial cost and benefit to this alignment. If it is infeasible, Alignment E may be aligned to cross Trabue at either Lake Shore Drive or Dublin Road. Over half of this route falls within an open space reserve owned by the Marble Cliff Crossing HOA. As an extension of the Scioto Trail, this alignment is one of the most direct alignments to Quarry Trails and the northern terminus, particularly if the underpass is constructed. If the underpass is not included, one or more at-grade crossing at the Lake Shore Drive or Dublin Road signals will be needed. The route through open space will make it one of the most quiet and scenic options south of Trabue.

Alignment F is recognized as effectively being the “No Build” or “No Action” alignment south of Trabue. Should no separated trail alignment be constructed south of Trabue, bicyclists and pedestrians traveling between the existing Scioto Trail and Quarry Trails Metro Park will likely walk or bike on Lake Shore Drive—a public street—to complete the “last mile” of their trip. Minor improvements could be made to Lake Shore Drive to improve safety, such as installing traffic calming to ensure safe vehicle speeds on Lake Shore Drive and improved crossing safety where users cross Fifth Avenue. Aside from these very low costs optional improvements, this alignment has no costs and creates no impacts on its own. As an extension of the Scioto Trail, this alignment would be an on-street facility, where pedestrians and bicyclists would share the road with vehicle traffic. Lake Shore Drive has a speed limit of 25 MPH, and available count data show daily traffic volumes vary from less than 1,000 near Trabue Road to approximately 2,300 close to Fifth Avenue. There are just three higher-volume commercial/multi-family residential driveways and, in the Marble Cliff Commons subdivision, a substantial number of driveways serving single family residences. It is one of the most direct alignments to Quarry Trails and the northern terminus. This narrow roadway route, traveling through a neighborhood, will be quiet but not the most scenic option

Alignment G would be along the east side of the Scioto River, constructed within an existing bikeway and conservation easement. The path travels from Fifth Avenue north along the river, goes under Trabue Road and then crosses the Scioto River and enters Quarry Trails via an existing through truss bridge. Challenges of the corridor include several encroachments on the easement by private property owners, including a portion of a residence, and that the easement is entirely within the floodway of a major watercourse. The route is expected to have a high construction cost. If built on-grade, portions will flood during a one- or two-year storm and require additional design and maintenance considerations. The alignment would offer scenic character and views of the river, but has ingress/egress issues at the north and south ends of the easement which add challenges for regional trail connectivity.

Alignment H follows the west side of US 33/Riverside Drive from Fifth Avenue to Trabue Road, then runs west toward Quarry Trails. Numerous businesses front US-33 along this alignment and there is a potential for substantial impacts to parking. Riverside Drive has the highest amount of traffic of roads in the study area, a speed limit of 45 mph, and is often congested during peak hours. As such, the corridor is not scenic, and users will be subject to a substantial amount of noise. Currently, 13 business driveways cross the path alignment, placing path users in conflict with turning

vehicles. This trail is expected to have high right-of-way costs and moderate construction costs. The design and permitting of this alignment will require involvement with ODOT.

Alignment I generally follows the east side of US 33/Riverside Drive. From Fifth Avenue, east of US-33, this route follows east side of the Norfolk Southern railroad line and then fronts the First Community Village retirement and nursing home community, proceeds north along or on a frontage road for several dozen single family homes, and then across the frontage of several businesses before turning west along Trabue Road. Like Alignment H, path users will need to cross driveways and several side streets, though there are fewer crossings. Within the same corridor as Alignment H, I also lacks natural scenery and will be noisy. This alignment does have railroad impacts and, as noted for Alignment C, coordinating with the railroad is difficult and takes a long time. This trail is expected to have moderate to high right-of-way costs, and moderate to high construction costs. It is less direct than most routes and has minimal grade changes.

Alignments—North of Trabue

Seen in Figure 5, five alignments, J through N, were considered north of Trabue.

Alignment J starts at the intersection of Dublin and Trabue roads, then travels north along the west side of Dublin Road to Scioto Darby Road, and then turns east along Dublin Road toward Griggs, then follows an independent alignment to Griggs Park. This route is adjacent to Dublin Road; it is not particularly scenic and high-speed traffic makes it fairly noisy for path users. Additional right-of-way will be needed in several areas and possibly along the entire corridor depending upon impacts to drainage. The route includes a number of low volume business driveways. The route is not particularly direct between Trabue Road and Griggs Park.

Alignment K follows the same corridor as Alignment J, just along the east side of Dublin Road to Scioto Darby Road, and then the south side of Dublin Road from Scioto Darby east toward Griggs Park. Like Alignment J, Alignment K eventually takes an independent alignment to connect Dublin Road with Griggs Park. Alignment K does allow for some scenic views into Quarry Trails Metro Park along Dublin Road; however, the rest of the corridor is not scenic and is subject to traffic noise. This alignment crosses fewer driveways, but more side-streets, including those into the Limestone Pointe subdivision. Like Alignment J, this route is also not particularly direct between Trabue Road and Griggs Park.

Alignment L follows the west side of the Scioto River between Trabue Road and Griggs Park. Portions of this trail are expected to be completed as developer contributions as part of the mixed-use Quarry Trails development project; however, the timing of those improvements is contingent upon when future phases of development occur. Alignment L is very scenic and quiet, with the potential for a vista or two. This alignment is expected to have no driveway or street crossings and is one of the most direct routes north of Trabue.

Alignment M follows the west side of US 33/Riverside Drive, from Trabue Road north to Griggs Park. This alignment would be predominantly a sidepath which parallels Riverside Drive. At the south end of the corridor, impacts to businesses may result in the loss of some parking spaces and will include several driveway crossings. Similar impacts may also be possible along the frontage to Arlington Pointe apartments. Alignment M is not particularly scenic and high traffic volumes and speeds will generate substantial road noise for users. This route is one of the most direct between Trabue Road and Griggs Park.

Alignment N is similar to Alignment M but follows the east side of US 33/Riverside Drive, from Trabue Road north to Griggs Park. Between Trabue Road and Lane Avenue, coordination will be needed with Scioto Country Club to consider whether the path can go behind a stone wall, or if the wall must be reconstructed behind the path—an expensive undertaking. North of Lane Avenue, there are several residential driveways and a local street intersections with Canterbury Road and Chateau Circle. A path crossing would be needed, likely between Canterbury and Chateau—allowing users of Alignment N to cross to the west side of US-33 to reach Griggs Park near Griggs Park. While an at-grade crossing may be the easiest to construct, the speed and volume of traffic

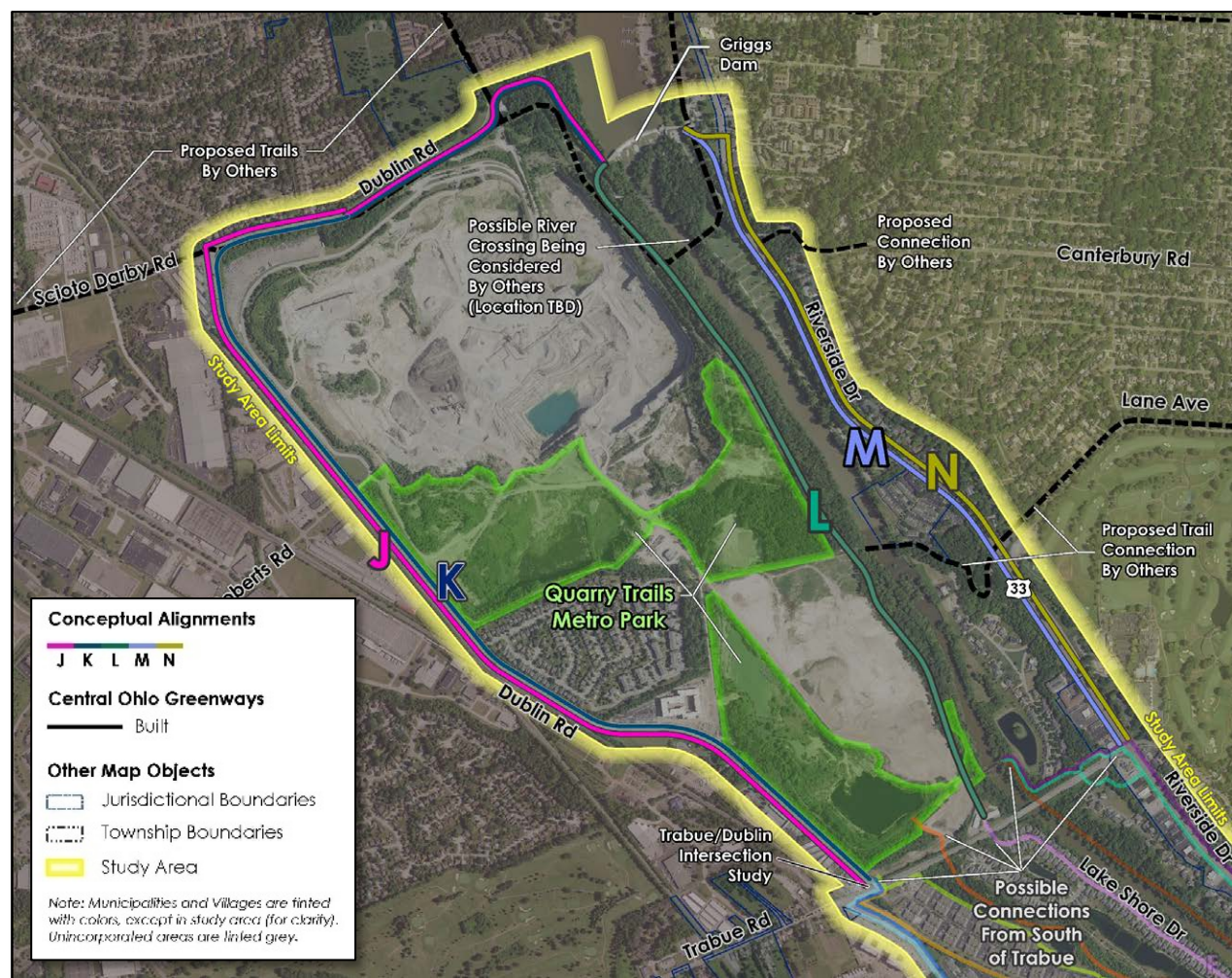


Figure 5 – North of Trabue Conceptual Alignments

necessitate a pedestrian hybrid beacon or signal, if it can be warranted. A grade separated crossing may be a better option, though much more expensive. The topography supports a tunnel under US-33 just south of Canterbury Road. Other locations may be possible, but will be substantially more expensive given that the west side of the road generally sits below the highway and the east side, save near Canterbury Road, sits above the highway. As noted for Alignment M, the corridor is not particularly scenic and subject to substantial levels of road noise. This route is one of the most direct between Trabue and Griggs Park, save for any at-grade crossing of Riverside Drive which could introduce delay for trail users.

