



FROM UTILITY TO AMENITY: REIMAGINING RESERVOIRS FOR MULTI-USE

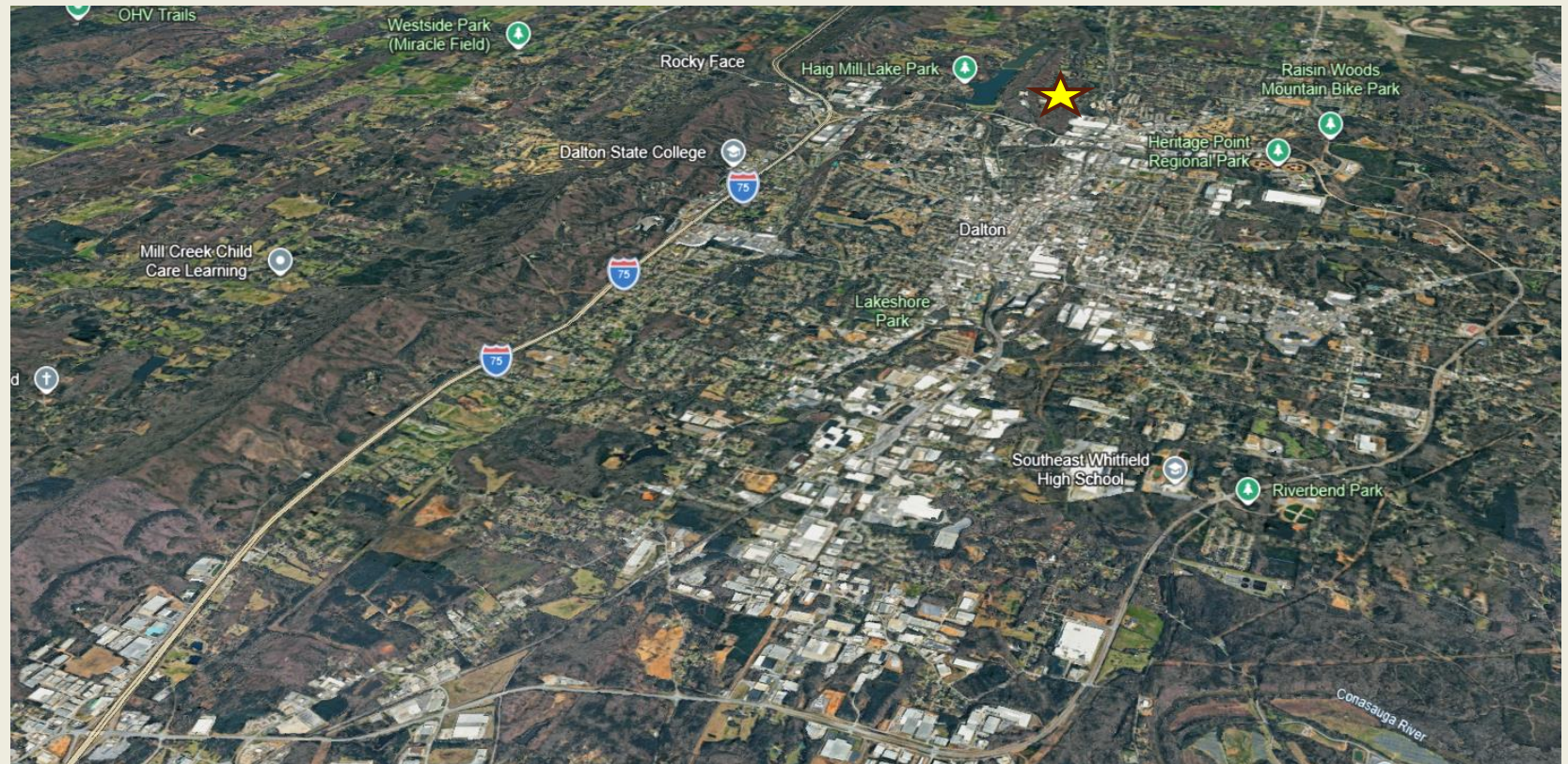
