A Report Prepared for:

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A Documentary Overview of the Proposed
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Greenway

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Management Summary

The proposed greenway through the campus of the University of Tennessee does not intercept, nor closely approach any recorded archaeological sites listed with the Tennessee Division of Archaeology. The route of the greenway closely follows a railroad grade cut originally constructed in 1856-58 by the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad. The right-of-way was also maintained by the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad and its successor, the Southern Railway. The right-of-way of this grade cut was originally 66 feet in width, but was enlarged to 80 feet and more during the late 1800s. The right-of-way housed a double track branch line that was maintained into the 1960s until being abandoned in place by the Southern Railway.

Civil War field fortifications were present near the northern end of the greenway at the grade crossing of the railroad at East Third Street. Modern construction has severely disturbed this area and no intact military features are likely to be encountered. Domestic and light industrial historic sites are not included within the proposed primary construction impact zone. There is little probability of intercepting potentially significant domestic or industrial sites or features. Portions of the right-of-way between Oak and Vine streets do contain intact, in situ rails, and the grade cut at this locality retains much of its original relief.

Current construction plans indicate that the greenway does not significantly depart from the corridor established by the railroad right-of-way. Modern construction has erased much of the right-of-way and reduced the cultural resource inventory in its immediate surroundings. Archaeological monitoring and/or testing is therefore not recommended.
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The report was edited by Nicholas Honerkamp, Ph.D., director of the Jeffrey L. Brown Institute of Archaeology, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

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Introduction

In response to a request from Derthick, Henley and Wilkerson, Architects, of Chattanooga, the authors have prepared this documentary overview of a proposed greenway corridor consisting of a pedestrian walkway and associated plantings that will link elements of the campus of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (UTC). The proposed UTC Greenway substantially follows a now-abandoned railroad right-of-way that extends from Martin Luther King Boulevard on the south to East Third Street on the north (Figures 1 and 2). The footprint of the proposed greenway is typically less than twenty feet wide, not including adjacent landscaping. The walkway spans an airline distance of roughly 3000 feet.

The objective of this documentary overview is to identify within the Greenway route the probability of archaeological features that may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and to provide a context for appreciating the historical significance of the proposed route. This documentary overview is not an exhaustive historical treatment of the areas impacted by the proposed greenway, but merely summarizes the salient historical features of the proposed linear park.

Documentary resources consulted for this overview consist largely of maps and views that are readily available at local research institutions. These resources include aerial views of the city prepared by A. Ruger (1871) and Norris, Wellge and Company (1886). Fire insurance maps reviewed for this document include the Sanborn publications (1885, 1889, 1901, 1917, 1949, 1955, 1965). Real estate plat books reviewed included those by G. M. Hopkins (1889, 1904, 1914) and C. W. Chadwick (1928). The flood control series by TVA was also examined (1969).

Limited deed material was collected. Topical clipping files at the Local History and Genealogy section of the Chattanooga Hamilton County Bicentennial Library were reviewed. A number of topical and secondary published histories were examined, including general Chattanooga history works such as Wilson (1980), Govan and Livingood (1977), and Livingood (1981). Railroad and transportation-related included Holland (1931), Folmsbee (1933), Livingood (1947) and Steinberg (1975, 1976), and Civil War related texts included Livingood (1995), Hoobler (1986) and official War Department Records (OR’s). Archaeological literature reviewed for this report consisted of Council and Honerkamp (1984).

Other than photographing current physical conditions on the proposed walkway, no field investigation was performed for this documentary overview.
Figure 1. Project location map, from TVA / USGS map, Chattanooga Quadrangle, 7.5 minute series (topographic) 105-SE, edition of 1969, photorevised 1976.
Figure 2. Greenway layout in reference to existing streets. The blue line represents the path of the proposed walkway through the campus of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. (top to north)
Documentary Overview

At the conclusion of the Cherokee Removal in 1838, Ross's Landing on the Tennessee River was a collection of settlers in a frontier community organized around an isolated ferry landing and river port. Having achieved their modern boundaries by the cessions of the Treaty of New Echota, the states of Georgia and Tennessee planned in earnest for a system of internal improvements that would commercially open their states for commercial and industrial development. The principal improvement would be the construction of railroads to link major commercial and population centers in the southeastern United States (Folmsbee 1933).

