



Photo Credit: Friends of BERT



**TRUST FOR  
PUBLIC  
LAND™**

Connecting everyone to the outdoors™

# Bonita Estero Rail Trail (BERT)

## Acquisition Update

# THE REASONS FOR BERT

## A DESTINATION TRAIL

Mighty “destination trails” **increase tourism**. In Florida, outdoor recreation **generates \$58.6 BILLION** in consumer spending, **485,000 JOBS**, and **\$3.5 BILLION** in state and local tax **REVENUE** annually

## IMPROVING HEALTH

This trail will improve public **HEALTH** and offer residents an easy way to get active. Trails **reduce auto use, alleviate congestion, and mitigate air pollution**. Investment in trails **IMPROVES quality of life** and encourages behavioral changes that reduce chronic diseases and health care costs

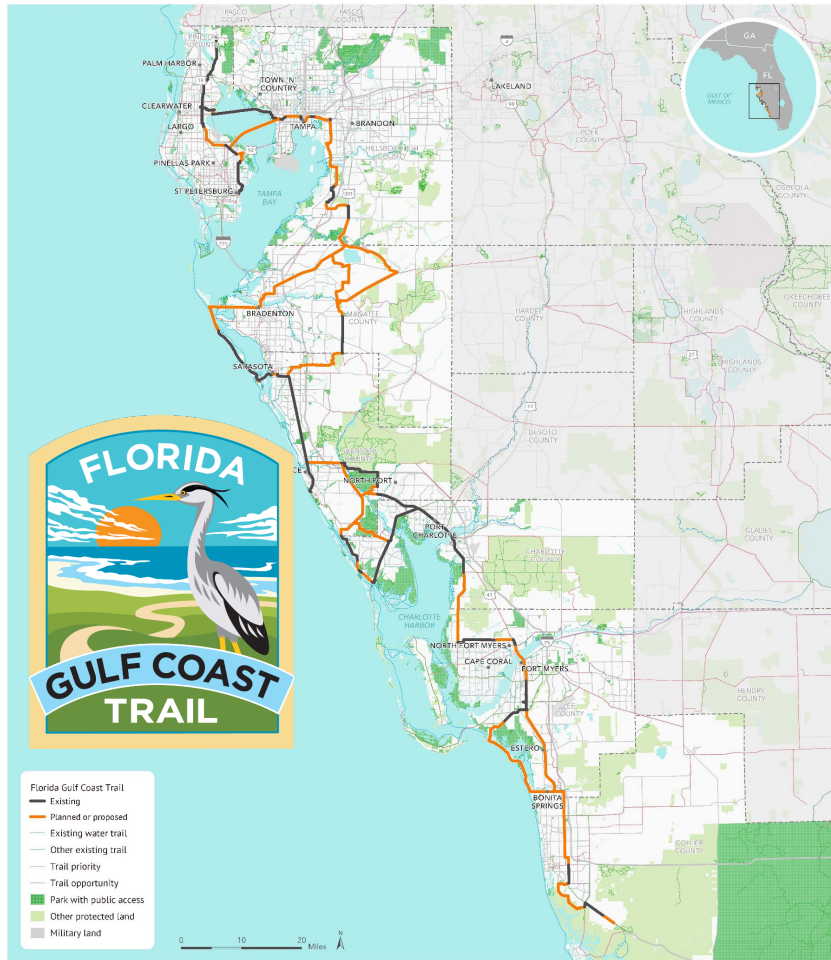
## STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS

The Florida Gulf Coast Trail will provide an opportunity for **people of all abilities** to get outdoors close to home. With nearby access to the trail, **NEIGHBORS WILL BE CONNECTED**. Proximity to the trail enhances property values and **desirability of a community**

## SAFER COMMUNITIES

More than **4 MILLION PEOPLE** live in this region. Our pedestrian infrastructure is not evolving in pace with our cities and towns. In fact, **3 of the 10 deadliest places for pedestrians** in the U.S. are metropolitan areas within **Southwest Florida**