Environmental Resources

In order to evaluate the potential for environmental impacts and regulatory issues, an analysis was conducted for the study area based upon existing data sources. The summary below characterizes the primary issues of concern within the area and for each alignment. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list of requirements, but rather focus on issues that highlight differences among the alternatives under consideration.

Environmental Issues – Fifth to Trabue

- National Wetland Inventory (NWI) shows an approximately 1.27-acre wetland area between Scioto River and the homes along Scioto Pointe. Alternative G would impact this area.
- FEMA floodplain mapping indicates that Alternative G would be entirely within the floodway of Scioto River. Alternatives C, D, E, F have a short crossing of the floodplain (not the floodway) on or adjacent to Lake Shore Drive.
- The Ohio Regulatory Property Search (ORPS) tool indicates typical leaking underground storage tank (LUST) sites adjacent McKinley and US 33. These issues are common on projects adjacent to roadways and unlikely to have a substantial impact on any alternative. The mapping also shows an abandoned dump (EARTHCO DEMO) near the intersection with McKinley/Trabue. Alternatives A and B would be near this area; however, the depth of excavation required for a trail or shared use path construction project would rarely raise concerns.
- The Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) database shows the Shrum Mound/Campbell Mound and the historic marker for Campbell Memorial Park on the west side of McKinley Avenue. The mound and park are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Alternative A may have impacts within the boundary of this site. The extent of impacts cannot be determined based upon the limited design information available as part of this study. There are no other recorded historic or archaeological sites in this area.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service maintains a list of threatened and endangered species that may be present within Ohio. Of the species listed for Franklin County, the primary issues for a potential trail are the threatened Northern Long-eared bat and endangered Indiana bat. Removal of wooded area impacts potential habitat, particularly adjacent to water. The Alternative with the most loss of wooded areas is Alternative G, as the entire length of the alignment is through a wooded area. Alternative E and to a lesser extent, Alternative C, would also impact smaller wooded areas for a portion of their length.

Within the southern study area, there are environmental issues to consider in comparison of alternatives. Alternative A appears to have the potential to impact the Shrum Mound/Campbell Park historic site. If this alternative is considered further, additional design information will be needed to confirm whether significant impacts can be avoided. Alternative G would substantially impact the floodway/floodplain, potential wetlands, and wooded areas adjacent to the Scioto River.

Environmental Issues – Trabue to Griggs

- National Wetland Inventory (NWI) shows small wetland areas adjacent to the Scioto River, which appear to be avoided by Alternative L.
- FEMA floodplain mapping indicates that Alternative L would be adjacent to, but just outside, of the floodplain and floodway of Scioto River, with a crossing of the floodplain at the south end. Alternatives M and N would have a crossing of the floodplain just south of Charing Rd intersection on US 33. Alternatives J and K would have a short crossing of the floodplain at the northern end.
- The Ohio Regulatory Property Search (ORPS) tool indicates typical LUST sites adjacent to US 33. Historic waste facilities are shown within portions of old quarry property currently under development (MCQ San LF, Marble Cliff Quarries Dump). None of these issues would be expected to have substantial impacts on a trail or shared use path.
- The Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) database shows the Upper Arlington Historic District located on the east side of US 33 north of Trabue (Scioto Country Club area). Alternative N would be adjacent to the boundary of the district. No other recorded sites impacted.
- For threatened and endangered species habitat, none of the alignments within the northern study area would have a substantial impact on wooded areas. Alternative L, which would impact the most trees, is located in a planned development area and would not increase the loss of trees in this area compared to No Build.

There are no environmental issues within the northern study area that would be of a magnitude to impact the comparison of alternatives.

Public and Stakeholder Input

Public Engagement

Efforts to engage the public started during the summer of 2020. CRPD issued a news release and posted on social media to announce an online public open house meeting and website. Oversized postcards were mailed to approximately 1,200 residents and property owners in the study area.

Launched on August 3rd, the website included a video presentation explaining the study and the alignments. It also included an interactive GIS map which allowed visitors to pan and zoom to view alignments in more detail, and static PDF maps for download. An online survey link was provided to accept comments for the duration of the meeting—August 3rd to September 4th, 2020. Contact information was also provided to accept comments by letter, e-mail and phone.

In addition to the public meeting, two one-hour Zoom meetings were conducted for two neighborhood associations that requested individual meetings.

During the comment period, 456 comments were received via the website survey. An additional 40 comments were received by e-mail, letter, and phone. Common themes heard in comments included:

- Safe biking and walking facilities are needed.
- Users would prefer an off-road path with scenic characteristics, away from noise and vehicles.
- Some users would like a path adjacent to existing roadways to provide for an efficient route.
- Biking/walking facilities feel safer when they are well used and should include access to all surrounding residents.
- New path should provide connectivity to other recreational and commuting routes, as well as to existing and planned parks.

Stakeholder Engagement

As noted in the introduction, Columbus Recreation and Parks sought to engage key stakeholders, including other local governments, in this project to help achieve consensus and buy-in on this project of regional importance. Those stakeholders included cities of Hilliard, Upper Arlington, and Columbus—including the Recreation and Parks Department and Department of Public Service; Franklin County Engineer; and Franklin County Metro Parks. Stakeholder and local government outreach occurred in January and February 2020.

On February 6, 2020 the team held an Advisory Committee meeting to show the draft alignments to a group of community members representing various stakeholders. The committee provided input, asked questions, and communicated ideas and concepts.

Options to Achieve Goal 1: Improve Mobility within the Study Area

Satisfaction of Goal One necessitates addressing several issues within the Study Area. These include:

1. ***Accommodation on High Speed, High Volume Roads***

Traffic volumes and speeds are high enough to discourage most pedestrians and bicyclists, and make it difficult for them to safely share the road with motorists. These are defined as McKinley Avenue, US-33/Riverside Drive, Dublin Road, and Trabue Road. Fifth Avenue is not included on this list as it has a shared use path and sidewalk.

Similarly, accommodations on any one road—allowing bicyclists and pedestrians to access adjacent land uses—does not address similar needs on other roads in the study area. While some places have connecting local roads or development, allowing other routes, the size and lack of local roads in the Fifth to Griggs study area necessitate improvements on all roads with high traffic speeds and volumes.

2. ***Accommodation of Bicyclists Given the Scale of Development***

The distance between supportive land uses is such that most active transportation trips will need to occur by bike for the sake of travel time. As such, providing accommodations for bicyclists is a priority. Means of accommodation include shared-use paths along roads or on independent alignments, bike lanes, and shared travel lanes under specific conditions. While most land uses are at a bikeable scale, some will still choose to walk or run.

Accommodations for pedestrians can be provided by sidewalks, as well as sidepaths and trails shared with bicyclists.

3. ***Provision of a Grid of Connectivity***

Similar to issues regarding the scale of development, the scale of separation between the major roadways and cross-river access points inhibits efficient transportation for all users—particularly those who travel slower and under their own power—namely bicyclists and pedestrians. Major roads in the study area—McKinley Avenue, US-33/Riverside Drive, Dublin Road, Trabue Road, and Fifth Avenue generally form a grid. McKinley/Dublin and US-33/Riverside Drive are generally north-south routes. Fifth Avenue and Trabue Roads are east-west routes at the south end and middle of the study area. North of Trabue, the next east-west link across the Scioto River and between Dublin Road and US-33/Riverside Drive is Fishinger Road, about 2-1/3 miles north of Trabue. The lack of an east-west connection between Dublin and Scioto Darby roads to US-33/Riverside Drive is a challenge for all users, particularly bicyclist and pedestrians who are more sensitive to such barriers given their slower travel speeds.

After identifying the corridors needing improvement, decisions about which alignment to select within those corridors can be made independently based on project-specific opportunities and constraints. For reference, guidance regarding alignment selection is provided below for each corridor based on issues identified as part of this study and known previous study efforts.

South of Trabue

McKinley Avenue Corridor

Alignments A and B are fairly similar and are both feasible but do differ on some counts. Since most development is on the east side of the street south of Belmont House, Alignment B will allow easier access to and/from these users, but also includes more driveway crossings. The 4,800 foot stretch of McKinley Avenue includes approximately 2,000 feet of sidewalk on the east side of the road—sidewalk to be removed to build a path. If Alignment B is constructed, a midblock crosswalk with median refuge and/or RRFB beacon should be considered in front of Belmont House at the apex of a curve where visibility is greatest, and possibly at Shrum Mound. Users traveling to/from Belmont House won't walk out of their way to Trabue Road to cross, and Shrum Mound is a destination and southbound COTA bus stop along the corridor. Improved crosswalks are recommended because McKinley Avenue has a 50 MPH speed limit and has moderate traffic volumes during peak hours. Users crossing McKinley Avenue to reach the facility will also be a concern and one or more crosswalks may be advisable. Both Alignments have areas where right-of-way is constrained, including the east side in front of the Quarry Plaza shopping center where private landscaping encroaches into the right-of-way, and in front of Belmont House where the parking lot elevation and distance between the back of curb and right-of-way line, which is a foot or less from the parking lot, are not sufficient to build a path. Of the two, the impacts to Quarry Plaza should be the least costly as no parking spaces should need to be taken to construct the path.

US-33/Riverside Drive—Fifth to Trabue

Alignments H and I will both be a challenge to implement. About 600 feet north of Fifth Avenue is a railroad crossing which prevents an east-side path (Alignment I) from continuing north but does allow a west side path. To get around this barrier, Alignment I includes a 1,200 foot detour traveling from US-33 and Fifth Avenue east on Fifth, then follows the north side of the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks. For those walking at 3mph, this creates 4 minutes, 30 seconds of additional delay. For bicyclists, traveling at 12 mph, it causes a minute and 14 seconds in delay. From this point north, a west side alignment (H) will require additional right-of-way, or by reducing or removing a section of median on US-33/Riverside from the railroad crossing north to Waltham Road. Alignment I may be feasible without “touching” US-33/Riverside, but will still require some right-of-way from First Community Village.