The Western and Atlantic Railroad, a state-owned enterprise of Georgia, proposed a route north from the rail junction at Atlanta to a terminus on the Tennessee River near Rossville. In 1839, the legislature of Georgia formally announced that the northern terminus would be at Ross's Landing. The citizens of the landing changed the name of the settlement to Chattanooga, and Georgia's announcement spurred a flurry of land speculation in the area. The W&A approached Chattanooga from the valley east of Missionary Ridge. Rather than tunnel through the ridge, the road crossed Chickamauga Creek several times, then rounded the northern end of the ridge before traversing the undulating terrain east of the city.

By 1854 a second road, the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, had been completed to the city. Entering from the west under the bluff of Lookout Mountain, the N&C converged on the south end of town and the terminus of the W&A. Later, the Memphis and Charleston Railroad, leasing the N&C track from Stevenson, Alabama, joined the other two roads at Chattanooga. In 1857, these three roads agreed to build a common passenger depot on the southern fringes of the town south of Ninth Street, (what is now Martin Luther King Boulevard). Joining the W&A, N&C and M&C railroads in Chattanooga in 1858 was the fourth antebellum railroad to service Chattanooga, the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad (ET&G).

The East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad was formed in 1848 out of the remnants of the Hiwassee Railroad, an enterprise, chartered in 1836, that had attempted construction of a trunk line south from Knoxville toward Georgia (Holland 1931). This early venture failed, and its charter was assumed by the new company, the ET&G. This road, commencing service over part of its route in 1855, eventually connected with W&A at Dalton, Georgia (Steinberg 1976: 5). In the same period, the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad was constructed north and east out of Knoxville toward southwestern Virginia where it, in turn, connected with other railroads. The ET&G thus was an integral part of a major interconnecting trunk line rail system running north and south through the heart of the Southeast.

Commercial interests in Chattanooga quickly realized the desirability of establishing a direct connection with the ET&G trunk line. As early as 1850, the state of Tennessee had given charters to the Chattanooga, Harrison and Cleveland Railroad Company, later reorganized as the Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown and Charleston
Railroad. This road had obtained a route east out of Chattanooga, through Hamilton County, providing for a right-of-way of sixty-six feet “...with such additional width, not exceeding two hundred feet as may be necessary for the accommodation of cuttings [grade cuts], embankments, sidings, depots, woodsheds and water stations for said road” (Hamilton County Deed Book 17: 743-44). Signing this deed were landowners extending from Chattanooga to Bradley County: G. W. Gardenhire, Reese B. Brabson, A. Kennedy, G. W. Dearing, Thomas H. Calloway, R. Henderson, J. B. Keener, Thomas Crutchfield, Washington Evans, Mathew Timmons, Henry Gotcher, John Chesnut, Eli Ragan, E. M. Cleveland, Mary Watkins, William McDonald, and later, J. H. Stallcup. In 1854, the ET&G bought out the interests of the Chattanooga, Harrison, Georgetown and Charleston and initiated construction of a branch line from Chattanooga to intersect the trunk line of the ET&G at Cleveland. This road made only two small additional land purchases in Hamilton County in 1859 (Hamilton County Deed Book 13: 605, 769).

Construction of the ET&G branch line from Cleveland to Chattanooga began in 1856 and was completed in 1858. Approaching Missionary Ridge from its depot at Tyner, the railroad was forced to open a tunnel through the ridge since the W&A already occupied the easier route around the north end of the ridgeline. The tracks of the ET&G crossed the W&A right-of-way east of town and approached the eastern fringes of Chattanooga near the mouth of Citico Creek. The branch line then swung south and crossed the high ground now occupied by the UTC campus. Construction through this area involved the use of grade cuts, the fill from which was likely used to create embankments to breach low swampy ground south and east of the depot grounds below Ninth Street. The ET&G shared the use of the Union Depot as a passenger station (Govan and Livingood 1977: 153).

