

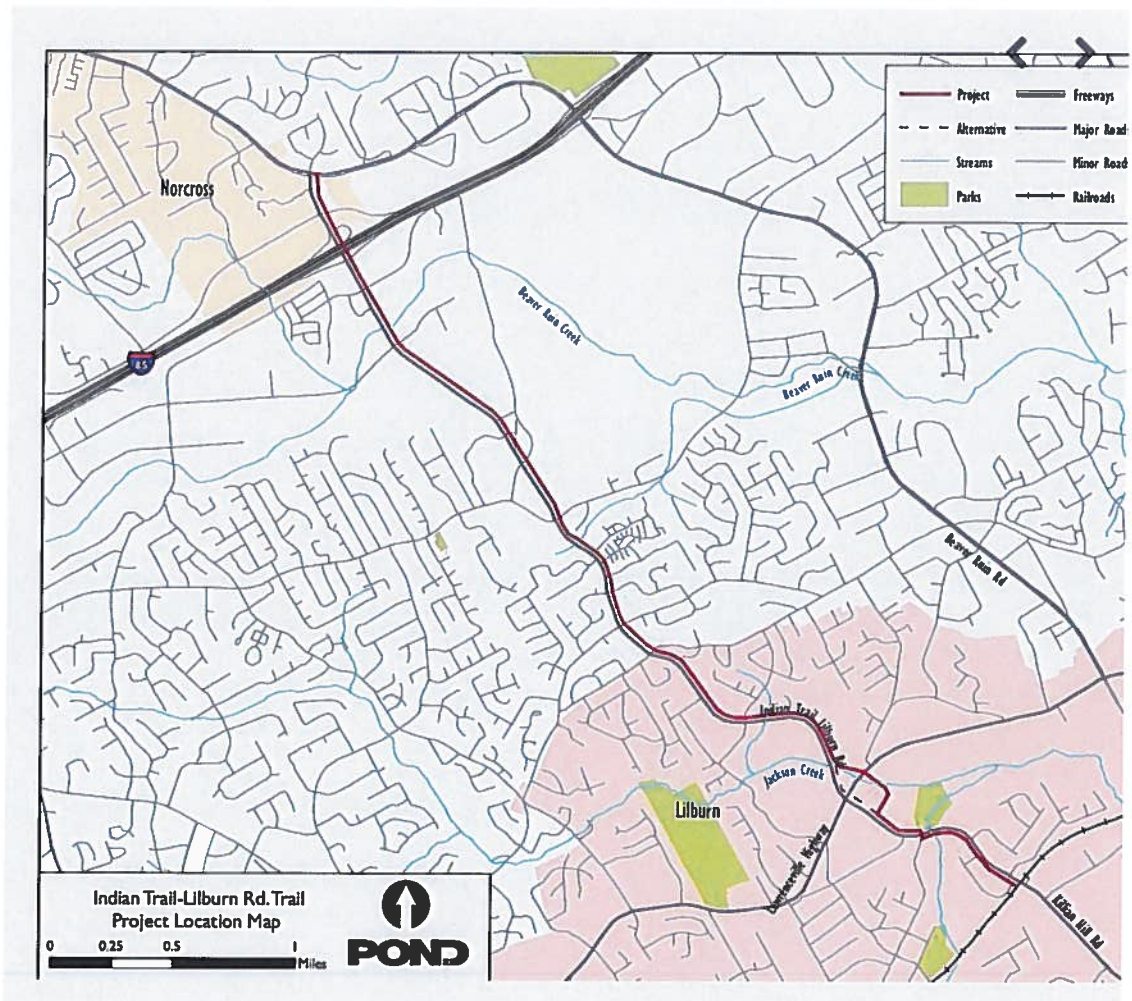
http://www.gwinnettdaily.com/local/cities/buford/arc-grants-gwinnett-cids-in-livable-centers-funding/article_04b429ea-3ec1-5502-8cb3-603cf2b1b3eb.html

FEATURED

ARC grants Gwinnett, CIDs \$643,728 in livable centers funding

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The Gwinnett Village Community Improvement District released this map showing the corridor for a planned Norcross-to-Lilburn trail. The project received \$311,728 in transportation funding from the Atlanta Regional Commission. The path includes a portion along Indian Trail Road, which was part of a 2006 LCI study conducted by the CID, which also received \$100,000 from the ARC to update that plan. (Special Photo)

The Atlanta Regional Commission announced on Tuesday that it is sending about \$643,728 to Gwinnett County and two of its community improvement districts to work on four trails and transit-oriented development projects in the county.

The Gwinnett Village and Gwinnett Place Community Improvement Districts each received Livable Centers Initiative study grants, worth \$100,000 and \$48,000, respectively. Meanwhile, the county is receiving about \$495,728 in LCI transportation funding from the ARC to help implement multi-use trail projects in the Norcross, Lilburn and Buford areas.

“Our board created LCI in 1999 to help communities across our region reinvent and improve themselves,” ARC Chairman Kerry Armstrong said in a statement. “Our local government partners have used these grants to devise strategies that improve livability by increasing walkability, encouraging healthier lifestyles and improving access to jobs and services.”

In all, the ARC awarded \$800,000 in grants and \$12 million in transportation funding to 20 communities across metro Atlanta to help those areas put together plans and policies that will improve their vibrancy and connectivity.

The Gwinnett Place CID’s grant will help pay for a study of a proposed trail connecting McDaniel Farm Park and Gwinnett Place Mall. Meanwhile, the Gwinnett Village CID’s grant will help it study transit-oriented development around a possible high-capacity transit station where Indian Trail Road crosses Interstate 85.

The county’s money, on the other hand, includes \$311,728 to help pay for a multi-use trail stretching from Norcross to Lilburn, and \$184,000 to cover bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the Buford Town Center area.

Gwinnett Village officials said they are planning to do an update to a similar LCI study on Indian Trail Road that was done in 2006. Issues such as land use development, transportation priorities, implementation strategies and market analysis will be looked at in the update.

The goal is to use the updated study as a blueprint on how to use land, improve mobility

and use capital improvement programs on that road through 2026.

“We rely on these studies to give us a true look at where we are and what we can realistically expect the area to become,” Gwinnett Village CID Executive Director Chuck Warbington said in a statement. “Our goal is to ensure that the area reaches its full potential and we appreciate ARC’s continued support as we work to strengthen the Indian Trail corridor and all of the surrounding areas.”

Gwinnett Village officials said they had included a multi-use path along Indian Trail Road in the 2006 study findings. They added, however, that the trail will be taken care of as part of the county’s Norcross-to-Lilburn multi-use pathway that received ARC transportation funding.

At the same time, the McDaniel Farm Park to Gwinnett Place Mall trail that Gwinnett Place CID officials plan to study is part of its ACTivate Gwinnett Place Master Plan for the area. County commissioners already approved an agreement with the CID last week to split the costs of the trail study, with the county paying \$50,000 and the CID paying \$48,500.

Gwinnett Place CID Executive Director Joe Allen said the \$48,000 ARC grant will provide additional funding that allows researchers to take an even deeper look than they were already planning to take.

The LCI study funding will help the CID pay for environmental screening of the area, public engagement and trail placement, according to information provided by the ARC. Allen said the addition of the grant funding to the CID and county’s funding may result in some changes to the plans though as ARC officials have expressed an interest in sharing some ideas they have about the project.

“We’re supposed to meet soon to talk about expanding the scope of the project, but as to what all of that means, I don’t know yet,” Allen said.

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