At the Waltham Road signals, users may be able to easily cross US-33/Riverside Drive, crossing from Alignment H to I or visa versa. From this point north and west to Trabue Road, Alignment H will include upwards of 13 driveway crossings and the potential to impact a substantial number of parking spaces in front of businesses in this corridor. As discussed above, this allows easier access to and from these businesses, but significantly increases the risk of vehicle-path user conflicts. Alignment I also has some driveway and street impacts, but the frontage is predominantly residential. There is a private road that parallels the street—a potential opportunity if it could be improved and made into a low volume, low speed shared street. Implementation in this corridor may benefit from a comprehensive approach to address access, safety, and congestion issues in the corridor. These issues include increasing traffic volumes, poor access management, the streets' status as a National Highway System and Federal Aid Primary route. Replacing the center turn lane with a narrow raised median and restricting left turns to designated U-turn locations may create enough width in the corridor to also construct a path within right-of-way.

North of Trabue

Dublin Road

The Dublin Road corridor and its alignments J and K present opportunities to improve connectivity along the corridor and to adjacent development. These include commercial properties west of Dublin Road between Trabue and Peabody Landscape Group, as well as the Gateway Lofts, River Oaks Apartments, and Limestone Pointe subdivision on the east side of the street. From Limestone Pointe north, the west alignment (J) is between Dublin Road and a CSX railroad track and the east alignment (K) is between the road and a berm that borders a portion of Quarry Trails Metro Park and the still active portion of the quarry.

Between Trabue and Peabody, Alignment J crosses nearly 10 commercial driveways and will have some right-of-way impacts. Previous widenings of Dublin Road leave little space between the back of curb and right-of-way line in some cases. Across the street, Alignment K has no driveway crossings and some nice views across Quarry Trails Metro Park. Up through Peabody, this alignment is preferred if it can be constructed economically as there is little room between Dublin Road and a drop-off into Quarry Trails.

North of Peabody, an alignment along the east side still makes sense from the standpoint of providing easy access to adjacent residential development. Care is needed to ensure safe crossings of Longspur Drive and Limestone Way—intersections on the inside of two curves, which affects sight distance and potentially the safety of path users at the crossing.

North of Limestone Pointe, there may be opportunities to provide further connections with Quarry Trails Metro Park and an opportunity to place the path on the slope of the berm, most of which is in right-of-way. Combined, these factors lend toward making the eastside alignment (K) a better and less expensive choice up to Scioto Darby Road.

From the signalized intersection of Scioto Darby and Dublin roads east, the corridor becomes more constrained and includes a parallel stream: Millikin Ditch. Between Scioto Darby and Wesley Chapel Cemetery, there are no existing signals and so crossing Dublin Road will require enhanced crosswalk improvements. A northside alignment (J) to this section of Dublin Road will require all users to cross at such a crosswalk. While a southside alignment (K) would not, residents who live off the Splitrock Road subdivision will need a crosswalk to access a southside alignment. Given the speed and volume of traffic, a crosswalk with median refuge island is advisable on the east leg of the intersection of Splitrock and Dublin roads. While it is possible for a northside alignment (J) to continue east of Splitrock, there are few if any other good crossing locations from this point east toward the eastern end of Wesley Chapel Cemetery.

US-33/Riverside Drive

Considering alignments N and M from Trabue Road north, both sides of the street present challenges. On the west (N) side, four commercial driveways serve five buildings, including three restaurants. Right-of-way for a sidepath is particularly constricted in front of the Domino's Pizza and El Vaquero Mexican restaurant. From approximately 900 feet north-northwest of Trabue to the vicinity of Lane Avenue, the frontage opens up and is comprised of scrub forest and sections of grass lawn. On the east side of the street, the frontage is owned by the Scioto Country Club and open, except for a low stacked stone wall and a line of trees along it—approximately 14 feet east of the eastern-most through lane and near the right-of-way line. If the wall needs to be moved as part

of the project, it will have a substantial cost—upwards of \$100 per linear foot. In addition, Scioto Country Club is in a historic district and as such, potential impacts may draw more scrutiny. A decision about what side of the street to locate such a path in this stretch may come down to the difficulty of getting users across US-33/Riverside Drive at its signals at Trabue (and/or Lane), and the comparative difficulty of resolving impacts to the historic district on the east side and the commercial properties on the west side of the street.

North of Lane, the immediate issue is a substantial grade on a descending alignment of US-33/Riverside Drive of approximately 7 percent in places. Due to ADA regulations, paths are typically limited to a 5 percent grade; however, the US Access Board's Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) provide an exception for facilities adjacent and run parallel to a road with steeper grades, allowing the pedestrian facility to match the same grade. Both alignments, N (west) and M (east) will have this steep slope as both must tie into driveways at the bottom of the slope. If additional right-of-way is purchased, Alignment N may be able to incorporate some switchbacks between US-33/Riverside Drive and an access road to the Arlington Pointe community, else it may be possible to provide an underpass of the west leg of the Lane Avenue and US-33/Riverside Drive intersection, reducing the elevation gain required in the steep-slope section.

From the bottom of the slope northwest, right-of-way and space in front of Arlington Point is tight and will likely require coordination with the property owner for the N alignment. However, from this point north, the alignment can travel through what is now Griggs Disc Golf Course, either along US-33/Riverside Drive, or outside of the park's fairways. If the trail travels through the park, it is likely some fairways will need to be relocated as the course's layout is compact, increasing the potential for path users to be hit by errant frisbees. If the course can be redesigned, perhaps extended north into areas just below the dam, a river-side path could be an attractive option. Considering alignment M on the east side of US-33/Riverside Drive, embankment slopes on the east side of the road will make this alignment a bit challenging in places but it is still anticipated to be constructible. By far, the most substantial challenge for this alignment will be how to get users from the east side to the west side of US-33/Riverside Drive near Griggs Park. There are currently no traffic signals in this area, and the road itself is a heavily traveled, four lane highway with substantial vertical and horizontal curvature, and a speed limit of 45 mph. Due to vehicle volumes and speeds, an at-grade crossing will require a signal or pedestrian-hybrid beacon; however, poor sight distance will limit where either could be placed. An underpass at Canterbury Road could be considered and help Upper Arlington consider a connection here; however, providing a new structure could come at substantial cost.

Trabue Road

As noted earlier in this study, path alignments along Trabue Road are anticipated to be completed as part of street improvements planned in the area, notably widening of the Trabue Road bridge over the Scioto River, street improvements at the new Lake Shore Drive signal, and likely future projects to improve capacity and reduce congestion at the Dublin Road/McKinley Avenue and US-33/Riverside Drive signalized intersections. With signals located at Dublin Road/McKinley Avenue, Lake Shore Drive, and US-33/Riverside Drive, and the potential for underpasses at the river crossing, the access road crossing between Scioto Pointe and Lane Woods, and potentially a new location with Alignment E, there will be ample opportunity for users to cross Trabue Road.

A north-side alignment likely makes the most sense along Trabue Road, particularly if it can be constructed in conjunction with site improvements for the Quarry Trails development. The most

substantial challenge of a northside alignment is how to convey a path across the frontage of a private business on the northwest corner of US-33/Riverside Drive and Trabue Road. A potential solution may be to remove the access and parking on the southside of the building and provide a driveway access to the access road loop between Scioto Pointe and Lane Woods. Another solution may include narrowing lanes on Trabue Road to provide the additional frontage needed. Including a raised median, Trabue Road on this leg is approximately 66 feet in width.

It is possible to place the path along the south side of Trabue Road, at least from Lake Shore Drive east. This may avoid the conflict with the business on the northwest corner, but will still require right-of-way from a business on the southwest corner of the intersection. This alignment is only suggested if the path alignment across the Scioto River is also on the south side of the street. A completely south-side alignment will likely include impacts to the Marble Cliff Crossing apartments and potentially landscaping or backyards of several homes in the Marble Cliff Commons neighborhood.

Griggs Park Vicinity

East/west connectivity is a challenge near Griggs Park and, as noted, long-term plans call for an east/west connection between the Heritage Rail Trail and an east-west connector through Upper Arlington, with both including a connection leading to the Scioto Trail. Griggs Dam is about 1.5 miles north of Trabue Road and about one mile south of Fishinger Road with no bridges in between. As considered in the Quarry Trails Connections Study by Upper Arlington, the ability to cross the Scioto River valley will be difficult and expensive. Options considered in that study include a “high” bridge just south of the dam, as well as lower bridges further south—including a new structure adjacent to the “gas line” bridge near Arlington Pointe apartments. Specific challenges in the area include a west-side bank that towers approximately 100 feet above the river with bedrock high in the soil profile and a very wide floodway just south of the dam. Options not considered in the Upper Arlington study include placing a bridge atop the dam, and building a bridge upstream of the dam—which would require underwater construction, which was presumed to be more expensive than a bridge constructed below the dam.

The cost of a new bridge may make more sense if it also conveys automobile traffic—a substantial cost of such a project is mobilization or getting the necessary equipment on site to get construction started. If the trail project could be built as part of a larger road bridge project, mobilization costs could be less, and the savings associated with widening other roads in the study area could be applied to the bridge project, making it a more cost-effective option. Study partners are encouraged to keep this in mind when considering potential roadway widening projects in and near the study area.

Options to Achieve Goal 2: Connect the Scioto Trail to Griggs Park and Quarry Trails Metro Park

Achieving Goal 2 requires a satisfactory connection between the Scioto Trail, a regional Central Ohio Greenway (COG) trail, and Griggs Park—where other COG trails are to converge—as well as Quarry Trails Metro Park.

As discussed under Goal 1, consideration of the alignments to improve mobility were based on the understanding that vehicle speeds and volumes on area roadways discourage most pedestrians and bicyclists, and make it difficult for them to safely share the road. This consideration also applies for Goal 2. But further, as a connection between *greenway* facilities and as a system link of the *greenways* system, the *satisfactory connection* should meet, to the extent possible, the characteristics of a *greenway*.

As noted by regional trail developing partners and the trail user community in Central Ohio, the following greenway characteristics and potential project impacts categories are used to help define and compare potential alignments:

Greenway Characteristics

- Natural Within the immediate proximity of native plants, habitats, and open space.
- Scenic Exposure to views, vistas, and bodies of water.
- Safe Minimal exposure to traffic crossing the greenway.
- Quiet Minimal exposure to noise, particularly as generated by traffic.
- Direct Direct and efficient connections between destinations and other routes.

Expected Project Impacts

- Environmentally Sensitive Minimize impacts to resources such as ecologically sensitive areas, environmental justice populations, and areas of potential contamination.
- Practical to Construct and Maintain A preference for routes which are practical and cost efficient to construct as well as minimal required maintenance, reducing overall lifecycle costs.
- Overall Project Costs A rough comparison of estimated construction and right-of-way costs considering the scarcity of capital funding for trail projects.