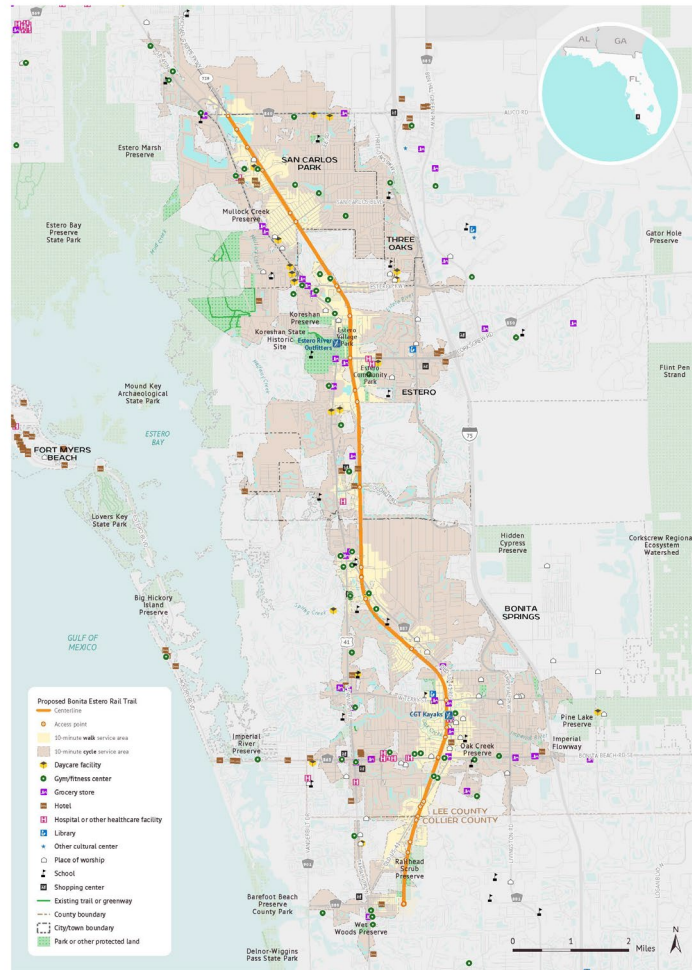
# BERT and Connectivity



## Florida Gulf Coast Trail

PINELLAS COUNTY TO COLLIER COUNTY

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## Bonita Estero Rail Trail

COLLIER AND LEE COUNTIES

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## Paradise Coast Trail



# BERT Acquisition Task Force

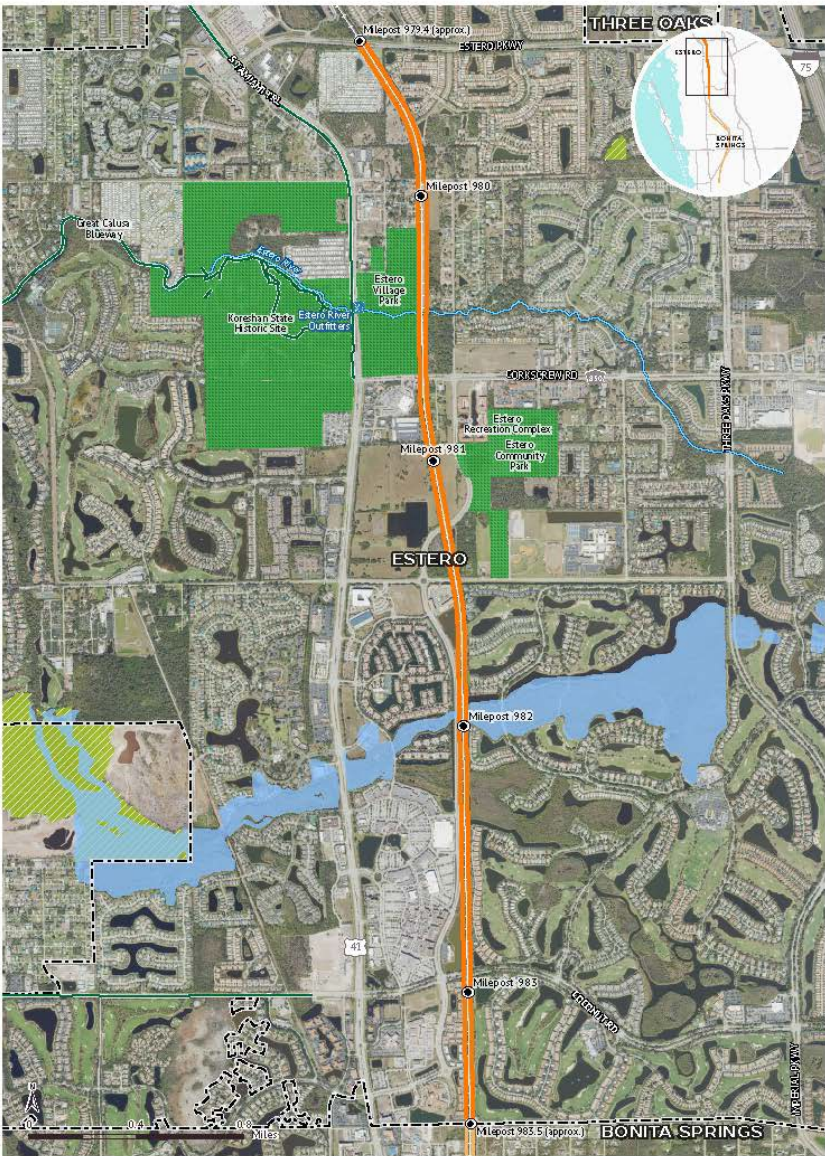
- Informally formed in 2024
- Comprised of Council/Board Liaisons and Staff, Friends of BERT, and TPL
- Memorandum of Understanding executed

