



2026 Virginia Recreational Trails Program Application Certification



This form must be completed, signed, and submitted with your complete application package

Applicant Name	Albemarle County Parks & Recreation		
Contact Person Name & Title	Tim Padalino, Chief of Parks Planning		
Applicant Street Address	401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902		
Mailing Address (if different from street address)			
Telephone Number	434-296-5844		
Contact E-mail Address	tpadalino@albemarle.org		
Applicant Type (select one) <input type="checkbox"/> State, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local, <input type="checkbox"/> Tribe, <input type="checkbox"/> Federal, or <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit (if non-profit, please also list locality) <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/>	US Congressional District	5	
	Virginia State Senate District Virginia	11	
	House District	55	
	County/Independent City & FIPS Code	Albemarle/003	
	Tax Parcel ID Number	078000000020M2	
	Project Title	Old Mills Trail Extension (Phase 1)	
Total Project Cost (100%)	Award Request Amount (up to 80% of total cost but not more than category maximum request)		
\$ 626,820	\$ 300,000		
Certification Statement			
<p>By submitting this application package for consideration for funding through the Recreational Trails Program, I hereby certify the information contained in this application is true and correct. I understand this application will be rated on the basis of the information submitted and the submission of incorrect or inaccurate data or an incomplete application can result in this application becoming ineligible for funding.</p> <p>I hereby certify that if awarded, the applicant will comply with all applicable Federal, Commonwealth of Virginia, and local laws and regulations. I hereby certify that the applicant understands the Recreational Trails Program is an 80-20 matching reimbursement program requiring verification of expenditures in order to receive reimbursement. Further, in signing and submitting this application, I hereby certify that the applicant is capable of providing the matching contribution and of financing the project while seeking periodic reimbursement.</p>			
Name of Official with Signatory Rights	Tim Padalino, AICP		
	Title	Chief of Parks Planning	
	Signature		
	Date	5/5/2026	

Virginia Recreational Trails Program 2026 Application - Version 1 (New Trails)

Section A – Project Details
1. Applicant Name Albemarle County Parks & Recreation
2. Project Title Old Mills Trail Extension (Phase 1)
3. RTP Grant Request Amount <i>(up to 80% of total project cost)</i> \$300,000 (or 48% of total estimated project cost)
4. Total Project Cost <i>(100% including match)</i> \$626,820
5. Project Category <i>(check one from list)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Diversified/ multi-use (hiking and biking or hiking, biking, and equestrian, etc.)
6. Project Classification <i>(check all that apply from list)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New trail construction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) New trail construction: downstream extension of existing trail
7. Trail Uses <i>(check all that apply from list)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pedestrian (walking, hiking, jogging, running, etc.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mountain biking <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) Birding and wildlife observation along designated Scenic River
8. Trail Surface Types <i>(check all that apply from list)</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native soil <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bridge (please specify type) ~35’ single-span bike/ped bridge (with timber decking) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) ~70’ railroad underpass shelter (with earth surface under roof)
9. Project Scope <p>Extend the existing Old Mills Trail by constructing 1.0 mile of new variable-width recreational trail (6’ wide where possible, minimum 4’ wide if necessary) – including some sections requiring culverts, benching, fieldstone retaining walls, and similar rock work. Construct one spur trail (approx. 150’ long) to provide trail users a convenient location to observe and contact the Scenic Rivanna River. Construct one bike/ped bridge (approx. 35’ long with 6’ clear zone) across eroded tributary stream. Construct one railroad underpass shelter (approx. 70’ long with 11’ clear zone) underneath elevated railroad trestle. Fabricate and install customary trail signage – including one greenway rules and regs sign, two wayfinding signs, 25 small boundary signs, and three interpretive signs for natural heritage and cultural heritage information and inspiration. Install approx. 4,000 SF of native landscaping along portions of trail to stabilize slopes, promote biodiversity, and enhance aesthetics under I-64 highway bridges.</p>
10. Property Street Address <p>Nearest street address is 150 Arguello Street at Alto View Apartment Homes. Public parking is available curbside on Arguello Street. Walk downhill on sidewalk, follow gravel pathway past stormwater management facility, and continue on access trail until intersection with signed Old Mills Trail. Turn left and continue for approx. 800’ to end of Old Mills Trail / beginning of project site.</p>

11. Latitude and Longitude

Beginning of trail extension = 38.018084, -78.448849 ; Bridge = 38.017738, -78.448114 ; Railroad underpass shelter = 38.016232, -78.447301 ; End of trail extension = 38.014086, -78.434258

12. Project Location

This Old Mills Trail Extension (Phase 1) will extend the existing 2.5-mile Old Mills Trail (OMT) downstream from the urban/suburban Pantops Development Area, and will follow the Scenic Rivanna River through the Southwest Mountains water gap and onto the “Lego Farm” portion of Monticello, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site designated by the United Nations. The OMT is a linear riverfront greenway that currently has an existing trailhead in Darden Towe Park (located approx. 2.5 miles upstream).

This project is a 1-mile initial phase – when combined with planned future phases, the entire OMT Extension will provide a total of 4 miles of new recreational trail beside the Scenic Rivanna River from Pantops to Milton Landing.

Additionally, the entire OMT Extension is one component of the larger planned “Rivanna River Greenway + Blueway” (RRGB) – a formally-planned interconnected system of river parks and riverside trails along the Rivanna River between the South Fork Rivanna Reservoir and (future) Buck Island River Park. The future total buildout of the RRGB will expand the existing Rivanna River Blueway from 12 miles to 17 miles (with new/enhanced river parks at Brook Hill, Milton Landing, and Buck Island), and will expand the existing Old Mills Trail from 2.5 miles to 10 continuous miles of riverside greenway trail between Darden Towe Park and the Glenmore neighborhood.

13. Property Ownership

This project includes the following parcels of record (from project start downstream to project end):

- TMP #78-20M2 is owned by the County of Albemarle.
- TMP #78-31A (“Lego Farm”) is owned by the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation (TJMF), and Albemarle County holds a greenway easement over this parcel (recorded 8/16/2007 in Deed Book 3489 Page 553).
- In between these parcels of, the project will cross two adjoining ROW’s: the VDOT-managed FHWA ROW (for I-64), and the VPRA-owned railroad ROW (where CSX controls a license agreement and where Buckingham Branch Railroad operates a short-line rail service). Please see the attached correspondence from VDOT, VPRA, CSX, and BBR which indicate their awareness and general support for this project. Albemarle County will continue to actively coordinate with these entities to obtain all permits, easements, and/or other approvals that are required to construct and operate a grade-separated public-access greenway trail under these transportation corridors.