The primary consideration for Goal 1 were alignments along street corridors, and those on a grid sufficient to improve mobility. For Goal 2, all alignments may be considered—including those discussed under Goal 1 as well as the independent alignments.

South of Trabue

For alignments south of Trabue Road, Table 1 (next page) shows how each provide a natural, scenic, safe, and quiet environment for a connection. The table is color-coded based on an interpretation of qualities with the least desirable characteristics shown in lightest green color to most desirable characteristics in dark green. A determination for each alignment is provided in the right-most column of the table.

While this study finds Alignment G is the most consistent with a greenway corridor factors, it is being dropped from consideration because the route is not viable. This study finds that it will be impractical to construct and maintain. Further, its construction would produce unacceptable environmental impacts. Alignment G is within the floodway and based on local flood data, an at-grade path may flood as frequently as 24 times per year. Constructing this path would create a serious disturbance along the riparian corridor, necessitating measures minimize impacts during construction. Once constructed, the path would likely need to be power washed to remove mud after every flood event. Alternatively, a 3,700-linear foot boardwalk could be considered instead, raise the path so flooding is less common. Even so, the boardwalk would still flood from time to time and could be damaged by flood events.

The next best option is Alignment E. This alignment is preferred as it provides a relatively direct connection, provides a fully separated path along its entire path, and is the most separated from adjacent residences. If feasible, this alignment should include a grade separated underpass of Trabue Road to allow a direct connection to the park; however, the alignment is still superior even if the underpass is not an option.

Alignment D is the next best option and has some similarities to Alignment E, but is not recommended. This option assumes users would use Lake Shore Drive itself from Fifth Avenue to the old haul road, now open space access within Marble Cliff Commons, then become an independent path facility traveling west and up the hillside to parallel Marble Cliff Commons. Alignment D does not maintain an independent facility over its length and it's unclear whether users might use it unless they want to travel toward the intersection of Trabue and Dublin roads. Those wishing to travel to Quarry Trails may just continue north on Lake Shore Drive, sharing the road. Given these issues, Alignment D is not recommended.

Similar to Alignment D, Alignment C is an acceptable option for those traveling toward the intersection of Trabue and Dublin roads. Alignment C provides a separated path along Lake Shore Drive that pulls away near the railroad tracks and then parallels them before terminating at Trabue and Dublin roads. As noted, while it is possible to gain approval for a path to run along a railroad, the process is long, difficult, and uncertain. Combined with a lack of directness, pursuit of Alignment C is not recommended.

Lastly, Alignment F is effectively the de facto “no build” alternative where those wishing to travel between the current end of the Scioto Trail and Quarry Trails Metro Park and any future trail segments to the north will use the shortest and most acceptable route—Lake Shore Drive. While it does not provide a fully independent path facility, Alignment F appears to be a somewhat acceptable option simply because it lack of construction impacts and the route is the most direct.

Table 1 Greenway Qualities of Alignments South of Trabue

Alignment	Greenway Characteristics					Expected Project Impacts			Determination
	Natural	Scenic	Safe	Quiet	Direct	Environmentally Sensitive	Practicality to Construct and Maintain	Overall Project Costs	
A	Developed Corridor with path along road.	Not Scenic	One to two moderate volume driveway crossings. Signalized crossings at Fifth Avenue and Trabue Road.	Moderate Traffic Noise. Approximately 12,000 vpd at 50 mph.	Not a direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	Potential minor impact to Shrum Mound	Generally practical. Sections of trail may require fall-protection fencing.	Relatively Low	Viable but not a direct route. Lacks Greenway qualities.
B	Developed Corridor with path along road.	Not Scenic	Five moderate volume driveway crossings. Signalized crossings at Fifth Avenue and Trabue Road.	Moderate Traffic Noise. Approximately 12,000 vpd at 50 mph.	Not a direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	Limited impacts	Generally practical. Sections of trail may require fencing to separate path from railroad near McKinley/ Trabue Intersection.	Relatively Low	Viable but not a direct route. Lacks Greenway qualities.
C	Developed corridor along street/railroad. ~20% with some natural vegetation.	Travels along railroad (uncommon facility type, linear views).	One moderate volume driveway crossing. Unsignalized crossing of Fifth Avenue.	Little noise except when trains travel through corridor.	Not a direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	Little to no impacts. Small risk of encountering contaminated soils along railroad.	Generally practical except railroad coordination. Sections of retaining wall and fencing may be required.	Relatively moderate cost, substantial issues working with railroad.	Viable but not a direct route. Lacks Greenway qualities. Discouraged due to difficulties working with railroads.
D	Partly developed corridor, some portions very close to residences. ~20% of corridor with natural vegetation on one side.	View of Marble Cliff Crossing reserve from top of hill. On-road for portion of corridor.	One moderate volume driveway crossing. Unsignalized crossing of Fifth Avenue. Signalized crossing of Trabue Road.	Little to some noise.	Not a direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	Some loss of vegetation in scrub forest	Generally practical. Sections of retaining wall and fencing may be required.	Relatively moderate cost	Viable but not a direct route. Lacks Greenway qualities.
E	Partly developed corridor. ~60% of corridor with natural vegetation on both sides.	Travel through railroad portal/barrel arch. Limited view of Marble Cliff Crossing reserve screened by natural vegetation.	One moderate volume driveway crossing. Unsignalized crossing (Fifth Ave) Underpass of Trabue Road possible.	Little to some noise.	A direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	Some loss of vegetation in scrub forest	Generally practical. Sections of retaining wall and fencing may be required. Underpass may provide some complexity.	Relatively higher cost if underpass is included.	Viable and recommended, with acceptable right-of-way and construction costs/impacts.
F De Facto "No Build" Corridor	Developed corridor (residential and commercial)	On-Road facility. Views of river over ~5% of corridor.	Travel along a low volume, low speed road. Risk of interactions with residents pulling out of driveways.	Some noise.	A direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	Little to no impacts	Little to nothing to construct or maintain.	Little to no cost	Viable but not recommended due to lack of separated facility, greenway qualities.
G	Undeveloped corridor along river.	Views of river over 95% of corridor.	No driveway crossings	Little noise.	The most direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	High likelihood to damage riparian corridor habitat.	Likely impractical to construct with expensive methods/ solutions likely. Likely ongoing expensive maintenance costs.	Highest cost to build and maintain	Not Viable due to constructability, maintenance, and environmental impact issues.
H	Developed roadway corridor.	View of river over 5% of corridor. Otherwise adjacent to busy highway.	Thirteen moderate volume driveway/street crossings. Adjacent to congested highway.	High traffic noise. Approximately 25,000 vpd traveling at 45 mph.	A somewhat direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	Limited potential to impact riparian corridor and scrub forest habitats	Somewhat substantial construction difficulty to integrate with private and public improvements.	Relatively higher cost	Viable but costly and a less direct route. Lacks Greenway qualities.
I	Developed roadway corridor.	No scenic views. Mostly adjacent to a busy highway.	Seven moderate volume driveway/street crossings. Adjacent to congested highway.	High traffic noise. Approximately 25,000 vpd traveling at 45 mph.	Not a direct route to Quarry Trails Metro Park	Limited potential to impact riparian corridor and scrub forest habitats. Possible contaminated soils along railroad.	Somewhat substantial construction difficulty to integrate with private and public streets. Railroad coordination issues.	Relatively higher cost, substantial issues working with railroad.	Viable but not a direct route. Lacks Greenway qualities. Discouraged due to difficulties working with railroads.

North of Trabue

For alignments north of Trabue Road, Table 2 (next page) shows how each provide a natural, scenic, safe, and quiet environment for a connection.

Alignment L

Alignment L is identified as the general corridor most consistent with Greenway criteria and scores a 30 out of 32 points. Per the agreement between the developer of the mixed-use Quarry Trails development and Columbus, a trail is to be built along the alignment and the property for the Alignment L corridor is to eventually be given to Franklin County Metro Parks. Public infrastructure contributions such as these are tied to specific phases of development, and the timetable for such improvements depend upon when or if these future phases are constructed. Beyond the portion of trail required to be contributed, it may make sense to provide a feature or destination at the northern terminus of the alignment—at least until east/west COG trails may be extended to connect to it. Such features could include a look-out over Griggs Dam, a trailhead with parking accessible from Dublin Road, or some combination of such features.

Other Alignments

The other alignments far and away score less than Alignment L and, not captured in the table, all are less than direct to connect users to both the Heritage Rail Trail extension, as well as an east-west alignment through Upper Arlington, currently planned for Zollinger Road. With respect to Goal 2, the primary challenge with these alignments is their proximity to higher volume, higher speed roadways.

Table 2 Greenway Qualities of Alignments North of Trabue

Alignment	Greenway Characteristics					Expected Project Impacts			Determination
	Natural	Scenic	Safe	Quiet	Direct	Environmentally Sensitive	Practicality to Construct and Maintain	Overall Project Costs	
J	Mostly developed corridor. Path along road.	None	Six street crossings, three signalized. Seven low to moderate volume driveway crossings.	Moderate Traffic Noise. Approximately 13,000 vpd at 45 mph.	Not a Direct Route between Griggs Park and Quarry Trails Metro Park	Minor impact to riparian habitat near stream crossings.	Generally practical. Sections of trail may require fall-protection fencing, culvert extensions or short bridges.	Relatively Moderate Costs Due to Length, Bridges/Culverts	Viable, not preferred for Goal 2 due to superior alternative (L).
K	Mostly developed corridor. Path along road.	Views of quarry trails from ridge line.	Three street crossings. Two moderate volume driveway crossings.	Moderate Traffic Noise. Approximately 13,000 vpd at 45 mph.	Not a Direct Route between Griggs Park and Quarry Trails Metro Park	Minor impact to riparian habitat near stream crossings.	Generally practical. Sections of trail may require fall-protection fencing, culvert extensions or short bridges.	Relatively Moderate Costs Due to Length, Bridges/Culverts	Viable, not preferred for Goal 2 due to superior alternative (L).
L	Portion of corridor along development. Portion within natural area.	View of river, possibly from ridge line.	Few if any street or driveway crossings.	Little noise except when trains travel through corridor.	A Direct Route between Griggs Park and Quarry Trails Metro Park	Potential impact to forested habitats mostly outside of riparian areas. Potential to encounter contaminated soils.	Practical. Short sections of substantial grading, retaining walls, and fall protection fence possible.	Relatively Low Costs.	Viable, most direct and simple alignment. Preferred
M	Mostly developed corridor. Path along road.	None	One street crossing (signalized). Seven moderate volume driveway crossings.	High traffic noise. Approximately 22,000 vpd traveling at 45 mph.	A Less Direct Route between Griggs Park and Quarry Trails Metro Park	Minor impacts to roadside vegetation and riparian habitat near Canterbury Road stream.	Generally practical. Sections of trail may require fall-protection fencing, retaining walls, culvert extensions or short bridges.	Relatively Moderate Costs Due to Bridges/ Culverts, and retaining walls/grading.	Viable, not preferred for Goal 2 due to superior alternative (L).
N	Mostly developed corridor. Path along road.	None	Three street crossings, including one of US-33 at a currently unsignalized location. One moderate and several low volume driveway crossings.	High traffic noise. Approximately 22,000 vpd traveling at 45 mph.	Not a Direct Route between Griggs Park and Quarry Trails Metro Park	Likely impacts to historic property. Minor impacts to roadside vegetation and riparian habitat near Canterbury Road stream.	Somewhat practical. Sections of trail may require rock excavation or retaining walls along US-33. Culvert extension or short bridge needed at Canterbury Road stream.	Relatively Higher Costs due to stone wall impacts, rock excavation, likely right-of-way impacts.	Viable, but costly inferior (requires users to cross US-33 twice) and therefore not preferred

