



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Groundwork Jacksonville Receives Grant for the Emerald Trail from the James M. Cox Foundation**

**JACKSONVILLE, FLA. (2/19/24)** Groundwork Jacksonville today announced a \$500,000 grant from the James M. Cox Foundation. The Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Cox Enterprises, parent company of Cox Automotive, and is named after the company's founder. The grant will help fund the design of Emerald Trail segment three, the Riverside Link, and segment four, the S-Line Connector.

"At Cox, we're deeply committed to supporting the communities where we do business," said Joey Satfield, general manager for the Manheim Daytona Beach-Jacksonville Market Center. "This generous contribution from the James M. Cox Foundation helps us advance our local conservation initiatives and dedication to providing accessible green spaces for everyone to enjoy."

Segments three and four of the trail are the first to be completed in partnership with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority. The project will be funded, in part, by \$132 million of gas tax revenue earmarked for the Emerald Trail by the Jacksonville City Council in 2021.

The Riverside Link is a 2.3-mile segment that begins at the Artist Walk under I-95 and ends at the southwestern end of McCoys Creek. A section of the trail also runs along Riverside Avenue to Memorial Park. Community engagement and preliminary design for the segment are already underway.

The 4.8-mile S-Line Connector was an abandoned portion of CSX railroad Right-of-Way, which the City of Jacksonville gained possession of in 2008. Approximately 1.3 miles of the S-Line — from 12th Street and Boulevard, near Andrew Robinson Elementary School, to E. 21st Street — remain unfinished and will be completed as part of the Emerald Trail project.

"The James M. Cox Foundation has been [a significant partner of PATH and the Atlanta BeltLine](#), so they understand the positive impact urban trails can have on a community's health and quality of life," said Kay Ehas, CEO of Groundwork Jacksonville. "We are grateful that the Cox Foundation sees that same potential in the Emerald Trail and has chosen to lend its support in such a significant way."

#### **About the Emerald Trail**

The Emerald Trail will be a 34-mile contiguous urban trail and linear park system stretching from Brentwood to San Marco and Lackawanna to Historic Eastside. It will connect 14 neighborhoods and Downtown Jacksonville, including 16 schools, two colleges, three hospitals, 21 parks, and the



Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center. The first segment of the Emerald Trail, the LaVilla Link, will open this spring. Segment two, along Hogan Street, is expected to be under construction in late 2024.

**About Groundwork Jacksonville**

Groundwork Jacksonville, Inc. was formed in 2014 by a group of city, nonprofit, community, and business representatives in partnership with Groundwork USA and with support from the U.S. National Park Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Jacksonville is one of 21 Groundwork Trusts across the country focused on environmental equity, resilience, stewardship, and transforming the natural and built environment in low-resource and climate-vulnerable communities. Visit [www.groundworkjacksonville.org](http://www.groundworkjacksonville.org) or follow @GroundworkJax on social media for more information.

**About the James M. Cox Foundation**

Named in honor of the founder of Cox Enterprises, the James M. Cox Foundation is committed to providing philanthropic support to nonprofit organizations in communities where Cox Enterprises does business. The Foundation concentrates its support on four priority areas: conservation and environment, early childhood education (birth to five years), empowering families and individuals for success, and health. Learn more at [www.coxenterprises.com](http://www.coxenterprises.com).

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