The overall layout of the four railroads that would share the common train shed south of Ninth Street was that of an inverted “Y.” The N&C and M&C approached from the southwest, and the W&A and ET&G from the southeast. With a curved connecting track linking the main lines, inbound trains could back into the train depot to disembark their passengers, leaving the smoke-belching locomotive on the outside of the train shed (Steinberg 1976: 6). This general track arrangement is shown in Figure 3.

At the start of the Civil War in April 1861, Chattanooga was far to the rear of open hostilities, although strong Unionist sentiment was prevalent throughout the region. Unionists in the region resorted to burning railroad bridges to harass the movement of Confederate troops and supplies. In November 1861 the ET&G bridge over South Chickamauga Creek was burned, as was one of the W&A bridges over the same stream. Confederate forces responded by garrisoning Chattanooga and placed bridge guard detachments over the major bridges on all regional railroads (Livingood 1995:78-85).
Figure 3. F. W. Dorr’s “Chattanooga and Its Approaches,” (1863), illustrating the routes followed by the railroads entering Chattanooga at the time of the Civil War. The East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad approaches the town from upper right in this view and is identified as the “Chattanooga and Knoxville RR.”
Chattanooga remained in the backwater of the war until late 1862 when Union forces had made inroads into northern Alabama. A raid by Federal forces on Chattanooga from the north shore of the river by Col. James Negley in June 1862 demonstrated the vulnerability of the town. Confederate forces began fortifying the high ground on the north side of town. When Col. John T. Wilder's Federal raiders shelled the town again in September 1863, it was part of a general Union advance into the region by armies under Gen. William S. Rosecrans. As one column of Rosecran's army approached the city from Lookout Valley, two others crossed into the Chattanooga Valley further to the south, threatening the rear of the Confederate army bivouacked around Chattanooga. Gen. Braxton Bragg was forced to abandon Chattanooga on September 9 and the town was occupied without a fight. Bragg's Army of Tennessee withdrew south and gave battle to one of the advancing Federal columns at Chickamauga, winning a decisive but costly victory. The defeated Union forces coalesced at Chattanooga and assumed a defensive posture within the town and its immediate environs. Federal forces controlled the north shore of the river and maintained a tenuous logistical supply line over Signal Mountain to Bridgeport. Bragg's forces occupied Missionary Ridge, parts of Chattanooga Valley, Lookout Mountain and the upper end of Lookout Valley.

A curtain of defensive earthen fortifications was erected on the outskirts of the town, extending south and west from the mouth of Citico Creek to the bank of the river opposite Moccasin Bend. There were several strongholds in this line, one of them being Fort Creighton (Fort Wood) on the east side of town just east of the ET&G line. A map of the town's defenses prepared late in 1863 by U.S. Coast Survey engineer F. W. Dorr illustrates in detail the defenses of the town (Figure 3, above). The main defensive line on the east side of town crossed the ET&G line near the northern end of the proposed Greenway at E. Third Street and Collins Street (Figure 4). Inside the outer ring of defenses were rifle pits placed at strategic points, usually on high ground commanding roads and railroad grades that could provide a line of advance for attacking troops. A rifle pit was present on the hill now occupied by the Chattanooga School for Arts and Sciences. Another rifle pit overlooked the ET&G tracks from the hill now crowned by Patten Chapel, Hunter Hall, and Hooper-Race Halls. A third rifle pit was located west of the crossing of the ET&G and Ninth Street / MLK Boulevard. These elaborate defensive positions were never tested by the Confederate forces besieging Chattanooga.