14. Public Access

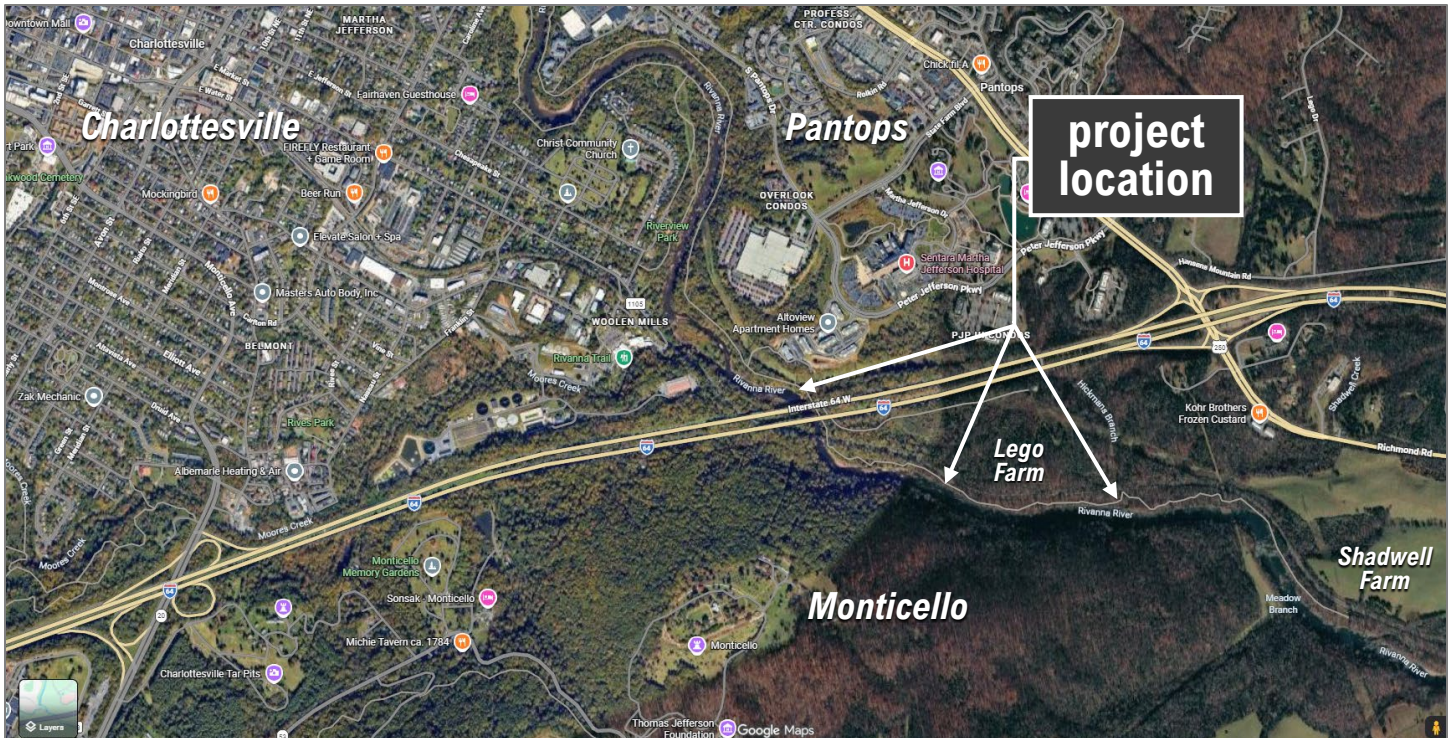
This project will be part of Albemarle County’s Greenways program and will be open 365 days per year. While County Parks are open from “7:00AM to Dark,” ACPR allows for longer hours of operation within County Greenways in recognition of the multiple functions and uses of these linear public assets.

Albemarle County will continue to actively coordinate with VDOT, VPRA, and CSX to obtain all permits, easements, and/or other approvals that are required to construct and operate a public-access greenway trail underneath these transportation corridors. Please see the attached preliminary correspondence from VDOT, VPRA, CSX, and BBR which indicate their awareness and support for this project – provided that all applicable permits are obtained prior to construction and provided that the project design meets all applicable safety standards and specifications.

Section M of the greenway easement from the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation (recorded in 2007) requires construction of this project to begin no later than August 16, 2027, and to be completed no later than August 16, 2029. If these timelines are not met, then TJMF can unilaterally alter or revoke the easement. ACPR and TJMF – and all other project partners – are committed to implementing this project within the timelines established in the deed.

End Section A

Section A Attachment: Question 10



Section A Attachment: Question 12 (Existing Site Condition Photos)



Aerial photo of upstream (beginning) portion of project area, including obstacles (I-64 bridges and railroad trestle).