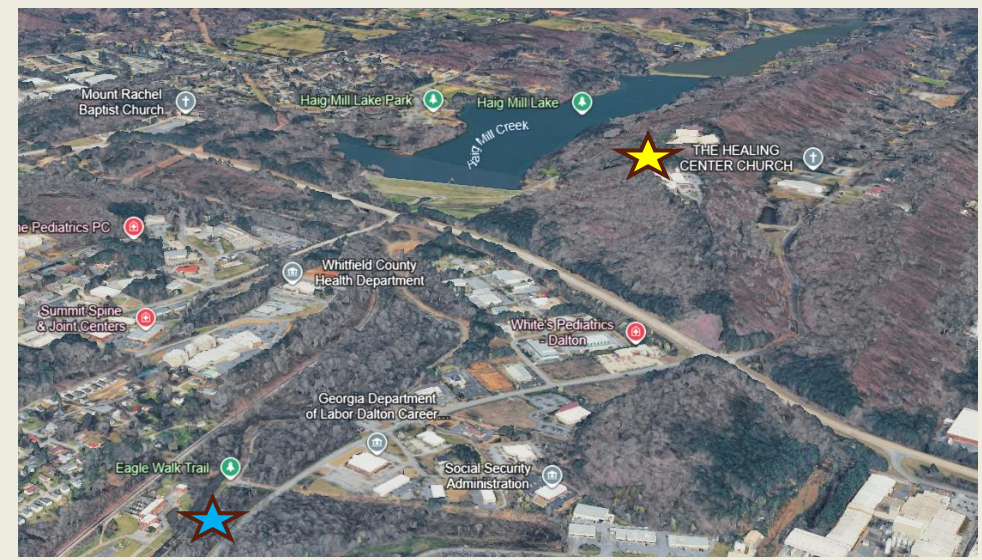
Northwest Georgia Outdoor Recreation Summit – Tue., June 16, 2026