Rosecrans was relieved of command of the Union forces around Chattanooga following the disaster at Chickamauga. Major General U. S. Grant assumed command of the armies assembled there and in November 1863 relieved the siege of the town in the battles of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge on November 24-25. The ET&G grade cut on the east end of the tunnel through Missionary Ridge was the scene of heavy fighting between Union forces under Gen. W. T. Sherman and Confederate forces under Gen. Patrick Cleburne (Livingood 1995: 434). There was no combat within the Union defensive perimeter other than artillery support of the advance on Missionary Ridge.
Figure 4. Detail from C. S. Mergell’s “Map of the Battlefield of Chattanooga,” (1864). The locations of modern street crossings of the ET&G Railroad grade are shown. Union defensive fortifications are shown in blue.
Chattanooga became a marshalling yard for the advance of Federal armies toward Atlanta. The railroads were both lines of advance and retreat and so assumed great importance as logistical resources. The United States Military Railroad of the Union forces assumed control of all regional railroads and engaged in an aggressive program of construction to rebuild and operate the various roads for the support of the military campaign. Specific operations of the USMR on the ET&G line within the project area (as narrowly defined) are not detailed in any documents reviewed for this project, but it is assumed that the heavily-trafficked roads underwent constant upgrades of track and hardware in this period. Contingents of Federal forces were stationed at key points between Chattanooga and Cleveland and at all major bridges along the entire line of the ET&G.

The ET&G Railroad was returned to its civilian owners in August 1865 (Livingood 1995: 618). In 1869, the ET&G merged with the East Tennessee and Virginia Railroad, forming the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad (ETV&G). The new company operated an important commercial artery that directly connected Chattanooga with railroads in Virginia that serviced the eastern seaboard area of the United States.

The Alfred Ruger aerial view of Chattanooga, published in 1871, provides an illustration of the ETV&G rail line as it passed through what would become the campus area at UTC (Figure 5). In 1871, the branch line was still a single rail line, traveling mostly through a grade cut in the project area. The only bridge shown on the route is a street bridge crossing over the grade at East Fifth Street, where a few houses were located along the south side of the road west of the tracks. (The Ruger view does not include the grade crossing at East Third Street). A small number of domestic structures clustered around the rail line from McCallie Avenue south to Ninth Street (now MLK Boulevard).

The 1885 edition of the Sanborn fire insurance maps of Chattanooga does not cover the project area, which at that time was a fringe suburban area well east of the core of the city, as the Ruger view strongly conveys. An aerial view, published by Norris, Wellge and Company in 1886 is more illustrative and detailed (Figures 6, 7 and 8). The ETV&G Railroad at that date was shown as having double tracks entering the east side of Chattanooga, perhaps indicating that additional width to the right of way had been obtained to widen grade cuts. The lines passed under a high bridge at Harrison Avenue (East Third Street), traveled through a deep grade cut between that street and East Fifth Street, where a street viaduct crossed the railroad. The grade cut continued to Vine Street, also furnished with a street viaduct. At Oak Street, the grade cut was deep and no bridge was furnished for the street. The bridge over which McCallie Avenue crossed the tracks was a substantial stone affair. At Eighth Street, the road viaduct was somewhat elevated to create a clearance over the railroad. In the vicinity of Flinn Street, the grade cut changed to a raised embankment. The railroad bridge over Ninth Street evidently employed substantial stone headwalls. The high embankment needed to cross the low-lying terrain called the "Gas House Flats" between Ninth and Eleventh is prominent in the view.
Figure 5. Detail from A. Ruger's "Bird's Eye View of Chattanooga," (1871), facing south, from 9th Street (top) to East Fifth Street (bottom). The area of the UTC campus is largely vacant at this date. Citizens Cemetery is at the bottom of this view.
Figure 6. Detail from Norris, Wellge and Company's “Chattanooga” view, (1886), facing south. The view extends from roughly Eleventh Street at top to East Third Street (Harrison Avenue) at bottom. At lower left is a representation of the earthworks of Fort Creighton (Wood). At center right is Chattanooga University (D). At the top of this view are the “Gas House Flats” over which the ETV&G traveled on a high embankment.
Figure 7. Detail of the Norris, Wellge and Company view of Chattanooga, facing south, from East Ninth Street (top) to Oak Street (bottom).
Figure 8. Detail of the Norris, Wellge and Company view of Chattanooga, facing south, from Vine Street (top) to East Third Street Street (bottom).
G. M. Hopkins' "Atlas of the City of Chattanooga" printed in 1889, does little to convey the variations in the topography; the Hopkins atlas and plat books principally illustrated property lines and major improvements for real estate purposes (Figures 9 and 10). The right-of-way of the ETV&G at this time exceeded eighty feet and was sometimes wider. The sheet covering the northern end of the project area (Figure 9) illustrates the Steele Orphanage on Straight Street, a now absent east-west street between East Third and East Fifth streets east of the railroad right-of-way and extending to Palmetto Street. Mrs. Almira S. Steele, a white teacher from Massachusetts, created in 1884 an orphanage for black children in a frame house on Strait Street. The Steele Home for Needy Children soon filled with black orphans from throughout the region. Local opponents of the mission burned the orphanage structures in 1885, but Steele collected enough capital to replace the frame buildings with a substantial brick structure. The house was situated north of Straight Street between the ETV&G on the west and Palmetto Street on the east.