# Key Fundraising Efforts

- **Lee County Commission. Feb/Mar. 2024.**
- **Active Transportation Infrastructure Improvement Program (ATIIP) – June, 2024**
- **Congressman Donalds (April, 2024)**
- **CDBG/DR – Estero Request (2024)**
- **EPA Community Change Program (2024) Helene/Milton**
- **Lee 20/20, (2025)**
- **SunTrail (2024, 2025)**
- **Safe Streets for All (2025).**
- **BUILD (2025)**
- **Outdoor Recreation Legacy Program**
- **Florida Legislature**
  - **Line Item, FWC, Florida Forever**
- **Florida Forever**
- **Estero, Bonita and Collier 2024, 2025**

# Current Acquisition

- 11.4 Miles total in Estero, Bonita and Collier.
- 4.1 miles in Estero



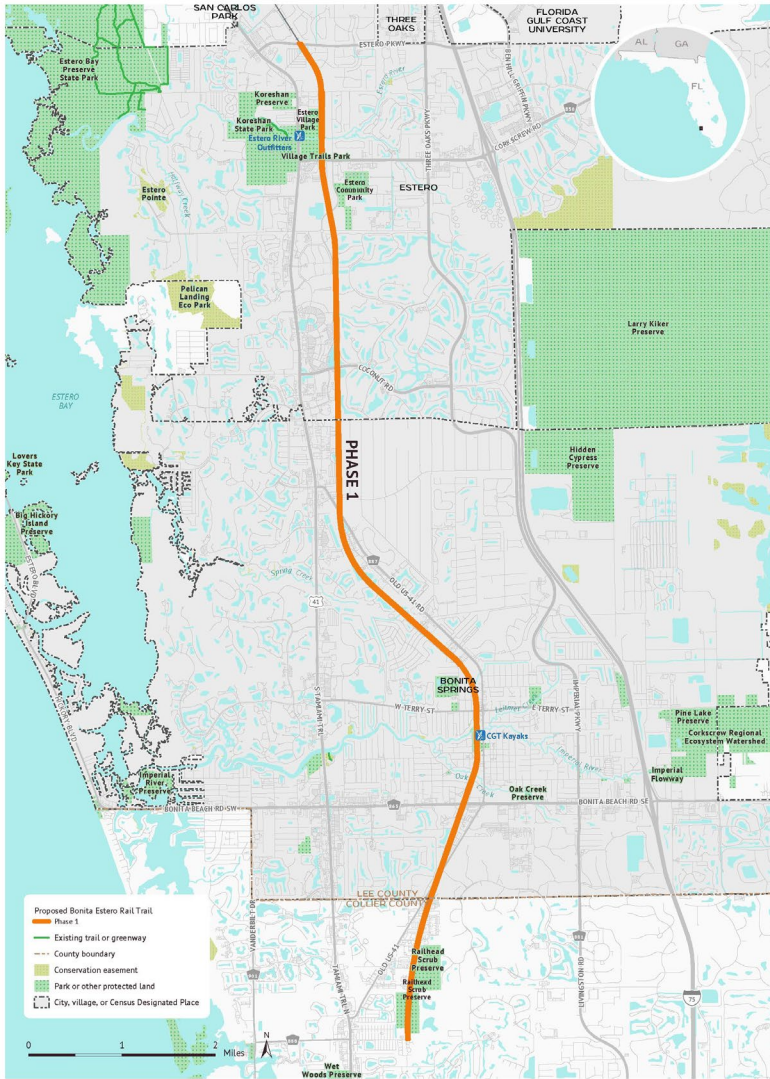
## Segment: Estero

Segment length: 4.1 miles Segment area: 66.7 acres

### BONITA ESTERO RAIL TRAIL

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- Segment of focus
- Rail milepost (LSDOT)
- Existing trail or greenway
- River/creek of interest
- Wetlands of interest
- City, village, or Census Designated Place
- Conservation easement
- Park or other protected land