HAIG MILL LAKE RESERVOIR

- Developed between 1993 and 1995 as a reliable source of raw water for meeting the needs of Dalton's residential, commercial, and industrial customers during periods of drought
 - Reservoir = 125 Acre footprint
 - 750-million-gallon capacity and 10 square miles of contributing drainage area
 - Direct connection to the Chattanooga Avenue Water Treatment Plant
- Operates Under a Reservoir Management Plan approved by the Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia DNR
- Category 1 Dam as defined by the Safe Dams Program of the EPD
- Upper Lake built in 1962 by the Limestone Valley Soil Conservation District and US Dept. of Agriculture
 - Dalton Utilities maintains both dams (upper and lower) as part of M&O of the reservoir



HAIG MILL LAKE PARK

- Opened in 2018 (20+ Years After Reservoir was Built)
- Largest City Park – 300 Acres
- Visit Data (According to Placer.AI):
 - 2025 - 65.8K visitors for a total of 165.4K visits
 - 2024 - 62.6K visitors for a total of 172.7K visits
 - 2023 - 59.4K visitors for a total of 151.8K visits
- Hours of Operation: Dawn till Dusk



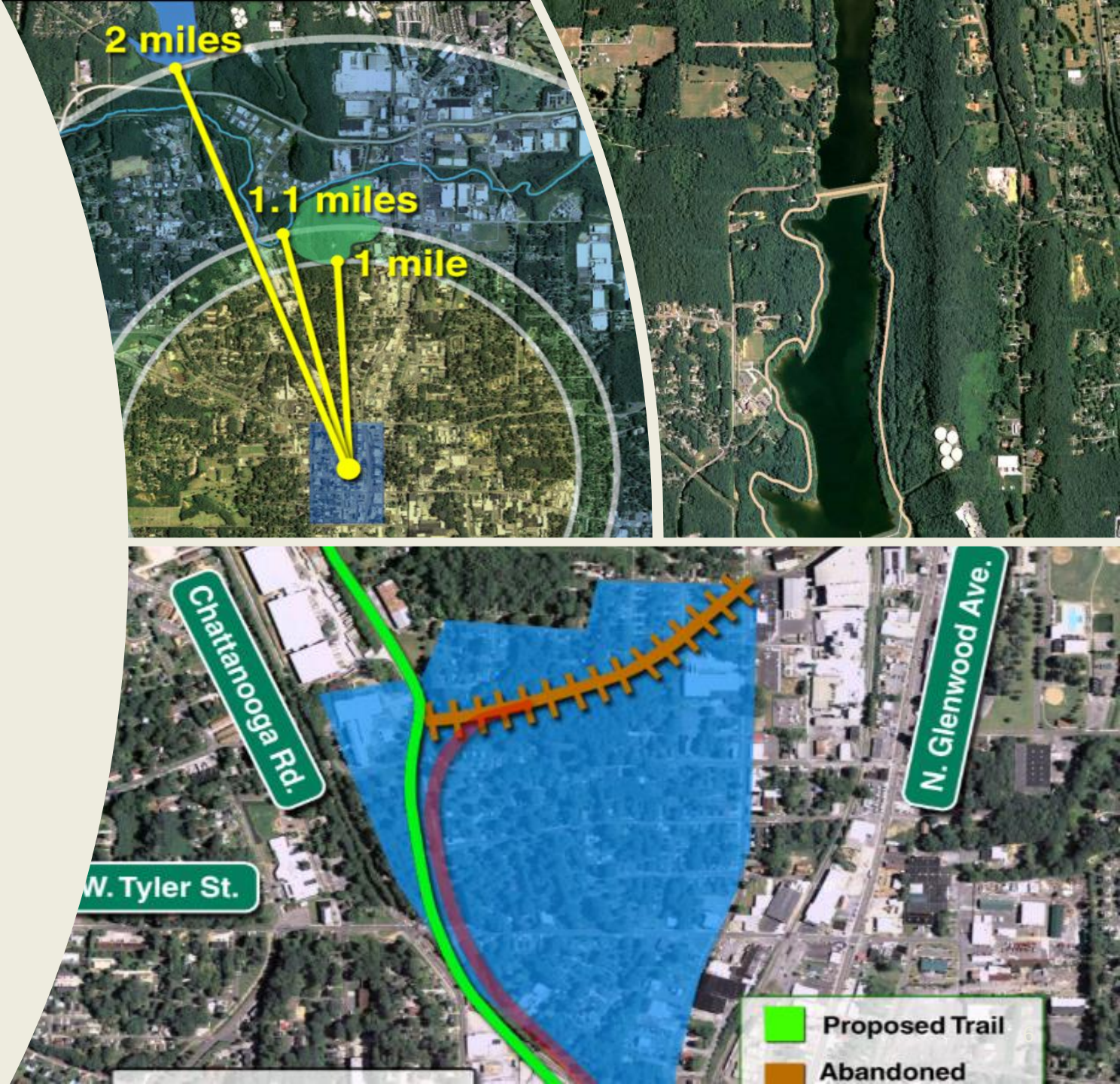
TOURISM DRAW = ECONOMIC IMPACT!