Chattanooga's population increased steadily throughout the nineteenth century, and the city expanded principally east and south, engulfing areas that had formally been rural or suburban in character. Increasing throughout the century was friction between the out-spreading populace of the city and the railroad lines they now surrounded. Each crossing of street and railroad track was a potential source of irritation and not a few of these grade crossings were extremely hazardous to pedestrian and wagon traffic. Complicating the interaction of machines and people was the ever-expanding system of interurban transport that laced the expanding incorporated area of the city (Steinberg 1975).

In 1894 the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad merged with the Alabama Great Southern, Cincinnati Southern and Memphis and Charleston to form the Southern Railway system. Increasing passenger and freight traffic through Chattanooga dictated the erection of new passenger terminals in the southern districts of the town to relieve the overcrowded Union Depot. The Central Passenger Station on Market at 13th Street had been shared by the Memphis and Charleston and the ETV&G since 1888, although both roads still used Union Depot as well (Steinberg 1976:15).

In addition to creating dangerous encounters between trains and people, the rail network dissected Chattanooga in unintended ways. The tracks of the Southern Railway on the east side of the town isolated the eastern suburbs from the commercial center of town. Wilson (1980: 161) notes "There were no bridges, tunnels or cuts to let traffic through at Ninth Street, and the traveler had to detour to McCallie Avenue" to find access to the Fort Wood area. Black inhabitants predominantly occupied "Scruggs Town" near Ninth (ML King Boulevard) Street, and another black settlement known as "Tadetown" grew up in the Fort Wood district, cut off from town by the deep grade cut of the Southern Railway line.
Figure 9. Detail from Sheet 3 of G. M. Hopkin’s “Atlas of the City of Chattanooga,” (1889), facing north, illustrating the ETV&G right-of-way from McCallie Ave. at bottom to Harrison Ave. (E. 5th Street) at top. Courtesy Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library.
Figure 10. Detail from Sheet 5 of G. M. Hopkin's "Atlas of the City of Chattanooga," (1889), facing north, illustrating the ETV&G right-of-way from McCallie Ave. at top to East 10th Street at bottom. This plate omits street viaducts over the railway. Courtesy Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library.
The Steele Home for Needy Children was situated in the fringes of the “Tadetown” neighborhood. An 1898 newspaper account of the Steele orphanage described the physical setting of the institution:

Situated on the bank rising from the tracks of the Southern railroad, corner of Palmetto and Straight streets, and north of Vine street, it is in a quiet, unfrequented settlement, and rises above the little cottages surrounding, a handsome four-storied brick structure, 100 feet long and 58 feet side, with forty-four large pleasant rooms, with every convenience, and many luxuries, and can accommodate several hundred homeless children at one time.