Recommendations and Next Steps

Columbus Recreation and Parks, in collaboration with Franklin County Metro Parks, has identified that its priorities within the study area are as follows:

- Selection and provision of a regional, separated permanent greenway trail connection to satisfy Goal 2, to *Connect the Scioto Trail to Griggs Park and Quarry Trails Metro Park*.
- The provision of other active transportation facilities to help connect users and destinations in the study area to provide good trail access.

While the needs within this study area are great, the resources to plan, fund, and build recreational trail connections are limited. As such, it is a priority to advance projects which will add recreational and transportation value, to the most extent feasible. Figure 6 below shows Alignments E and L as the recommended alignment corridors for greenway development, as well as the road corridor alignments, all symbolized by the most logical sponsors for each corridor. These sponsors are encouraged to consider opportunities to pursue funding and implement the recommendations.

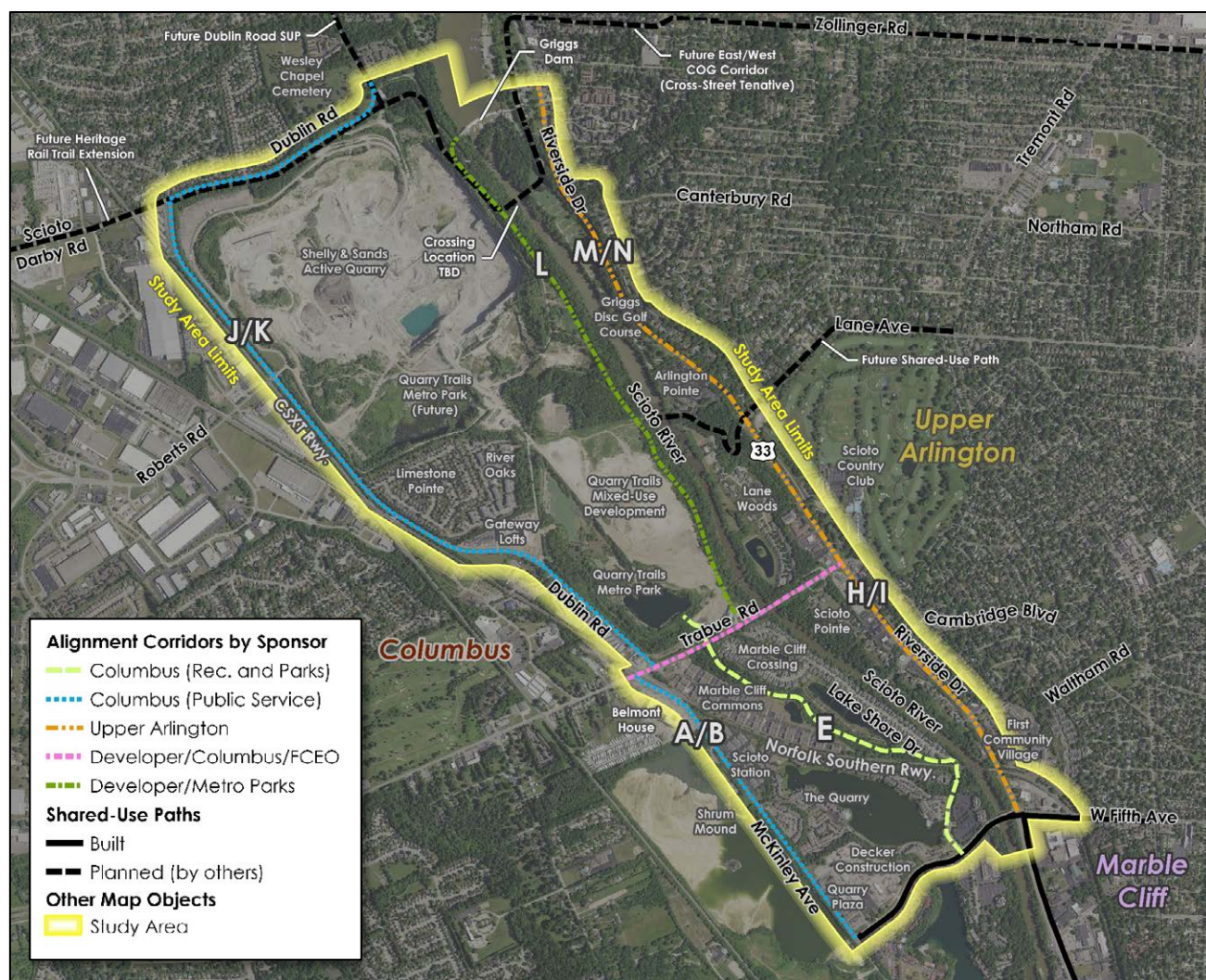


Figure 6 — Recommended Alignment Corridors

South of Trabue

Alignment E is identified as the most preferable, viable route in terms of satisfying desired greenway characteristics and expected project impacts. As a next step, Recreation and Parks should perform preliminary engineering study to determine more specific details on the route, costs, and property impacts. Over the course of this study, the alignment may be adjusted based on subsequent findings.

Without constructing a path, the “No Build” alternative and de facto route will become Lake Shore Drive (Alignment F). Lake Shore Drive is the only walkable or bikeable public street connecting Scioto Trail to Quarry Trails Metro Park. Given that Alternative F does not satisfy Goal 2’s greenway criteria, this is not a desirable long-term solution. Some Marble Cliff Commons residents have acknowledged this and are concerned that more bicyclists and pedestrians on Lake Shore Drive may increase the risk of crashes. In the recent past, Lake Shore residents have also had previous issues with cut-through motorists, speeding through their neighborhood.

Beyond Alignment E, paths are still recommended along McKinley Avenue and US-33/Riverside Drive to satisfy Goal 1; however, it should be clear that these are shared use paths along roadways that will not be as desirable for many users, and will be more difficult to construct to satisfy Goal 2.

A logical partner for McKinley Avenue is Columbus Department of Public Service, perhaps including construction of a path as part of the street’s next resurfacing project or any potential widening project.

For US-33/Riverside Drive, the recommended partner is Upper Arlington and there are several possible options to address issues along the corridor. The traditional approach would be to pursue a federally-funded project led by the Ohio Department of Transportation. Increasing traffic volumes, poor access management, a lack of pedestrian/bicyclists facilities, and likely safety issues are issues along the corridor.

North of Trabue

North of Trabue Road, it is recommended to use Alignment L to provide the greenway corridor and extension of the Scioto Trail. This route is mostly within Quarry Trails Metro Park, is predominantly under the control of the park district and private development team, and has high marks for directness, scenery, access, and potential connectivity for other jurisdictions. Aside from this route, all others substantially lack greenway qualities and, as such, are not recommended as a greenway connection. Columbus may wish to partner with Metro Parks on enhancements such as a north-end trailhead on City property near Griggs Dam but the recommendation to do so is beyond the scope of this study.

Like the South of Trabue area, paths are needed along area roadway corridors to satisfy Goal 1. For Dublin Road, Columbus Department of Public Service, possibly in partnership with the Franklin County Engineer, may consider such improvements. While there are several places where right-of-way is limited, a path should be feasible along most of the corridor, particularly over areas with enclosed drainage.

For the US-33/Riverside Drive corridor north of Trabue Road, Upper Arlington is the most logical implementation partner. Similar strategies to those used south of Trabue are recommended for the first 1,000 feet north of Trabue Road, from which point a sidepath is feasible in what appears to be relatively level and undeveloped frontage up to Lane Avenue. From Lane Avenue north, the project will become much more costly and difficult and require a partnership with Arlington Pointe and, in Griggs Park, with Columbus.