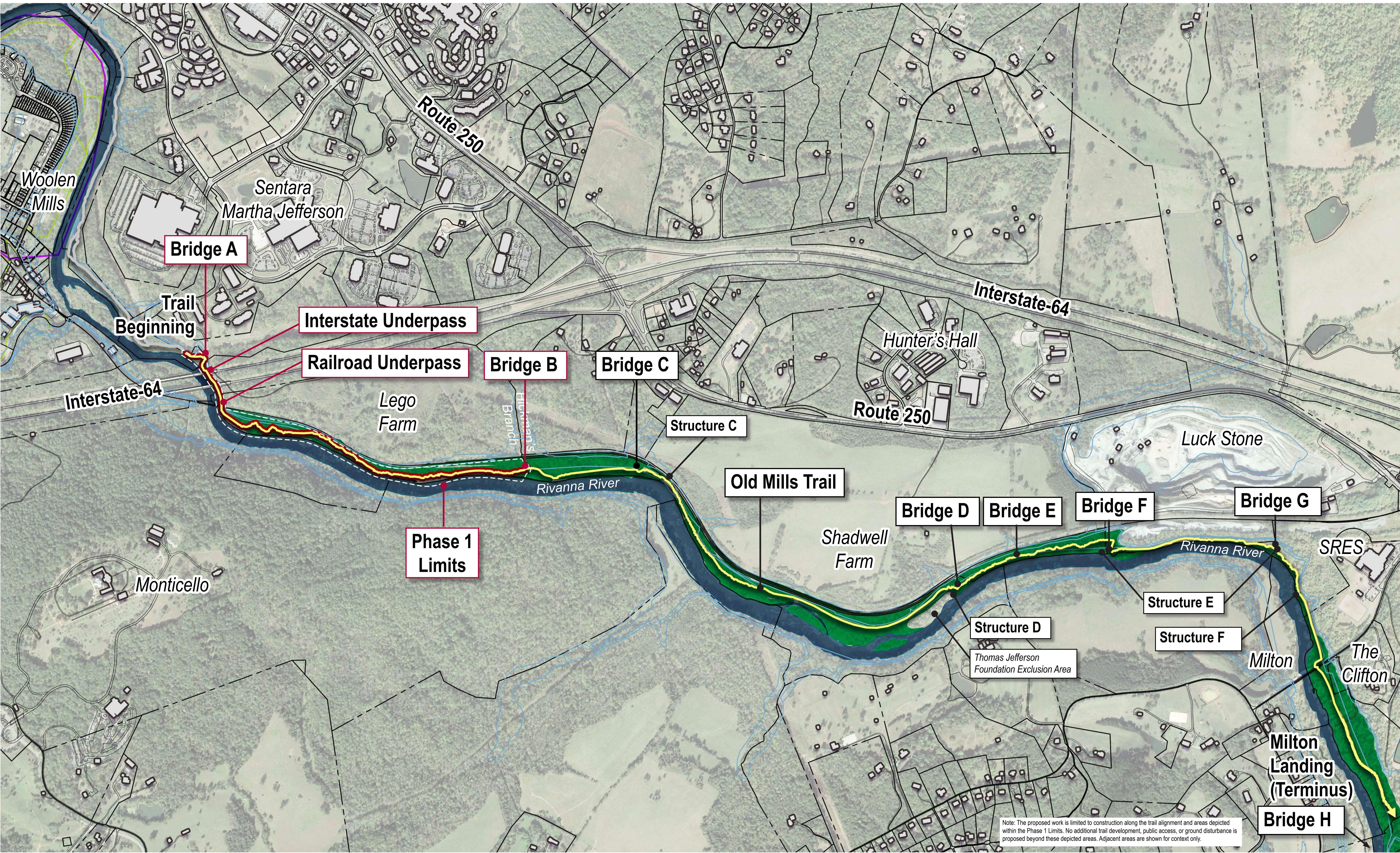
Vicinity of planned bike/ped bridge, showing incised tributary stream where bike/ped bridge (approx. 35' span) is needed.



Vicinity of I-64 highway bridges, showing need for trail construction, culverts, and bank stabilization/restoration.



Vicinity of railroad trestle, showing need for trail construction, covered underpass shelter (approx. 70' length), bank stabilization/restoration, and general maintenance.



Note: The proposed work is limited to construction along the trail alignment and areas depicted within the Phase 1 Limits. No additional trail development, public access, or ground disturbance is proposed beyond these depicted areas. Adjacent areas are shown for context only.



PREPARED BY:
McGuireWoods LLP

EXEMPTED FROM RECORDATION TAXES UNDER
THE VIRGINIA CODE (1950), AS AMENDED,
SECTION 58.1-811(A) (3)

THIS DEED OF EASEMENT (this "Deed") is made this 16th day of August 2007 by and between **THOMAS JEFFERSON FOUNDATION, INC.**, a Virginia non-stock corporation, Grantor, and the **COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE, VIRGINIA**, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Grantee.

W I T N E S S E T H:

WHEREAS, the Grantor is the owner in fee simple of the real property located in Albemarle County that is described below;

WHEREAS, the Grantor desires to grant and convey to the Grantee, and Grantee is willing to accept, an easement over the property for the purpose of allowing the Grantee to establish and maintain a public access trail and greenway, including authorized improvements (collectively, the "Greenway"), subject to the terms and conditions stated in this Deed.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the recitals and the mutual benefits, covenants and terms herein contained, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, the Grantor hereby grants, conveys, covenants and agrees as follows:

1. **GRANT AND CONVEYANCE OF EASEMENT.** As evidenced by the signatures of the parties to this Deed of Easement, this conveyance fulfills in its entirety proffer ZMA 2004-005 made by the Grantor. For and in consideration of ONE DOLLAR (\$1.00), cash in hand paid, and other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged by the parties, and subject always to the terms and conditions set forth herein, the Grantor hereby grants

and conveys unto the Grantee and its successors and assigns (hereafter, all references to the Grantee include its successors and assigns), with SPECIAL WARRANTY OF TITLE, a public access trail and greenway easement (the "Easement") in gross over the property described below (the "Easement Area"), restricting in perpetuity (except as otherwise stated in this Deed) the use of the Easement Area in the manner set forth herein:

That certain easement, shown and designated as Greenway Easement on the Plat Showing Greenway Easement Containing 14.954 Acres for Quarter Lego Farm Tax Map Parcel 31A, Scottsville Magisterial District, Albemarle County, Virginia of Roudabush, Gale and Associates, Inc., dated June 1, 2007, as revised August 9, 2007, a copy of which is attached hereto and to be recorded with this deed (the "Plat"). Reference is made to the Plat for a more particular description of the location of the Easement Area.

The property interest conveyed herein is an easement encumbering a portion of that certain lots or parcels of land shown on the Plat as part of TMP 07800-00-00-031A0, situated in Albemarle County, Virginia, being the same lots or parcels conveyed to the Grantor by deeds of record in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Albemarle County, Virginia at Deed Book 881, Pages 290-296 and Deed Book 881, Pages 297-303.

2. PURPOSES OF THE EASEMENT. The purposes of the Easement are to establish in the Easement Area a segment of a countywide system of greenway trails that will link people to the County's natural, recreational, cultural, historical and commercial resources. As part of this system, the Easement will serve to protect important and/or sensitive resources, provide recreational and educational opportunities, provide an alternative transportation system, and provide an economic benefit.

3. ESTABLISHMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GREENWAY. The Grantee shall have the right to establish and maintain, at its sole cost and expense, a Greenway within the Easement Area, as follows:

K. Authority to accept easement. The Grantee covenants that it is authorized to accept the Easement pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-1800. The Grantee, acting by and through its County Executive, duly authorized by resolution adopted by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Albemarle, Virginia, accepts the conveyance of the Easement pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-1803, as evidenced by the County Executive's signature hereto and recordation of this Deed.