The orphanage closed after Steele’s death in 1925, and was demolished prior to 1965. The site of the orphanage is commemorated by a Tennessee Historical Commission marker situated on Palmetto Street.

The Southern Railway constructed a new passenger facility off lower Market Street in 1909. Terminal Station, known today by its more popular name as “The Chattanooga Choo-Choo,” was the last passenger facility built in Chattanooga. The rise of the automobile as the dominant mode of transportation in the twentieth century spelled the doom of passenger railroading. Competition between trains and automobiles for the right of way in Chattanooga resulted in large-scale reorganization of the routing of trains in the city beginning in 1946. In that year a consultant for the Resources Utilization Board of the city and county recommended removing both railroad tracks and train stations in the downtown area of Chattanooga (Pennington 1946). By this date the old ET&G rail line through the eastern suburbs had been abandoned as a mainline route. The tracks through the UTC campus were thereafter used for local shunting and switching operations between the Terminal Station and the old maintenance facilities off Citico Creek. Mainline traffic used rights-of-way east of Central Avenue.

The Southern Railway dispatched its last passenger train from Chattanooga in 1970, the same year that another major carrier, the Louisville and Nashville Railroad (L&N) discontinued its passenger service (Steinberg 1976: 34). In time, the major rail systems serving Chattanooga removed their freight yards outside the city core. Southern Railway, a major Chattanooga employer, upgraded its freight sorting facilities at the DeButts Yard in 1972 (Livingood 1981: 413).

Also occurring in the 1960s and 70s was urban renewal. Entire neighborhoods were erased in order to qualify for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants from the Federal government. In 1965, Sanborn maps still show a double track running through the east side of the town, but by 1969, TVA flood control sheets illustrate that one of the lines had been removed (Figures 11 and 12). It is unclear when the track through the campus area was last used.
Figure 11. Detail from the TVA flood control sheet 8-2, facing north, from Vine Street (bottom) to East Third Street (top). Urban renewal and the expansion of UTC erased a neighborhood of small homes. Note the single track in the Southern Railway right-of-way.
Figure 12. Detail from the TVA flood control sheet 8-2, facing north, from Vine Street (top) to McCallie Avenue (bottom). The concrete street viaducts over the railroad tracks were originally constructed prior to 1917.
The most sweeping alterations of the physical landscape surrounding the proposed Greenway have occurred as the result of expansion of the campus of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. An outgrowth of “Chattanooga University,” formed in 1886, and renamed “U. S. Grant University” in 1889 and the “University of Chattanooga” in 1907, UTC was constituted in 1969 after a merger of the city college with the University of Tennessee system. Immediately, university officials launched an aggressive program of expansion of the facilities of the college.

Construction of the Fine Arts Center and the Lupton Library have hemmed in a small, relatively intact portion of the old ET&G right of way between Oak and Vine Street, although one end of the grade cut now houses a campus amphitheater completed in the early 1990s. The original grade cut north of East Fifth Street has all but disappeared in grading operations associated with construction of the Challenger Teaching and Learning Center at the northeast corner of East Fifth Street and Palmetto. Portions of the railroad embankment stretching north of MLK Boulevard still survive adjacent to TVA’s former Solar Power Center, but the remainder of the right-of-way to the north has been seriously altered, generally by filling in of the grade cut.

Archaeological Resource Potential

The proposed UTC Greenway does not intersect or closely approach any recorded archaeological sites listed on the Tennessee State Site File maintained by the Division of Archaeology in Nashville. Probabilistically, it is unlikely that unrecorded prehistoric archaeological sites are present within the corridor. The only class of resource to be considered as potentially eligible is the railbed itself or any historic military, domestic, commercial or industrial historic site or site component that may fall within the construction impact area.