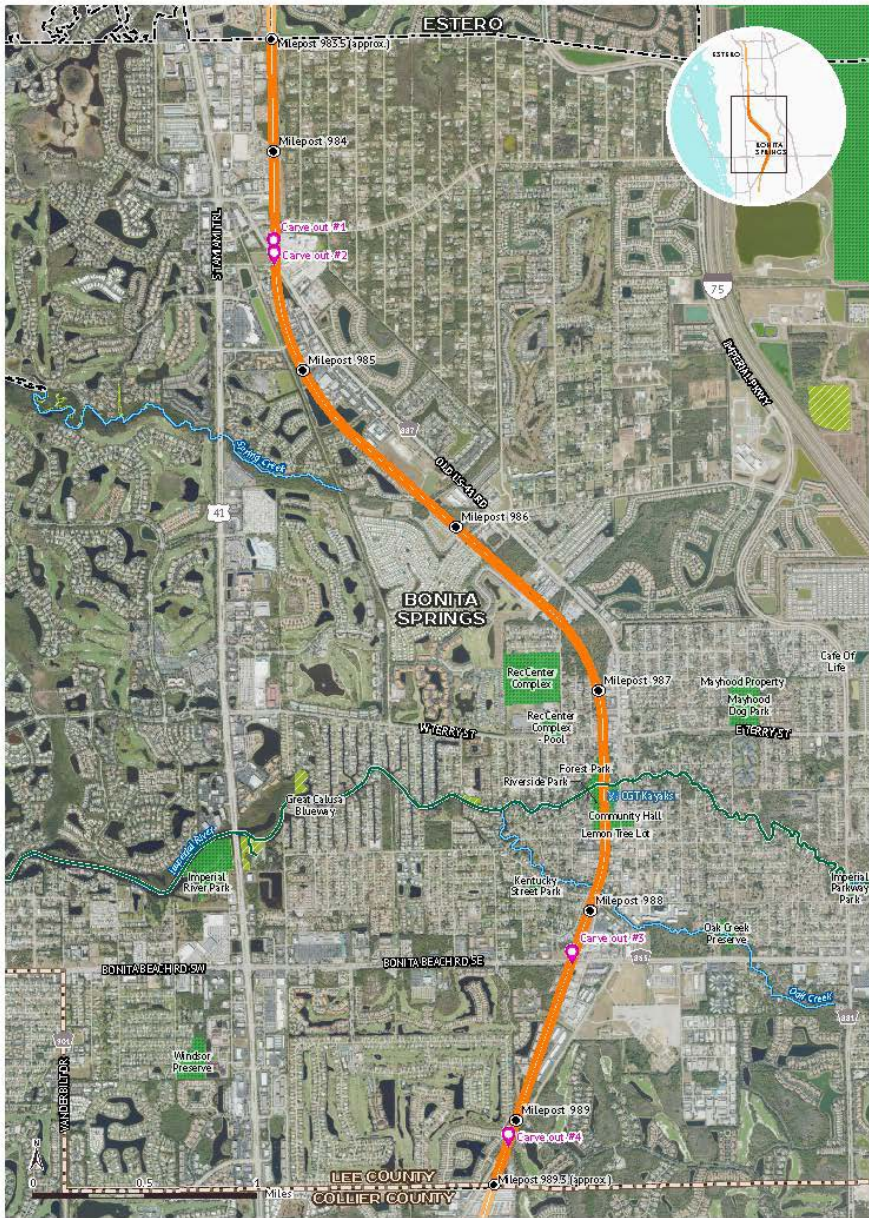
## Bonita Estero Rail Trail: Phase 1

COLLIER AND LEE COUNTIES

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# Bonita Springs & Collier County Segments