L. Hold harmless. To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, including, without limitation, Virginia Code § 29.1-509(E), and notwithstanding any other provision in this Deed to the contrary, the Grantee shall protect, indemnify, defend and save harmless the Grantor from and against any and all liabilities, obligations, losses, claims, damages, demands, penalties, causes of action, costs and expenses, (including, without limitation, reasonable attorneys' fees and expenses and court costs) of any kind imposed upon, incurred by, or otherwise asserted against Grantor on account of any loss or damage to the Easement Area or the Grantor's other property or any injury to, or death of, any person that may be occasioned by any cause whatsoever pertaining to or otherwise associated with this Easement or the Easement Area, and the Greenway, except to the extent arising out of the gross negligence or willful misconduct of Grantor.

M. Failure to Timely Complete Trail; Termination of Greenway Program. In the event that (1) the Grantee has not commenced construction of the Class B trail within the Easement Area within twenty (20) years of the date of this Deed; (2) the Grantee has not completed the construction of the Trail within twenty-two (22) years of the date of this Deed; or (2) the Grantee terminates the County Greenway program, then the Grantee shall, upon request by the Grantor, vacate and release the Easement and all of its rights to the Easement Area and Greenway, at its expense and in a form reasonably agreeable to the parties and recordable in the Clerk's Office of Albemarle County. In the event the Grantee terminates the Greenway program after the Greenway or any portion thereof

PLAT SHOWING
GREENWAY EASEMENT
CONTAINING 14.954 ACRES
FOR QUARTER LEGO FARM
TAX MAP 78 PARCEL 31A
SCOTTSVILLE MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT
ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VIRGINIA



OWNERS APPROVAL

The dedication of the greenway easement described herein is with the free consent and in accordance with the desire of the undersigned owners, proprietors, and trustees. Any reference to future potential development is to be deemed as theoretical only. All statements affixed to this plat are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

THOMAS JEFFERSON FOUNDATION INC.,
a Virginia non-stock corporation

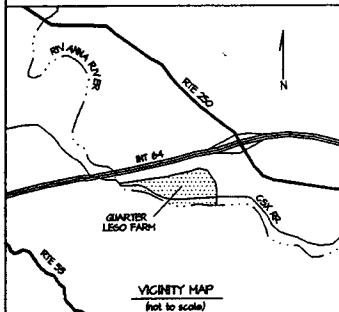
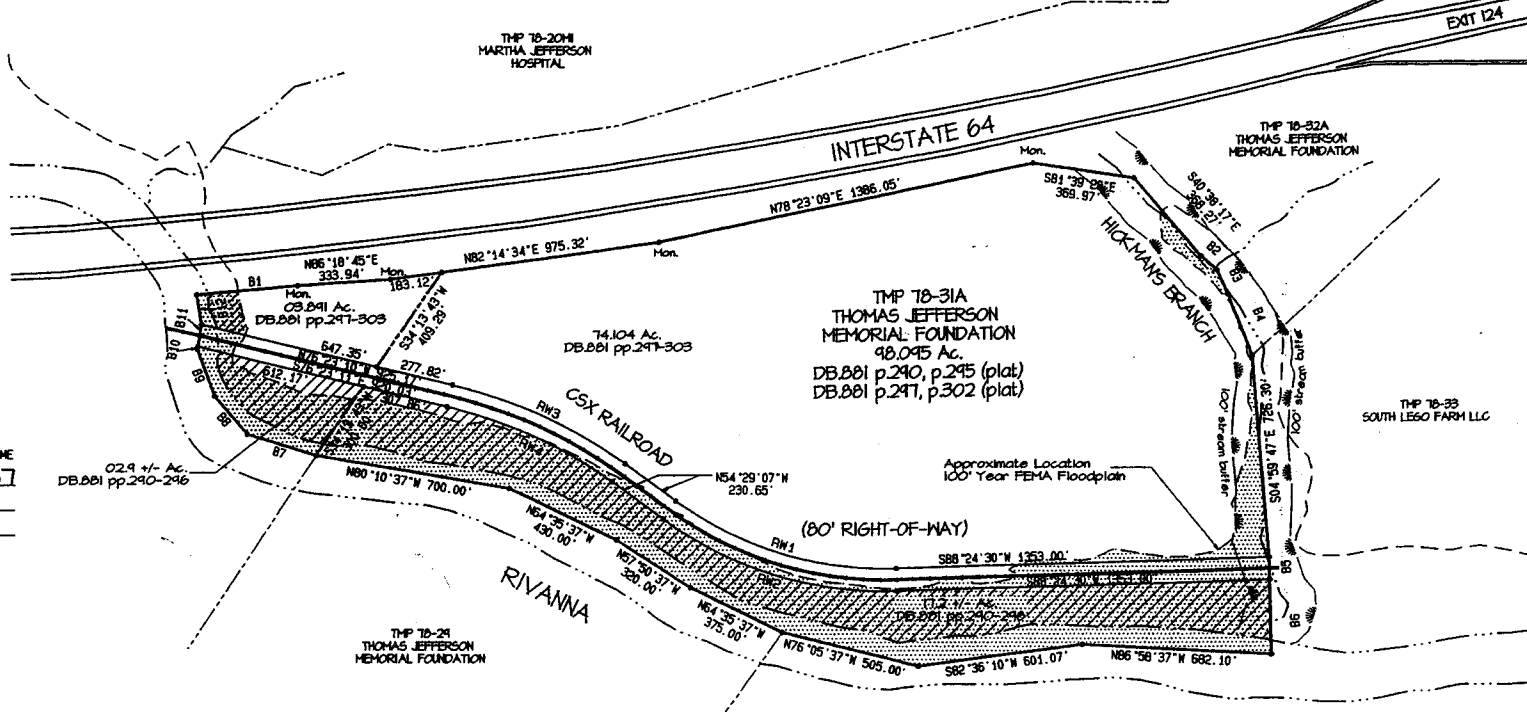
By: J.P. Jordan
Title: President

NOTARY PUBLIC

THE FOREGOING INSTRUMENT WAS ACKNOWLEDGED BEFORE ME
THIS 16th DAY OF August 2007

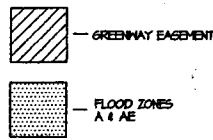
My Commission Expires June 30, 2010
Commission No: 258113

APPROVED FOR RECORDATION
A. J. McCallister DEP 9/10/07
Agent Board of Supervisors



LINE TABLE FOR BOUNDARY:

LINE	BEARING	DISTANCE
B1	N84°51'30"E	364.25'
B2	S49°51'37"E	76.34'
B3	S24°19'37"E	94.58'
B4	S22°01'37"E	236.61'
B5	N01°35'30"W	80.00'
B6	N01°35'30"W	265.00'
B7	N72°39'00"W	260.00'
B8	N40°34'58"W	180.00'
B9	N20°33'51"W	180.00'
B10	S13°38'56"W	10.00'
B11	N09°58'19"E	80.17'
B12	S09°39'56"E	108.35'