Most of the proposed walkway stays within the original railroad right-of-way and as such the route has remained free of non-industrial elements. In the trail segment from Oak to Vine streets, remnants of the last-used railroad tracks are still present (Figure 13). At the northern end of the proposed walkway, where considerable disturbance has taken place in recent years, displaced rails are exposed. In this same area, modern construction has likely reduced the integrity of any military survivals from the Civil War period.
Figure 13. Southern Railway tracks in the grade cut between Vine and Oak Streets, UTC campus, facing south.
Over much of the route, contours have been substantially altered. From MLK Boulevard north, a small remnant of the original embankment survives. By Eighth Street the railroad embankment has disappeared and the grade cut from this point north has been largely filled in the last three decades. The last remnant of the original grade cut is present between Oak and Vine. Construction on the campus at UTC has erased the grade cut from Vine street north to East Third Street. This has been accomplished, evidently, by both degradation (truncation) of surrounding high ground and the filling of the grade cut. A remnant of the original grade cut is present under the existing overpass of East Third over the railroad right-of-way, but this small area is just outside the defined project limits.

The original construction of the railbed or railbeds would have consisted of the basic earthwork, involving grade cuts through high ground and embankments in low-lying areas. Within these basic situations and atop level ground would have been the railbed proper, consisting of wooden crossties held in place by earth and/or crushed stone ballast crested along the center of the railbed to provide lateral drainage away from the crossties. Marginal ditches would have been present to promote drainage along the railbed. Culverts of wood or stone would have permitted cross drainage. Tracks laid over soft, boggy ground may have employed mudsill timbers of the type documented at the Union Railyards site in downtown Chattanooga (Council and Honerkamp 1984). The rail bridge or viaduct at the south end of the project, crossing over MLK Boulevard, is nominally out of the project area.

Maintenance of the track (crossties, rail and related hardware) and the railbed (the earthwork and ballast) would have generated debris through time. Steel and iron were aggressively salvaged and recycled by the railroads, but the sheer volume of material meant that many artifacts were lost and some were abandoned in place as too costly to retrieve. The types of artifacts found are amply illustrated in Council and Honerkamp (1984: 135-159). These include track spikes, rail chairs, rail fragments, splice bars and plates, tie plates, knees, switch hardware and other hardware, either broken and discarded or abandoned in place. Features (non-portable artifacts or constructions) encountered in rail-related archaeological contexts include crossties and related timber constructions, remnants of the railbed (ballast and embankments) and footings to associated structures. Few railroad structures were noted within the right-of-way through time, with the exception of small switchman’s shacks or crossing guard kiosks, particularly in the segment between Eighth and Ninth streets, where industrial spurs were run off to the east and west.

With the exception of the railroad tracks themselves, the right-of-way occupied by the ET&G, the ETV&G, the Southern Railway and its current constitution, the Norfolk Southern, was a relatively featureless environment through time.
Summary and Conclusions

The greenway does not intercept, nor is in the immediate vicinity of any recorded archaeological sites. Prehistoric sites within the right of way are unlikely and would have been obliterated by excavation of railroad grade cuts. The proposed UTC Greenway substantially follows the right-of-way of the East Tennessee and Georgia Railroad as originally created in the period 1856-58. No significant structures were noted within the right-of-way. Much of the right-of-way has been severely altered by modern construction.

Deep excavations in now-filled portions of the right-of-way may possibly intercept late 20th century railbeds and track systems abandoned in place. Surviving portions of the grade cut between Oak and Vine Street may be historically significant, but the potential eligibility of the grade cut for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places has not been demonstrated. The greenway’s close physical association with a rail line dating to 1858 provides a strong historical link with Chattanooga’s industrial fabric. The present route of the greenway thus presents several valuable interpretive opportunities focusing on the 1862 Confederate siege of Chattanooga, the importance of rail transportation in the 19th and 20th centuries, the presence of a unique privately run black orphanage within a coherent black community (and race relations in general in Chattanooga), and the city’s extensive industrial history.
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