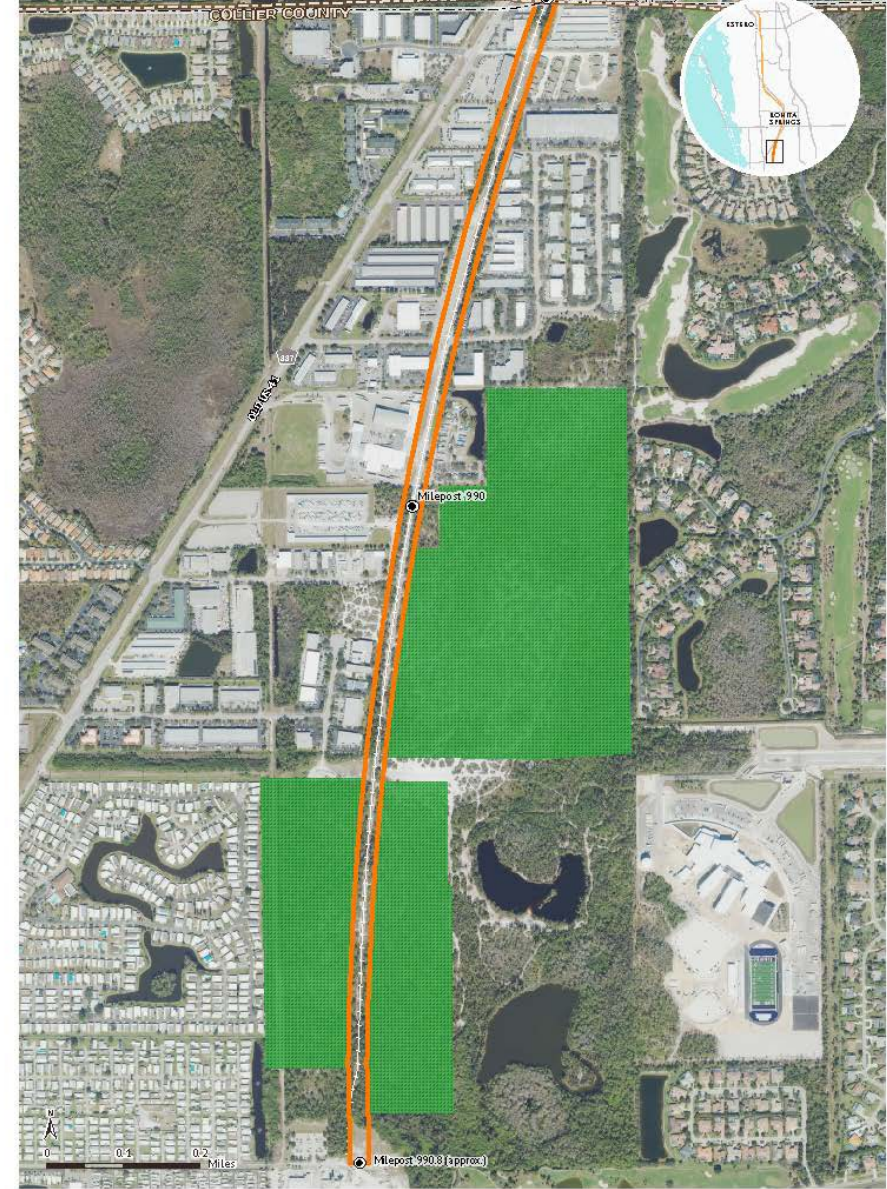
## Segment: Bonita Springs

Segment length: 5.8 miles Segment area: 89 acres

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- Segment of focus
- Carve out
- Rail milepost (USDOT)
- Existing trail or greenway
- County boundary
- River/creek of interest
- City, village, or Census Designated Place
- Conservation easement
- Park or other protected land



## Segment: Unincorporated Collier County

Segment length: 1.5 miles Segment area: 24.3 acres

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- Segment of focus
- Rail milepost (USDOT)
- County boundary
- City, village, or Census Designated Place
- Conservation easement
- Park or other protected land





# The Estero Transaction

## The Corridor – 11.4 miles

- Estero: 130 feet wide
- Estero: 4.1 miles

## Total Price: \$60M

- Estero: \$19.8M

## Contract Type

- Purchase and Sale Agreement or
- Lease-Purchase Agreement



## Key Tasks & Dates

1. **3/2026 - Estero approve contract**
2. **2 – 8/2026 Due diligence**
  - **Appraisals, Titlework, Survey, ESA**
3. **6/2026 Railbanking process**
  - **SGLR prep for abandonment**
  - **TPL/Estero File for NITU**
4. **9/2026 Purchase and/or Lease Commitment(s)**
  - **Estero Commits by 9/29/26**
  - **TPL commits by 9/30/26**
5. **10/2026 Closing**

# Special Property Conditions

## 1. Railbanking

- **Maintains Corridor Contiguity**
- **Interim Trail Use Agreement**
- **Potential for Reactivation**

## 2. Licenses, Leases and Agreements

## 3. Deed Restrictive Language



# Next Short-Term Steps

- **Estero Council Chooses P&S or LPA and Authorizes Execution – March, 2026**
- **TPL available to participate in one-on-ones with Councilmembers and future public meetings.**
- **Continue and Commence All Due Diligence**