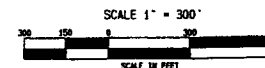


CURVE TABLE FOR CSX RIGHT OF WAY:

LINE	RADIUS	DELTA	ARC	CHORD	CHORD BEARING
RW1	1306.45'	37°06'30"	847.43'	832.70'	N73°02'15"W
RW2	1386.45'	37°06'30"	899.25'	883.61'	S73°02'15"E
RW3	1803.18'	21°52'00"	688.18'	684.01'	N65°25'07"W
RW4	1723.18'	21°52'00"	657.64'	653.66'	S65°25'07"E

NOTES:

- 1) NO FIELD BOUNDARY LOCATIONS WERE DONE IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS PLAT.
- 2) THE BOUNDARY IS TAKEN FROM A PLAT IN D.B.881 p.245
- 3) THIS PROPERTY LIES IN THE MIDDLE RIVANNA RIVER WATERSHED.
- 4) THIS PROPERTY IS ZONED RA.
- 5) THE BANK OF THE RIVER IS TAKEN FROM FIRM COMMUNITY PANEL NUMBER 51006 0245D, EFFECTIVE DATE FEBRUARY 4, 2005.
- 6) UPON RECORDATION THE GREENWAY EASEMENT IS HEREBY DEDICATED TO ALBEMARLE COUNTY.
- 7) EASEMENT DEDICATED PER ZHA2004-005 MONTICELLO HISTORIC DISTRICT PROFFER #1.
- 8) THE STREAM BUFFERS SHOWN HEREON SHALL BE MANAGED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ALBEMARLE COUNTY WATER PROTECTION ORDINANCE.



SHEET 1 OVERVIEW AND BOUNDARY
SHEET 2 200 SCALE DETAIL OF EASEMENT

REVISED AUGUST 8, 2007:
ADDED NOTE 8, REVISED
NOTE 7.

JUNE 1, 2007
SCALE: 1" = 300'
FILE: 8339
SHEET
1/2

ROUDABUSH, GALE & ASSOCIATES, INC.
ENGINEERS, SURVEYORS AND LAND PLANNERS
A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
SINCE 1958
244 HICKMAN ROAD - CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22902
PHONE: 804-752-1100 FAX: 804-752-1101 WWW.RGANDG.COM

From: [Jim VanDerzee](#)
To: [Tim Padalino](#)
Cc: [Brandon Shumaker](#)
Subject: Re: Request for assistance: Old Mills Trail project (RR trestle at Rivanna River in Pantops)
Date: Monday, April 20, 2026 11:55:54 AM

CAUTION: This message originated outside the County of Albemarle email system. DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.

Thanks, Tim.

It's an unusual arrangement: we operate the rail line, the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority owns it, and CSX maintains all of the license agreements for it. As the license agreement holder, CSX must be the first party to approve this. They have a portal on their web site to submit requests.

Jim VanDerzee
Manager of Industrial Development
Buckingham Branch Railroad
904-910-5079

Solid Team, Flexible Solutions

On Fri, Apr 17, 2026 at 9:55 AM Tim Padalino <tpadalino@albemarle.org> wrote:

Hello Mr. Van Derzee,

My name is Tim Padalino, I serve Albemarle County as the Chief of Parks Planning (in the Parks & Rec Department).

Forgive the long email, but I'm reaching out to you and Buckingham Branch Railroad in order to share some Old Mills Trail project updates ([below](#)) and to make a time-sensitive request for assistance ([bottom](#)).

I know you might not be familiar with this project, but I'm happy to connect by phone, on Teams, or in person to discuss the current focus and effort – please just let me know.

[Project Info:](#)

From: [Mechnick, Bill](#)
To: [Peter Krebs](#); [Tim Padalino](#)
Subject: FW: [E] Request for Coordination – Proposed Rivanna River Trail Underpass at Buckingham Branch Rail Bridge
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 4:05:08 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
[image008.png](#)
[image009.png](#)
[image010.png](#)

CAUTION: This message originated outside the County of Albemarle email system. DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.

From: Marcus, Randy <Randy_Marcus@csx.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 12:44 PM
To: Mechnick, Bill <Bill.Mechnick@kimley-horn.com>; Joshua Lineberger <joshua.lineberger@vpra.virginia.gov>
Cc: Liebelt, Michael <Michael_Liebelt@csx.com>
Subject: RE: [E] Request for Coordination – Proposed Rivanna River Trail Underpass at Buckingham Branch Rail Bridge

Bill,

Thank you for your VM. As previously stated, CSX does not object to project. As owner of the corridor, VPRA would be responsible for further review and approvals.

Randy J. Marcus
Director, State Relations – VA, WV & DC
CSX Transportation
T. 804-226-7484 | M. 804-814-7117
4900 Old Osborne Turnpike, Richmond, VA 23231



From: Marcus, Randy
Sent: Wednesday, April 29, 2026 10:51 AM
To: 'Mechnick, Bill' <Bill.Mechnick@kimley-horn.com>; Joshua Lineberger <joshua.lineberger@vpra.virginia.gov>
Cc: Liebelt, Michael <Michael_Liebelt@csx.com>
Subject: RE: [E] Request for Coordination – Proposed Rivanna River Trail Underpass at Buckingham Branch Rail Bridge

Bill,

CSX Real Estate has no objection to the project.

Randy J. Marcus
Director, State Relations – VA, WV & DC
CSX Transportation
T. 804-226-7484 | M. 804-814-7117
4900 Old Osborne Turnpike, Richmond, VA 23231



From: Mechnick, Bill <Bill.Mechnick@kimley-horn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 28, 2026 3:15 PM
To: Marcus, Randy <randy_marcus@csx.com>; Joshua Lineberger <joshua.lineberger@vpra.virginia.gov>
Cc: Liebelt, Michael <Michael_Liebelt@csx.com>
Subject: RE: [E] Request for Coordination – Proposed Rivanna River Trail Underpass at Buckingham Branch Rail Bridge

This Message Is From an External Sender

This message came from outside your organization.

Thanks so much Randy. Very helpful.