Appendix A: Exhibits

- Figure 1 Study Area
- Figure 2 Biking/Walking Network
- Figure 3 Land Use Context
- Figure 4 South of Trabue Conceptual Alignments
- Figure 5 North of Trabue Conceptual Alignments
- Figure 6 Recommended Alignments

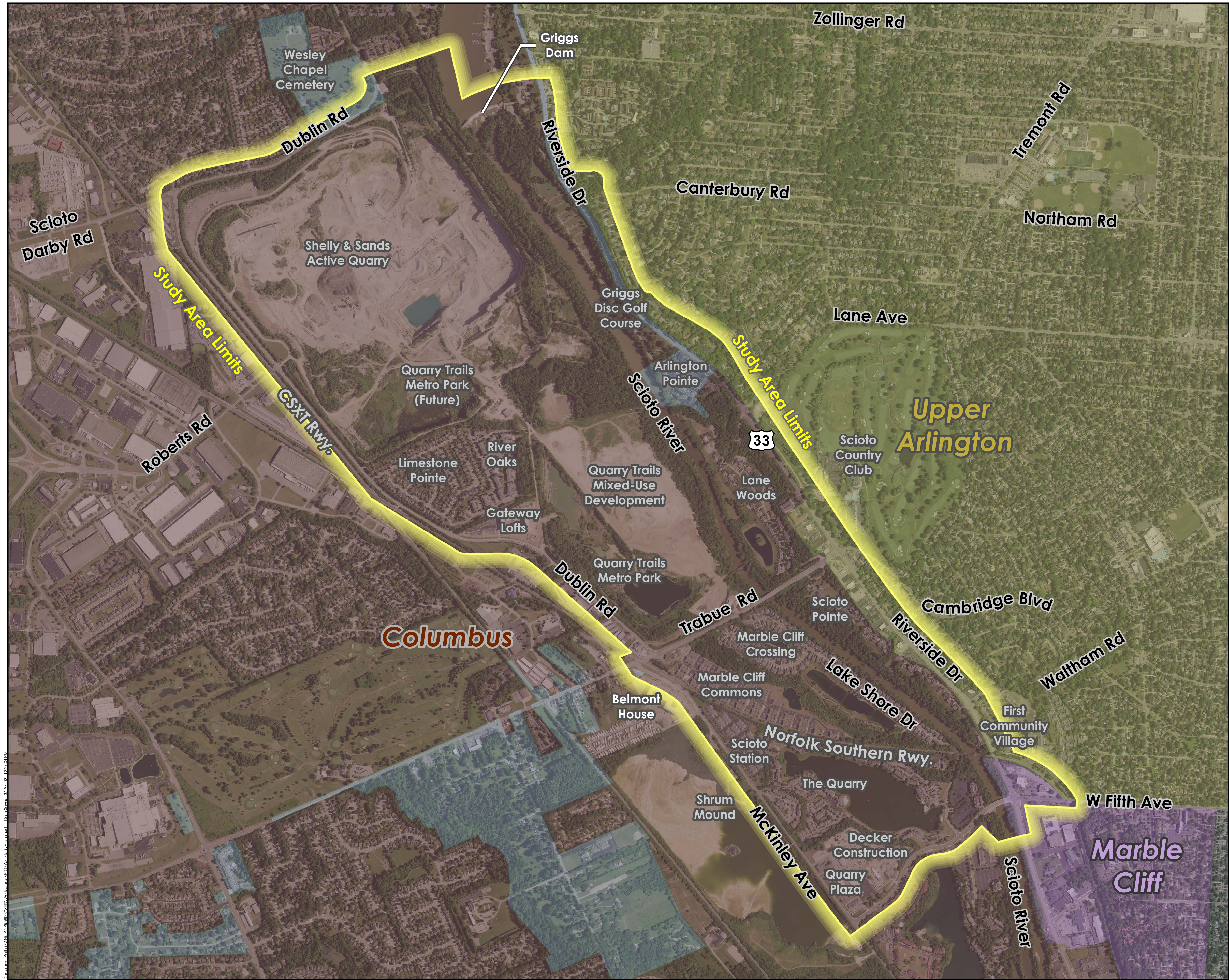


Figure 1

Study Area and Jurisdictions

Fifth to Griggs Biking and Walking Study

Legend

Jurisdictional Boundaries

Columbus

Upper Arlington

Marble Cliff

Township/Unincorporated

Other Map Objects

Study Area

Exhibit Information

N

00.250.5

Miles

Last Updated on 3/19/2021

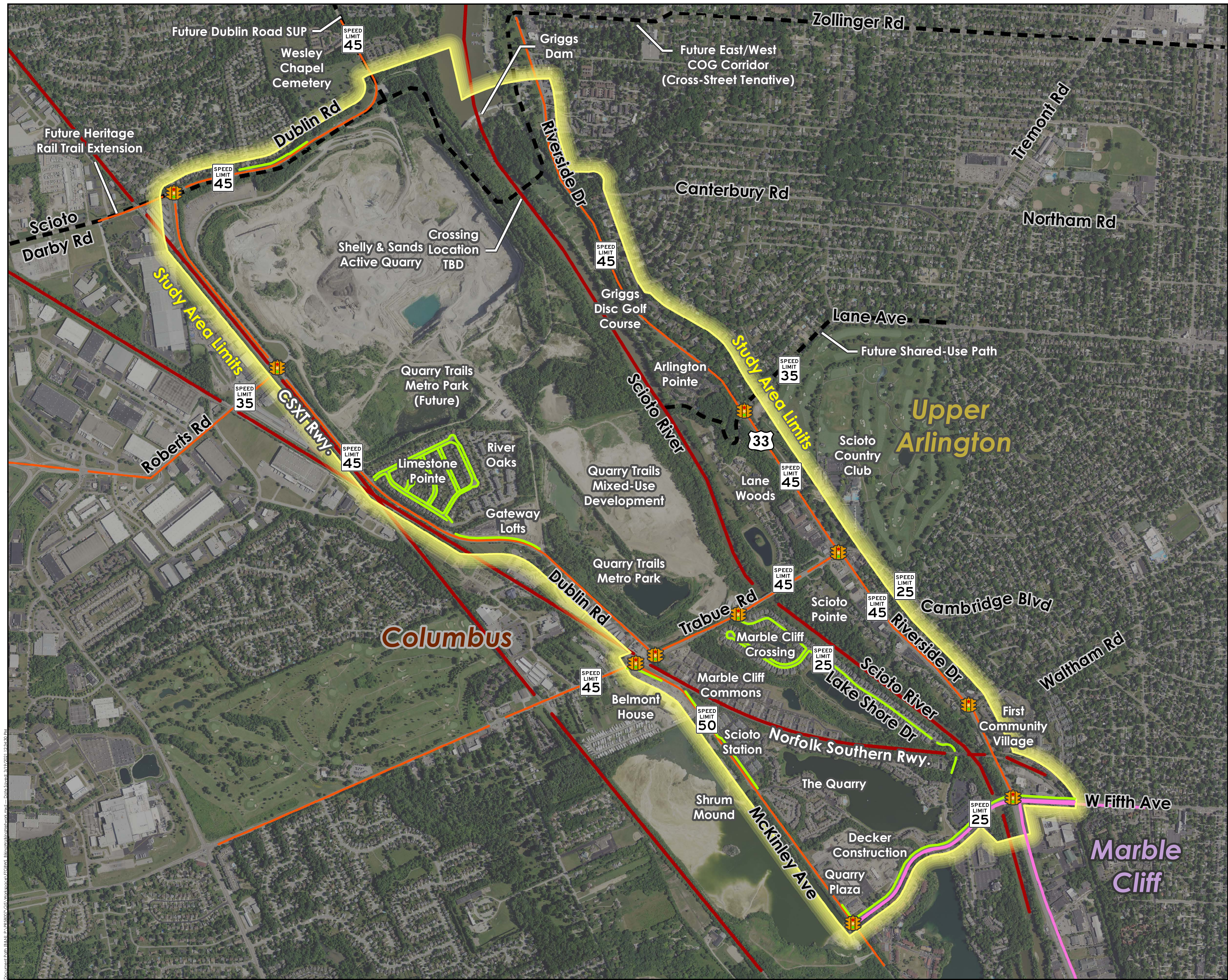


Figure 2

Biking/Walking Network

Fifth to Griggs Biking and Walking Study

Legend

Bike/Ped Accommodations (Public)

Shared-Use Path

Sidewalk

Shared-Use Path
(proposed by others)

Street Characteristics

Traffic Signal Locations

Posted Speed Limit

Barriers to Biking and Walking

River, Rail, or Expressway

Busy Streets

Other Map Objects

Study Area

Exhibit Information

00.250.5

Miles

Last Updated on 3/19/2021

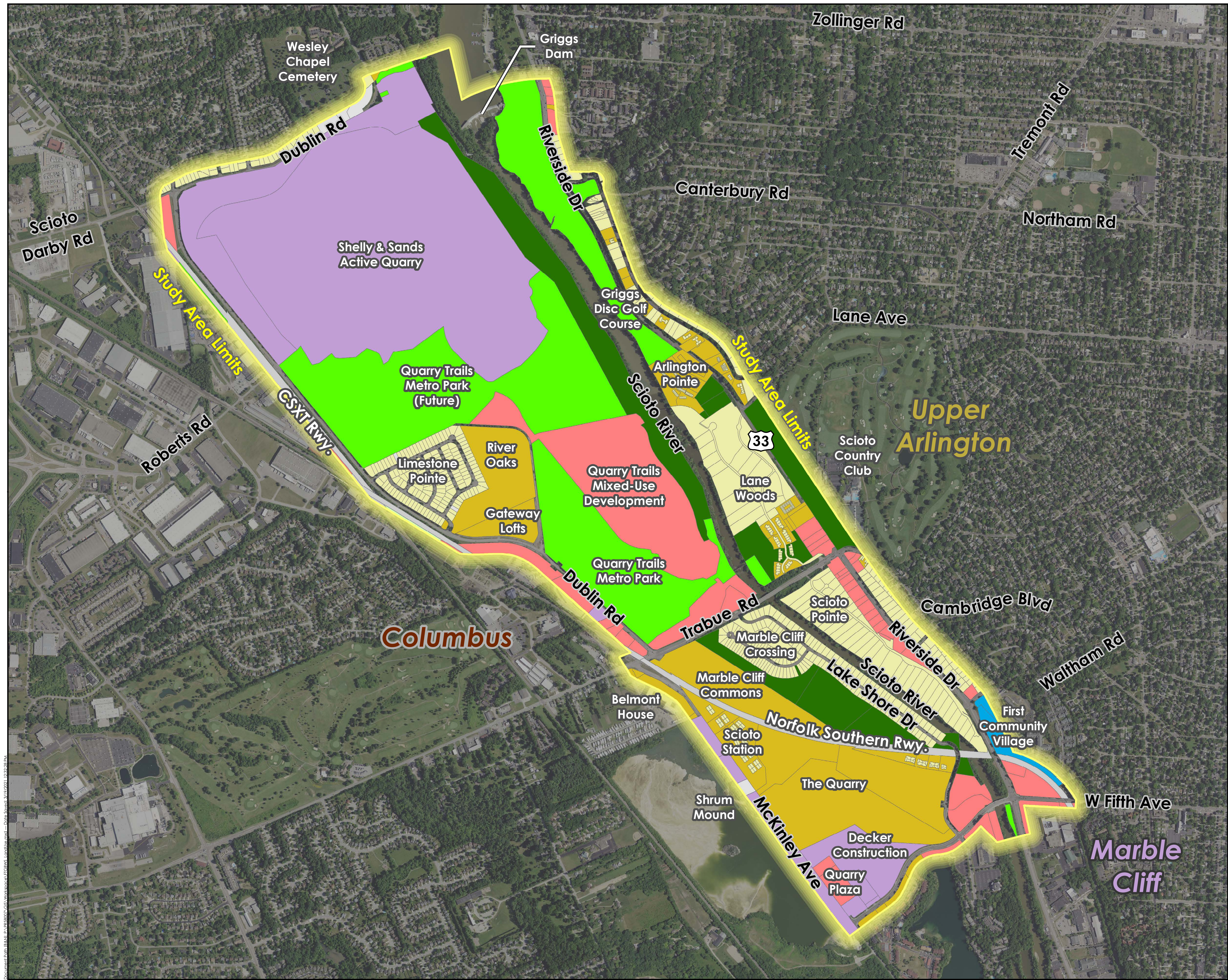


Figure 3

Land Use Context

Fifth to Griggs Biking and Walking Study

Legend

Land Use Categories

- Agriculture
- Residential - Single Family
- Residential - Multifamily
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Industrial/Mining/Landfill
- Public Park/Open Space
- Private Park/Open Space
- Institutional
- Public - Other
- Railroad