- I-75 Billboards
- Visitor Guide
- Blue Ridge and Southern Living Magazines
- Destination Location for Outdoor Enthusiasts
 - Value-add for other events in our community like Baseball Tournaments



ORIGINS OF THE PARK

- Planning Started Circa 2010; Dalton's "Green Hat" on Downtown Dalton
 - Centered around trail connectivity from downtown to some of Dalton potential recreational amenities (i.e. Mt. Rachel, Historic Crown Mill, Mill Creek Trail, and Haig Mill Lake)



DESIGNING THE PARK



DESIGNING THE PARK



PARK AMENITIES

- (4) Fishing Piers; Catch and Release
- (3) Pavilions/Picnic Areas
- (2) Outdoor Classroom Buildings
- (12) Benches with shelter
- Kayak Rentals
- Launches for Kayaks/Canoes
- Boat Ramp
- Playground
- 3-Mile Nature Trail
 - Paved trail under construction





RECREATION WHILE PROTECTING DRINKING WATER

- Primary objective of the reservoir management plan is to preserve and protect the quality of water in Haig Mill Reservoir
 - Secondary objectives are to maintain aesthetic quality of the natural environmental conditions while **accommodating the safe and healthful use** of the reservoir and its lands for **limited recreational purposes by the general public**
- Security – the property is completely fenced and access controlled by either Dalton Utilities or Dalton Parks and Recreation personnel
 - Critical operational areas are restricted from public access for public safety and protection of infrastructure (i.e. intake structure and access bridge, water tanks, emergency spillway, plunge pool, etc.)
- Clear identification of public access areas and authorized recreational uses to **minimize human contact with the water**
 - Non-motorized boating (fuel concerns)
 - Paddle boarding
 - Fishing
 - Hiking – Pets not allowed on the reservoir trail
 - Picnicking
 - Fitness Areas
- Water Quality Protection Measures for each permitted activity & quarterly monitoring at 8 different sites for various parameters
- 150-Foot Buffer Consideration – Certain park amenities strategically located outside the buffer for protection of the water quality

PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

- Addition of exotic species or non-native plants
- Fires or burning of debris
- Removal of forest humus or mulch
- Gasoline or diesel powered boating vessels
- Cleaning of vessels with soaps or solvents
- **Swimming, diving, snorkeling, scuba diving**
- Hunting of any kind
- Pet/Animal use