Bill

From: [Shepherd, Carrie \(VDOT\)](#)
To: [Michael Barnes](#)
Cc: [Tim Padalino](#); [Kevin McDermott](#)
Subject: Re: VDOT letter of support for the Old Mills Trail under the I-64 Rivanna Bridge
Date: Friday, May 1, 2026 1:38:27 PM
Attachments: [Outlook-2dufg10b.png](#)

CAUTION: This message originated outside the County of Albemarle email system. DO NOT CLICK on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.

Michael,

We had a meeting with the Policy Department on Tuesday, and they are going to help us put something together. We may not have the letter to you by Tuesday, but it should be fine because we are also reaching out to DCR and we've been told the letter can follow the application submission. I should hear something next week, so I'll follow-up.

Thanks,
Carrie



Carrie Shepherd, P.E.
Resident Engineer / Charlottesville
Virginia Department of Transportation
434-422-9779
Carrie.Shepherd@VDOT.Virginia.gov

From: Michael Barnes <mbarnes2@albemarle.org>
Sent: Friday, May 1, 2026 1:33 PM
To: Shepherd, Carrie (VDOT) <carrie.shepherd@vdot.virginia.gov>
Cc: Tim Padalino <tpadalino@albemarle.org>; Kevin McDermott <kmcdermott@albemarle.org>
Subject: Re: VDOT letter of support for the Old Mills Trail under the I-64 Rivanna Bridge

Carrie,
I forgot to ask you yesterday about this letter of support.
Is there anything more that you need from us to meet this deadline of next Tuesday?
Thanks
Michael

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

From: Michael Barnes
Sent: Friday, April 17, 2026 1:40:12 PM
To: Shepherd, Carrie (VDOT) <carrie.shepherd@vdot.virginia.gov>
Cc: Tim Padalino <tpadalino@albemarle.org>; Kevin McDermott <kmcdermott@albemarle.org>

Section B – Project Need

15. Summary of project need

The Old Mills Trail (as well as the broader Rivanna River Greenway + Blueway corridor) is currently a well-used and much-loved outdoor recreation destination. It is also a corridor of incredible untapped potential and underutilized value. This OMT Extension (Phase 1) project will provide new public recreational trail access out of the Pantops neighborhood, onto Monticello’s historic Lego Farm, and into the Scenic Rivanna River’s water gap through the Southwest Mountains – a premier segment of Virginia’s first state-designated Scenic River.

The need for this project relates to a combination of multiple factors, including the remarkable project location, its proximity to an urbanizing mixed-use designated growth area, the lack of any prior public access, and the community benefits of this first phase of the project (all of which are also further described in the responses to Questions 17 “New Public Access” and 25 “User Benefits”).

Project Location: This project has an exceptional location due to its abundant natural heritage and scenic resources, as well as its notable cultural heritage and historic resources. This project will provide new public recreational trail access out of the Pantops neighborhood, onto Monticello’s historic Lego Farm, and into the Scenic Rivanna River’s water gap through the Southwest Mountains – a premier segment of Virginia’s first state-designated Scenic River.

This segment also has nearly unparalleled historic interest – designated as a Historic District by Virginia and a UNESCO World Heritage Site by the United Nations. Because the water gap was historically the upstream limit of river navigation, there are numerous historic resources clustered in the surrounding area. This project will take trail users past remnants of the Rivanna’s canal and lock system, and traces of the ancient Three Notched Road.

Additionally, the restored Woolen Mills complex and the ruins of the Charlottesville and Albemarle (C&A) Railway power plant are clearly visible across the river in the City of Charlottesville.

Project Benefits: Altogether, this one project will create an enticing new attraction for participants in a wide variety of trail-based activities like hiking, trail running, mountain biking, birding and wildlife observation, shoreline fishing, forest bathing, and/or relaxing and viewing the flowing waters of the Scenic Rivanna River.

Additionally, this project will successfully meet a demonstrated community need. The Albemarle County Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment (2018) identifies “hiking / walking / running” as the top “High Priority” activity, and also identifies “hiking / walking trails as the top “High Priority” facility need.

In short, this project will provide access to a new outdoor recreation destination with an incredible sense of place and unique experiential value. One mile of trail will bring visitors through forests that are rich with history both riparian and pre-historic, and will provide physical and visual access to a designated Scenic River with abundant riparian and aquatic wildlife.

None of this has previously been legally accessible to the public – but this project will create a new era of public use, discovery, enjoyment, education, and inspiration.

Finally, this project will also lay the groundwork to continue to extend the Old Mills Trail further downstream to Milton Landing and Glenmore in future phases, where it will eventually pass within view of Jefferson’s birthplace and a historic mill ruin at Shadwell Farm (which has never been accessible to the public).

16. Nature-Based Recreation Access Model Need

Need Class = 3 (Moderate) per Land-based Recreation Access Model

17. New public access and ConserveVirginia

Yes – this project represents an inspiring and exciting increase in new public access for three interrelated reasons:

1. **Proximity to higher-density residential and mixed use neighborhoods:** This trail extension project begins in the Pantops Development Area (or County-designated growth area). In 2019, an estimated 4,810 people

lived in the Pantops Census-Designated Place. In the years since then, Alto View Apartments and other newly-constructed dwelling units and residents have been added to Pantops. The zoning and multi-family housing in Pantops result in relatively high population density – as well as an concentrated need for outdoor recreation and access to natural open spaces.

2. **Proximity to landscape of exceptional natural and cultural heritage:** This project will be a gateway into the Scenic Rivanna River at it's water gap through the Southwest Mountains, where Thomas Jefferson's Monticello is located. Although Monticello is located only 2,500' away from the project site, it is over 550' higher in elevation and cannot be seen due to the extremely steep topography and dense forested land cover. And although the urbanizing land uses and congestion of Pantops are immediately adjacent, the water gap results in the highway noise being replaced with the sound of songbirds, raptors, jumping fish, rushing water, and rustling leaves. In these ways, the Old Mills Trail Extension will simultaneously bring trail users through one of the most biodiverse and beautiful segments of Virginia's first state-designated Scenic River, and also through a cultural landscape of global significance as a UNESCO-designated World Heritage Site.
3. **Lack of any prior public access or use:** Because both sides of this portion of the Scenic Rivanna River are owned by the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, and because TJMF's priorities include historic preservation and resource stewardship, Lego Farm and other riverfront Monticello properties have never been open to public use. This project will provide safe, legal trail access beyond major barriers (interstate and railroad bridges), and provide long-awaited riverfront access to Thomas Jefferson's Lego Farm.

In short, this project will provide new public access to a unique outdoor recreation destination with an incredible sense of place and memorable experiential values. One mile of new trail will bring visitors out of the bustle of everyday life, through riparian forests that are rich with history both presidential and pre-historic, and to the shoreline of a designated Scenic River with abundant riparian and aquatic wildlife.