Other Map Objects

- Study Area

Exhibit Information

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Last Updated on 3/19/2021

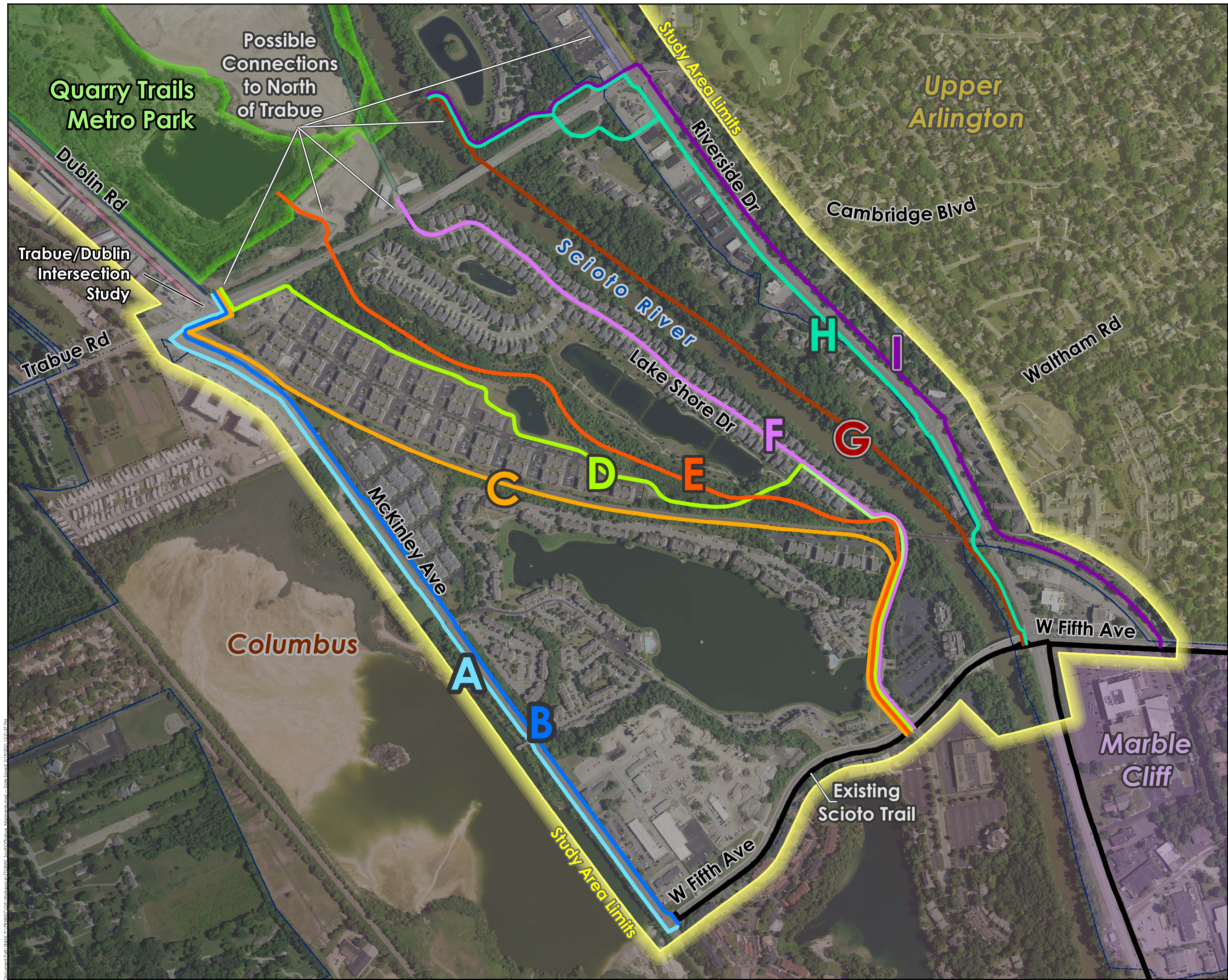


Figure 4

South of Trabue Conceptual Alignments

Fifth to Griggs Biking and Walking Study

Legend

Conceptual Alignments

A B C D E F G H I

Central Ohio Greenways

— Built

Other Map Objects

— Jurisdictional Boundaries

— Township Boundaries

Study Area

Note: Municipalities and Villages are tinted with colors, except in study area (for clarity). Unincorporated areas are tinted grey.

Exhibit Information

0 600 1,200 Feet

Last Updated on 3/19/2021

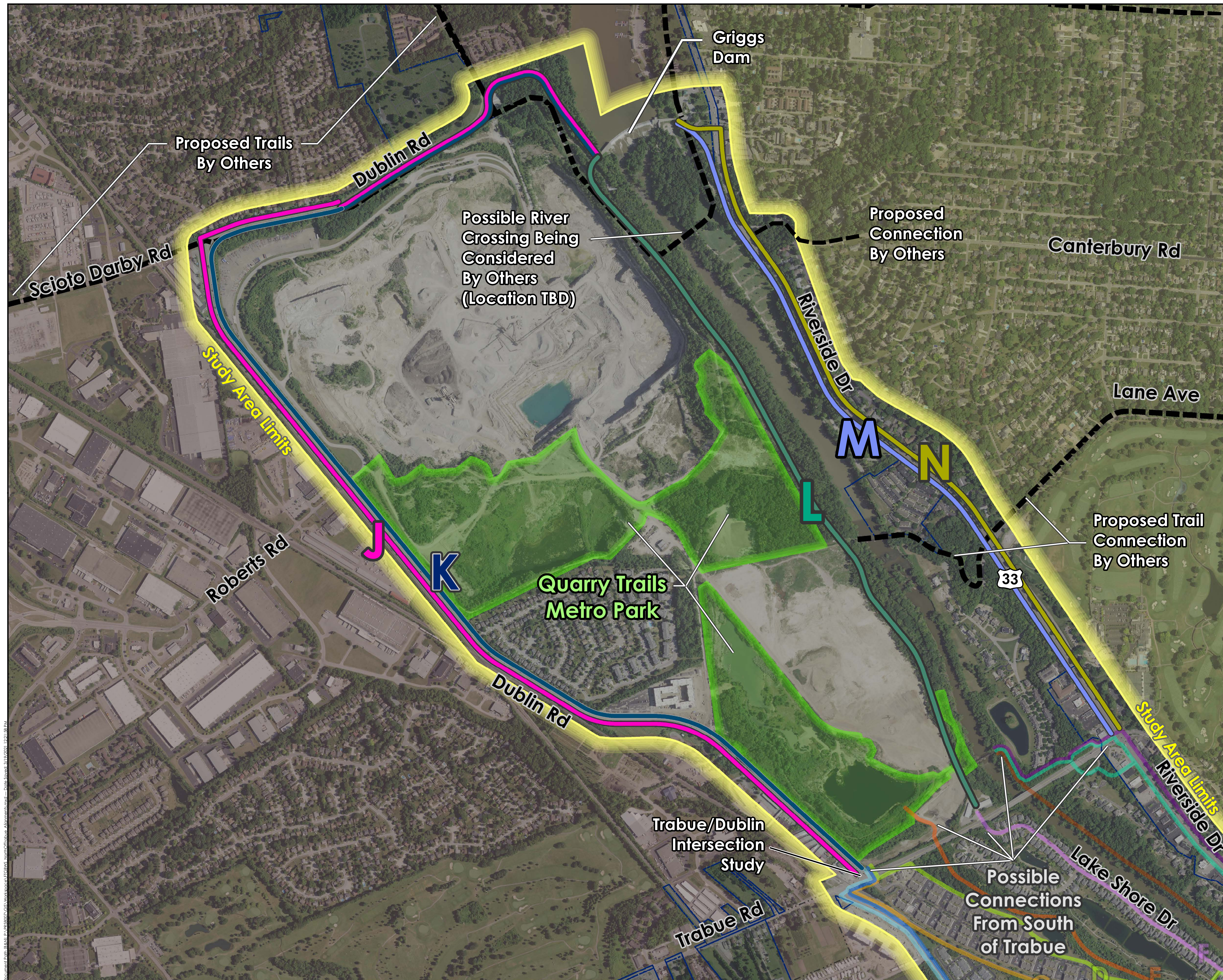


Figure 5

North of Trabue Conceptual Alignments

Fifth to Griggs Biking and Walking Study

Legend

Conceptual Alignments

J K L M N

Central Ohio Greenways

— Built

Other Map Objects

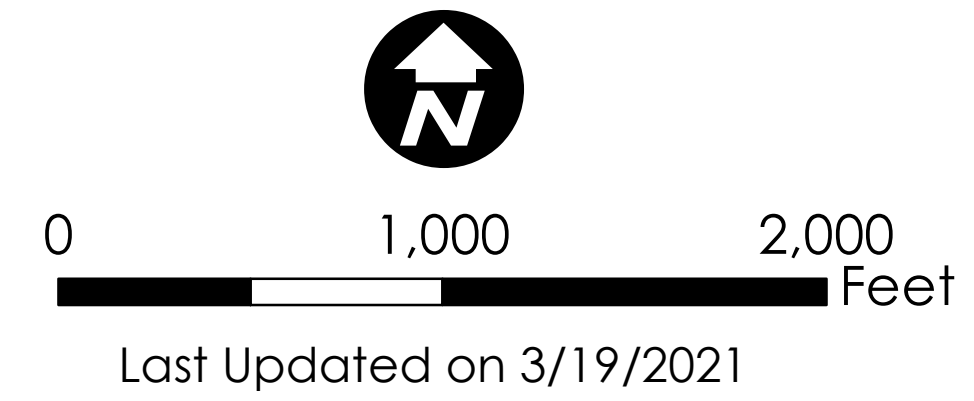
— Jurisdictional Boundaries

— Township Boundaries

Study Area

Note: Municipalities and Villages are tinted with colors, except in study area (for clarity). Unincorporated areas are tinted grey.