MAINTENANCE CONSIDERATIONS

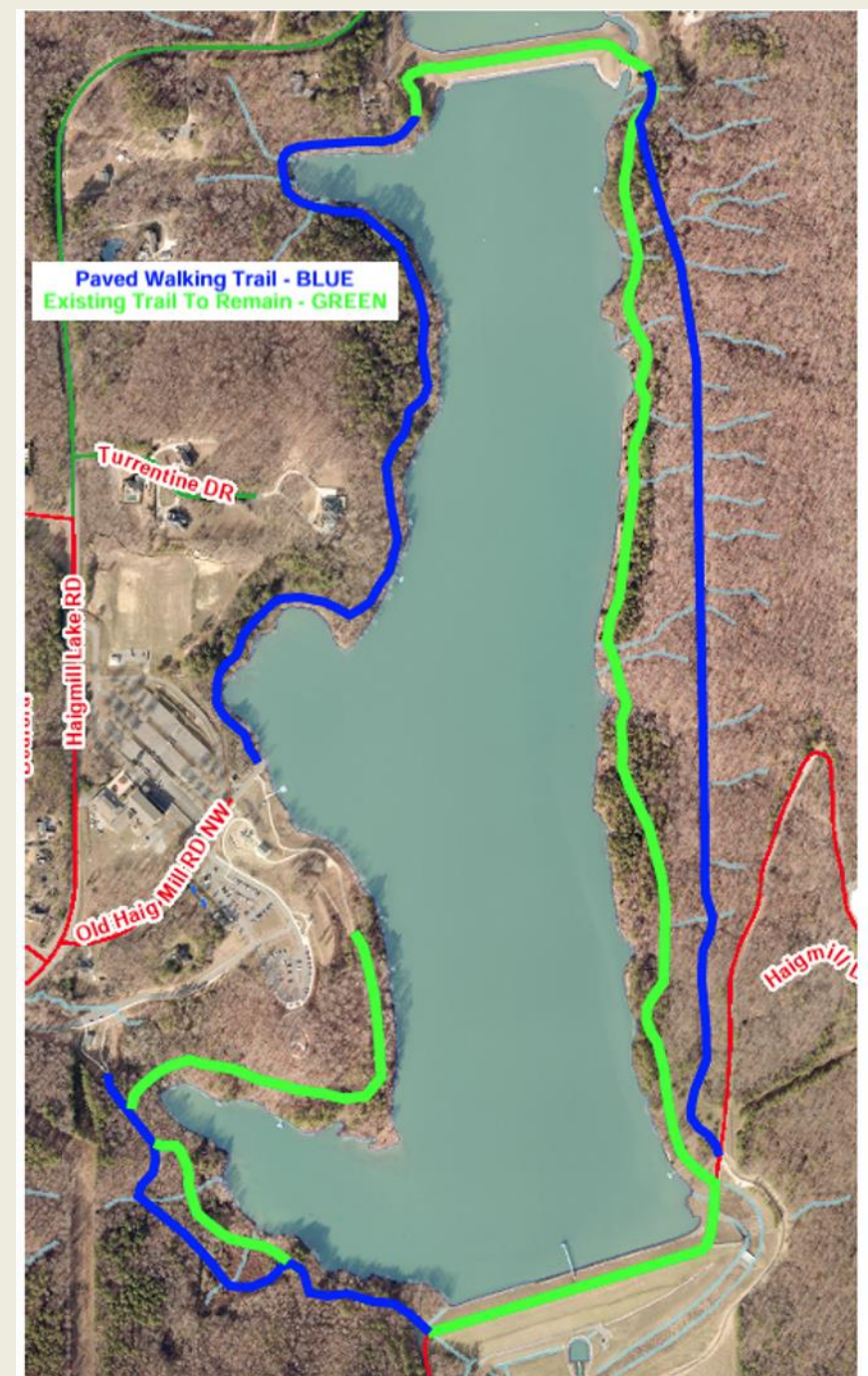
- Daily, weekly, monthly activities?
 - Daily –check trail for fallen trees/limbs, facility checks (bathrooms twice per day, playgrounds, trash cans in park)
 - Weekly – Landscaping/mowing (toward end of the week = looks good for weekend rentals); pest control (ants Wasps nests); watering landscaping if necessary
 - Monthly – 3x per year pressure washing; 4x per year maintaining detention pond
- Maintenance theme – keep it natural (fallen tree could be fish habitat)
- How many staff? 3 FT (Seasonal 4-6 PT in summer); PT: Close the Park and Work Weekends
- Fish Management/DNR Coordination? Catch and Release Rule for Bass (Parks and Recreation Rule); limit 20 per day on other fish; can be more stringent than State rules but not less; healthy bait fish population; stocking has not been required yet since 2018
- Invasive Species? Child caught goldfish someone had put in lake; required removal of several
- Have not really had a problem with algae or weed grass
- Dalton Utilities handles dam maintenance; not Parks and Recreation staff
- Trash along trail; fish bait containers seem to be a problem
- Water level during dry times? Water only drops 1 foot during dry times; natural springs feeding into upper lake

RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Potential Drowning Concern/Countermeasures
- ADA Access and Accommodations
- Getting Lost – Mile Marker with Help Indicators
- Is Cell Service Available Along the Trail?
- Review with Public Safety Agencies/911/EMA on how to Dispatch in Case of Emergencies
 - Table-top response exercises
 - Proper equipment to respond to emergency
- Signage
- Fencing/Procedures for Closing/Clearing Park; Automated Gate with Doorbell
- Coordination with Insurance Carrier/Risk Management Reviews