Indicate if the area is identified as a priority for conservation per DCR's [ConserveVirginia](#) model.

Yes – the VA Natural Heritage Data Explorer shows both banks of the Rivanna River, as well as Lego Farm, identified in the ConserveVirginia model ("Cultural and Historic Preservation" category).

18. Local and regional plan alignment

This collaborative effort to implement the Old Mills Trail Extension is in alignment with numerous formally-adopted County plans and policies, including:

- [Albemarle County FY24-28 Strategic Plan](#)
 - *Goal 3 – INFRASTRUCTURE & PLACEMAKING: "Invest in infrastructure and amenities that create connection, opportunity, and well-being."*
 - *Goal 4 – QUALITY OF LIFE: "Encourage a vibrant community with economic and recreational opportunities that serve all community members."*
 - *Goal 4.5: "Enhance overall access to parks and recreational opportunities with an emphasis on urban neighborhoods."*
- [AC44 Comprehensive Plan](#)
 - *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Goal: Albemarle County will have a connected and accessible network of parks and greenways with both active and passive recreation opportunities to improve quality of life ... and provide access to nature.*
 - *PROS Objective 5: Expand and improve the trail networks and blueways in County parks and greenways...*
 - *PROS Action 5.4: Increase and accelerate the funding, development, and operation of the planned Rivanna Greenway + Blueway – an interconnected network of greenway trails, water trails, river parks, and other river access points – between Brook Hill River Park and (future) Buck Island River Park. Initial efforts should focus on initiating and completing the extension of the Old Mills Trail (from Pantops to Milton) and the development of Milton Landing River Park and Brook Hill River Park.*
 - *PROS Objective 2: Increase and accelerate the development of parks, greenways, and blueways with an emphasis on parks and greenways in the Development Areas...*

- *PROS Action 2.2: Expand public private partnerships and increase resources that accelerate the implementation of County parks projects through joint efforts with the Albemarle County Parks Foundation and other partners.*
- *PROS Action 1.5: Continue and increase efforts to lead parks and greenways planning with local and regional partners.*
- *Albemarle County Greenways Plan* (see PR-7 / PDF p. 147)
- *Rivanna River Greenway + Blueway* (see PR-8 / PDF p. 148)
- **Pantops Master Plan**
 - *Conservation Vision: With the Rivanna River as the backbone, create an integrated system of parks and greenways throughout Pantops that provides accessible, usable amenity spaces and conserves and restores natural systems.*
 - *Conservation Goal 1. Provide pedestrian and trail connections to major natural systems and public amenities, such as the Rivanna River greenway corridor and Darden Towe Park.*
 - *Conservation Goal 2. Create a variety of public spaces to support active, passive, and social recreation and link existing neighborhoods to cultural assets.*
- **Charlottesville and Albemarle Convention & Visitor’s Bureau "Destination 2045" Tourism Master Plan** (see pp. 27-28 “Key Focus Areas” and “Infrastructure: Outdoor Recreation – Trails”)
- **Urban Rivanna River Corridor Plan** (collaborative regional plan: Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, Albemarle County, City of Charlottesville)
- Albemarle County Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment (2018)

19. Virginia Outdoors Plan (SCORP) Needs

This Old Mills Trail Extension (Phase 1) project, referred to in the following description as “Pantops to Milton,” is integral to the “Rivanna River Greenway” Regional Featured Project:

Regional Featured Project: Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission

Project Type: Trails; Project Name: Rivanna River Greenway; Status: In progress; VOP Region: Region 3

“Pantops to Milton, bridge connection from Pantops to Woolen Mills, new trailhead parks for bike, pedestrian, and vehicular access with bathrooms and other amenities, wayfinding and interpretive signage”

Additionally, this project supports and advances the following VOP Outdoor Recreation Priorities (2.1.4):

- *“expand outdoor recreation access”* – This project will expand the existing Old Mills Trail by 1.0 mile, including construction of multiple significant trail structures, in order to provide public access to new riverfront greenway trail along a designated Scenic River and onto a designated World Heritage Site
- *“improve safety”* – This project will improve safety on the County-owned portion of this project, by eliminating the need to traverse a small side tributary using a 12x12 timber (or “skinny”) and eliminating the need to continue on a very narrow sideslope trail that crosses a steep slope with exposure to unprotected falls. The proposed bike/ped bridge will cross the main tributary in a location that bypasses this small side tributary and section of sideslope trail. By eliminating this difficult trail section – and by providing a new bridge with 6’ clear zones and safety railings – this project will increase safety on the County-owned parcel.
- *“give rise to better health”* – This project will provide Albemarle County residents and visitors with expanded access to recreational experiences that directly support improved physical and mental health. The trail expansion will provide safe, convenient, authorized passage under the vehicular and railroad transportation infrastructure, eliminating an existing barrier and enabling trail visits of increased distance and time. And because the trail will extend onto Monticello’s Lego Farm, this project will be a high-profile, popular new destination – and can reasonably be anticipated to attract more visitors, including new users and more frequent return users. This one project will create an enticing new attraction for participants in a wide variety of trail-

based activities like hiking, trail running, mountain biking, birding and wildlife observation, shoreline fishing, forest bathing, and/or relaxing and viewing the flowing waters of the Scenic Rivanna River.

Additionally, this project will provide new opportunities to experience several “most-needed” outdoor recreation activities, as identified by a significant number of Virginians across the following categories (2.1.3):

- For *“most-needed water-based activities,”* 28% of VOP respondents said *“relaxing – viewing water”*
- For *“most-needed nature-oriented activities,”* 29% of VOP respondents said *“open space – visiting natural areas,”* 26% said *“open space – visiting historic areas,”* 24% said *“open space – picnicking away from home,”* and 19% said *“open space – viewing scenery.”*

And as described above and in other responses, this OMT Extension project is consistent with the following “types of projects [to] be prioritized” (2.1.6):

- *Projects on existing publicly owned recreation lands. (2.1.2)*
- *Projects that improve safety for all visitors on recreation lands and waters. (2.1.4 - Safety)*
- *Projects that improve safety on multi-use trails and paths. (2.1.4 - Safety)*
- *Projects that provide new public access sites or upgrades where current access needs are not met. (2.1.4 - Challenges)*

Through a formal partnership with and pledge from the Rivanna Conservation Alliance, and with guidance from ACPR’s Natural Resources Specialist, this project includes approximately 4,000 SF of streambank mitigation and native landscape installation. In this way, this project meets the following planning recommendations:

“(2.1.4 – Resilience) Planners should incorporate strategies...that address Virginia’s resiliency in the development, maintenance, and management of recreation resources. These resiliency-focused initiatives include ecological restoration [and] biodiversity improvement...”