Exhibit Information



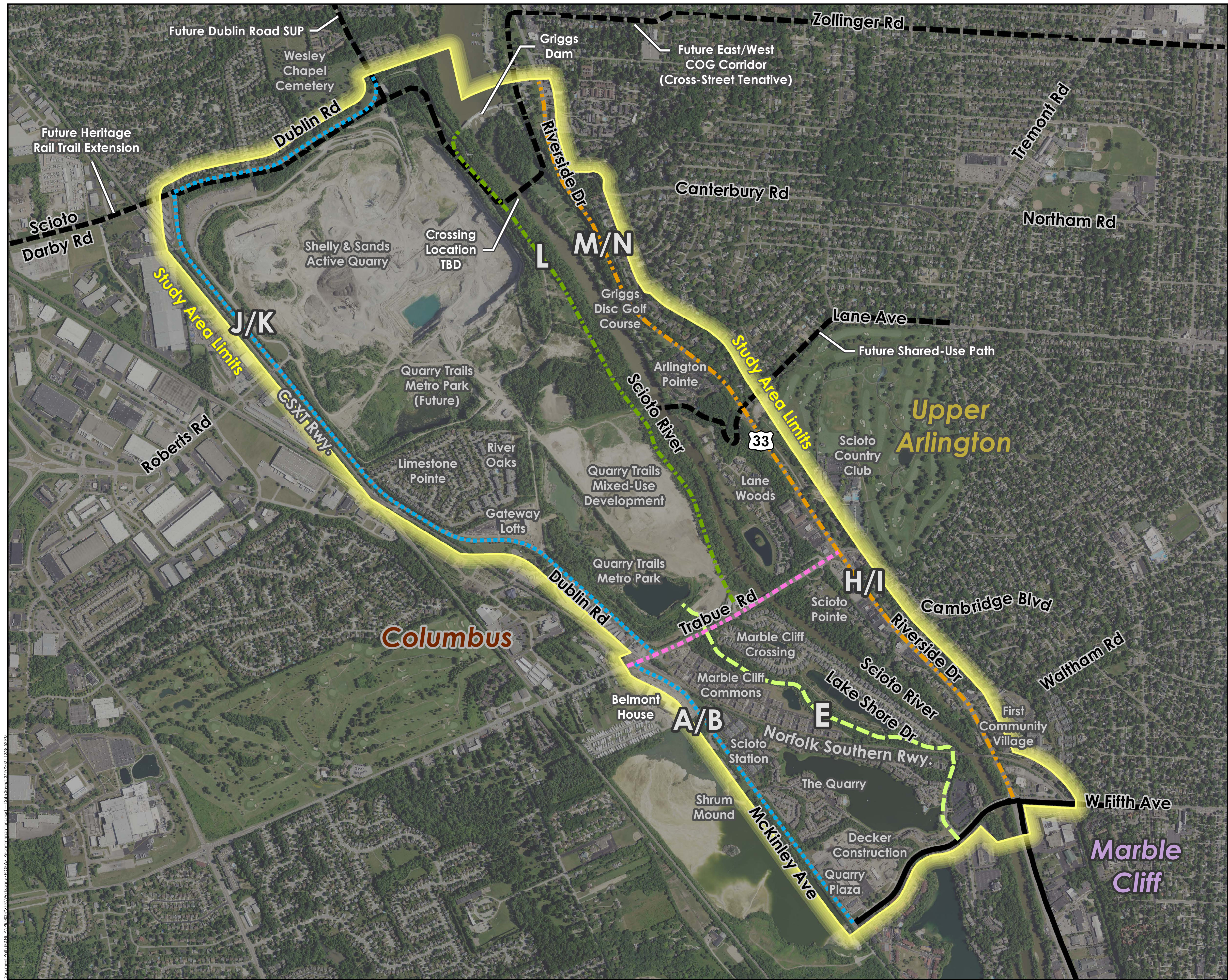


Figure 6

Recommended Alignments

Fifth to Griggs Biking and Walking Study

Legend

Alignment Corridors by Sponsor

- Columbus (Rec. and Parks)
- Columbus (Public Service)
- Upper Arlington
- Developer/Columbus/FCEO
- Developer/Metro Parks

Shared-Use Paths

- Built
- Planned (by others)

Other Map Objects

- Study Area

Exhibit Information

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Last Updated on 3/19/2021

Appendix B: Summary of Public Comments

Scioto Trail Extension: Fifth to Griggs Biking and Walking Study Public Outreach Summary



The City of Columbus Recreation and Parks Department (CRPD) is sponsoring a study to explore options to improve biking and walking in the area between Fifth Avenue and Griggs Park. From August 3 to September 4, 2020, CRPD hosted an on-line open house. A project website was established to solicit public input on multiple alignments under consideration. A video presentation was provided to explain the study and the alignments. An interactive GIS map was provided to allow visitors to move around the map and view alignments of interest. PDF maps were also provided for download. An on-line survey link was provided to accept comments. Contact information was also provided to accept comments by letter, e-mail and phone. Two one-hour Zoom meetings were conducted for two neighborhood associations that requested individual meetings.

CRPD issued a news release and posted on social media to announce the open house website. Oversized postcards were mailed to approximately 1,200 residents and property owners in the study area.

During the comment period, 456 comments were received via the website survey. An additional 40 comments were received by e-mail, letter, and phone.

Among the nearly 500 comments received, there were several common themes:

- Safe biking and walking facilities are needed
- Users would prefer an off-road path with scenic characteristics, away from noise and vehicles
- Some users would like a path adjacent to existing roadways to provide for an efficient route
- Biking/walking facilities feel safer when they are well used and should include access to all surrounding residents
- New path should provide connectivity to other recreational and commuting routes, as well as to existing and planned parks

Regarding a potential design of the path, several mentioned that it is important for it to be wide enough for all users and allow space to separate walkers from bikers. A few mentioned that it would be nice to have some variation in grade. There was a difference of opinion on whether dog walking should be allowed, with some specifically asking for dogs to be allowed and others asking for them to be prohibited.

When asked to provide input on the different alignments being considered, the most common concerns were:

- Avoid areas with frequent flooding
- Avoid impacts to private property
- Avoid streets with multiple driveways and on-street parking
- Avoid existing roads with heavy traffic
- Choose cost-effective option(s) that could be built soon
- Avoid/minimize crossing roads

Comments on Alignments

Following are the takeaways for each alignment based upon public input.

South of Trabue Road

McKinley Road Alignments (Alignment A on west side, Alignment B on east side):

- Lower cost to construct
- Minimizes private property impacts
- Access to adjacent land uses
- Good connections to other routes, including directly to the end of the trail at 5th Avenue and McKinley
- Direct route for commuting
- Not scenic
- Very close to high speed traffic
- Crossings are at traffic signals
- Intersections have very heavy traffic
- Crosses busy commercial driveways

Railroad Alignment (Alignment C):

- Away from traffic
- Close to neighborhoods (this was conveyed as good and bad)
- Shorter route
- Next to an active rail line
- Railroad may refuse to allow this

Marble Cliff Commons/Marble Cliff Crossing Alignments (Alignment D adjacent to Marble Cliff Commons, Alignment E through Marble Cliff Crossing HOA property):

- Scenic, quieter route
- Close to neighborhoods (this was conveyed as good and bad)
- Away from traffic
- Avoids residential yards
- Could impact HOA property
- Higher cost
- Shorter route with direct access to new park
- Alignment E could cross Trabue Road underneath, which is safer than crossing at intersections on Trabue
- The southern portion of Alignment D is on Lake Shore Drive, which was described as a concern due to poor visibility at the curve and driveway conflicts (Note: the southern portion of E would be a separated path along west side of Lake Shore Drive and use the existing railroad underpass.)

Lake Shore Drive Alignment (Alignment F):

- This route is currently used. Bicycle/pedestrian users will increase when the Metro Park opens to the north if no other routes are built. (This was conveyed as a negative issue.)
- Existing roadway, so a bike boulevard would be quick to implement
- Less traffic than other roadway options (McKinley and Dublin/Riverside)

- Direct route to new park north of Trabue
- Not scenic
- Cuts through middle of a neighborhood
- Potential for numerous conflicts with residential driveways (90+ short driveways with vehicles backing out)
- Conflicts with parked vehicles and service vehicles in neighborhood

Scioto River/Scioto Pointe Alignment (Alignment G):

- Scenic, quiet, shaded route
- Away from traffic
- Existing trail easement already in place
- Higher cost
- Frequent flooding (maintenance issues, periodic closures)
- Impact to habitat along river
- Connects to old rail bridge north of Trabue
- Concern over loss of privacy for adjacent residents

Dublin Road/Riverside Drive Alignments (Alignment H on the west side, Alignment I on the east side):

- Close to desired connections to Upper Arlington, Hilliard, and campus
- Minimizes residential property impacts
- Avoids residential streets
- Makes Riverside Drive accessible to non-motorized users
- Would be consistent with the type of trail south of 5th Avenue
- Improves aesthetics of Riverside Drive
- Could connect to old rail bridge north of Trabue
- Direct route for commuting
- Adjacent to high speed traffic
- Crosses major roads
- Not scenic
- Alignment H crosses many commercial driveways
- Alignment I could be unbuildable due to railroad refusal to allow it next to active tracks.

North of Trabue Road

Dublin Road Alignments (Alignment J on west side, Alignment K on east side):

- Provides access to existing neighborhoods
- Closer to park
- Could create a “loop” route with Alignment L through the park
- Provides connections to Hilliard
- Good for commuting
- Close to heavy, high speed traffic
- Noisy
- Longer route
- Not scenic
- Crosses business/industrial driveways

Quarry Trails Alignment (Alignment L):

- Already planned as part of Quarry Trails development
- Scenic, quiet route
- Direct access to park
- Away from traffic
- Does not impact private property, avoids neighborhoods
- Concern that this route encourages users to continue onto Lake Shore Drive to the south
- Requires river crossing to connect to east side of river
- Isolated area

Riverside Drive Alignments (Alignment M on west side, Alignment N on east side):

- Provides access to existing neighborhoods
- Provides connections to Upper Arlington and campus
- Well-lit
- Easy access from surrounding areas
- Provides access to park
- Direct route
- Could provide bridge over Scioto River
- Costly
- Heavy, high speed traffic
- Not scenic
- Crosses busy intersections
- Crosses business driveways
- Impacts residential properties