RECENT IMPROVEMENTS

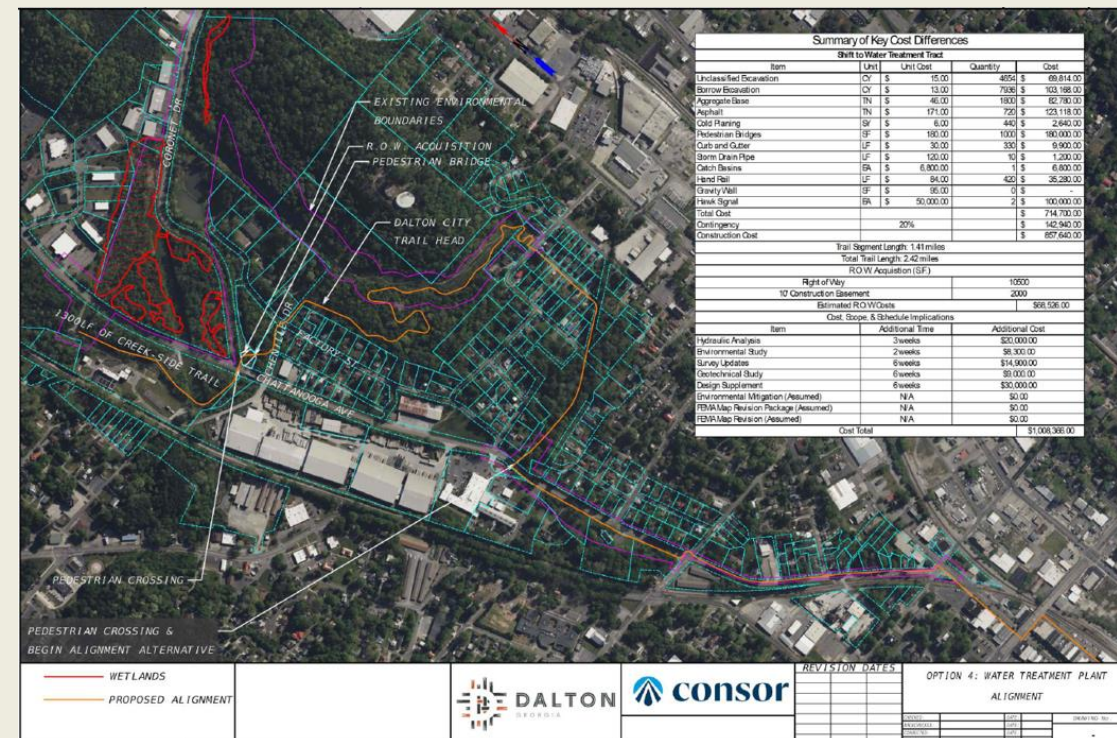


CONNECTION TO MILL LINE



Total trail connectivity:

- Haig Mill: ~3.5 Miles
- Mill Line Phase 1: ~1.5 Miles
- Mill Line Phase 2: ~2.5 Miles
- Total: ~8 Miles



LOOKING FORWARD

- 250th Celebration with Kids Sailboat Competition
- Father's Day Fish Camp
- Taps in the Park?
- "Beast Before the Feast" Thanksgiving Run
- Philanthropic Opportunities?



 PARKS + RECREATION
CITY OF DALTON

HIKING CAMP

June 22-26
8:00am-1:00pm
Ages: 9-13
\$100
per participant
www.daltonparks.org



www.daltonparks.org (706) 278-5404



 PARKS + RECREATION
CITY OF DALTON

Summer CAMPS

JUNE-JULY

Make the most of summer with DPRD! Our camps give children the chance to stay active, make friends, memories and explore new adventures all summer long.

- SUMMER FUN CAMP**
• Ages: 6-12 • Registration Fee: \$100
- SPORTS CAMP**
• Ages: 7-12 • Registration Fee: \$100
- FISHING CAMP**
• Ages: 7-12 • Registration Fee: \$40
- CAMP RISING SUN**
• (special needs) • Ages: 5-7 • Registration Fee: \$80
- CAMP SUNSHINE**
• (special needs) • Ages: 8-18 • Registration Fee: \$80



QUESTIONS?

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