20. Will the project create a new trail opportunity for a community that does not currently have access to public trails within a 10 minute (1/2 mile) walk or within a 15 minute drive?

This project does not create all-new residential access to trails where non such access previously existed. However, it will provide more safe, more convenient public access to 1.0 mile of new multi-use trail along a Scenic River that is fundamentally different than the location and character of the existing portion of the OMT. Specifically, this project provides an opportunity for residents to legally, safely pass under the highway bridges and railroad at the edge of the Pantops Development Area, and continue on the Old Mills Trail extension into a rural, historic section of the designated Scenic Rivanna River valley. In these ways, this trail extension will provide residents of Pantops – which is characterized by urban land uses, suburban development patterns, and congested roads – with expanded access to previously-inaccessible lands characterized by high-quality open space, historic landscapes, and wildlife habitat.

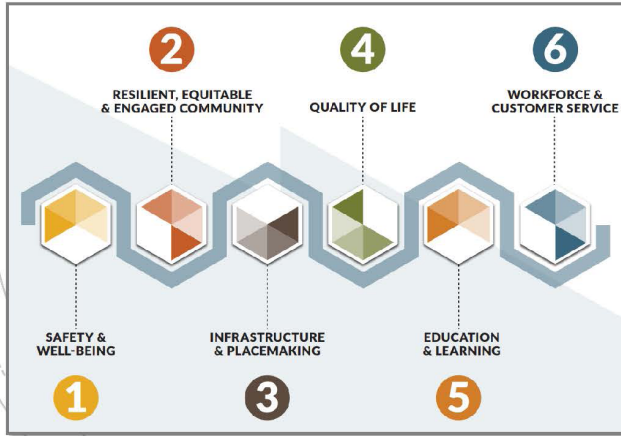
21. Community Linkages

By utilizing existing public and private spur trails and community connections, this project will provide numerous residential communities in Pantops with access to the scenery and serenity of Monticello’s historic riverfront property at Lego Farm. It will also link Lego Farm to Darden Towe Park – a dynamic regional park located 2.5 miles upstream on the existing OMT and jointly owned, funded, and managed by Albemarle County and Charlottesville – by elongating the existing OMT beyond it’s stopping point under the interstate highway.

End Section B

Section B Attachment: Question 18 (Local and Regional Plans)

- Albemarle County Strategic Plan (FY24-28)
- AC44 Comp Plan: Greenways Plan
- AC44 Comp Plan: Rivanna River Greenway + Blueway
- AC44 Comp Plan: Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Chapter
- Pantops Master Plan
- Biodiversity Action Plan
- Urban Rivanna River Corridor Plan
- Jefferson Area Bike-Ped Plan
- Destination 2045 Tourism Master Plan
- Parks & Rec Needs Assessment



Goal 3: INFRASTRUCTURE & PLACEMAKING

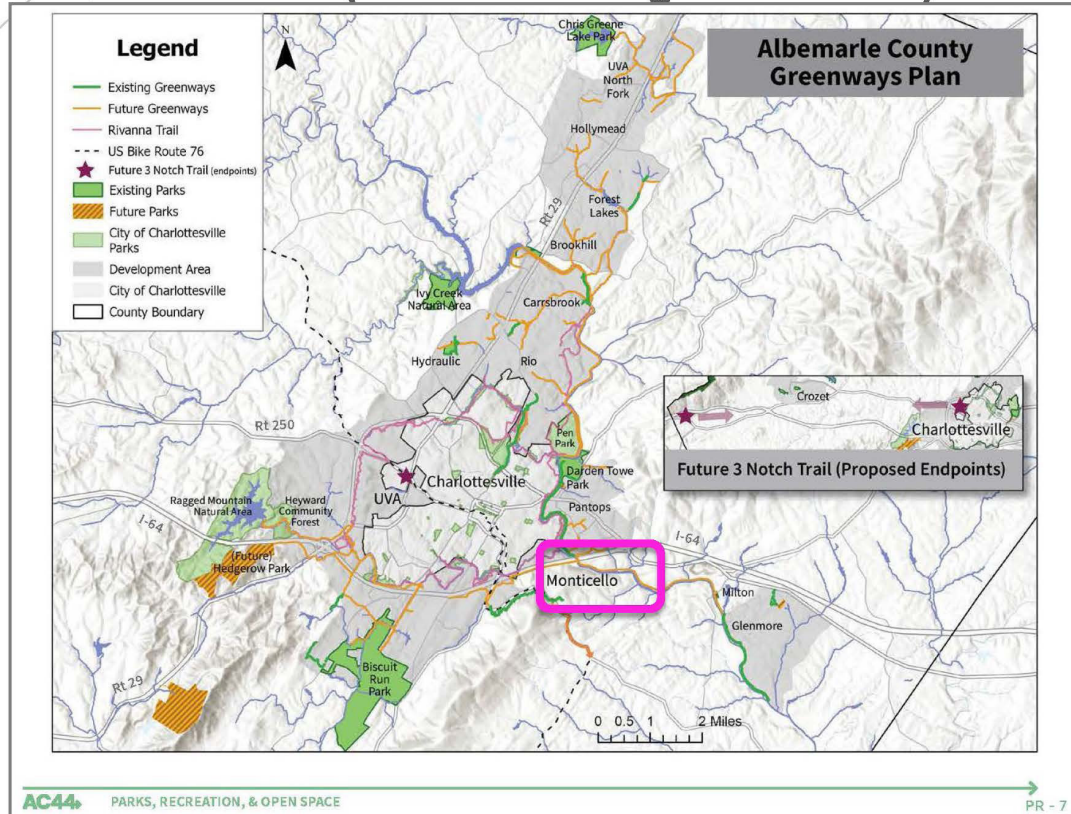
- “Invest in infrastructure and amenities that create connection, opportunity, and well-being.”
- Goal 3.4: Implement long-range plans to embrace multimodal connectivity.

Goal 4: QUALITY OF LIFE

- “Encourage a vibrant community with economic and recreational opportunities that serve all community members.”
- Goal 4.4: Integrate parks planning with multi-modal transportation planning across the County.
- Goal 4.5: Enhance overall access to parks and recreational opportunities with an emphasis on urban neighborhoods.

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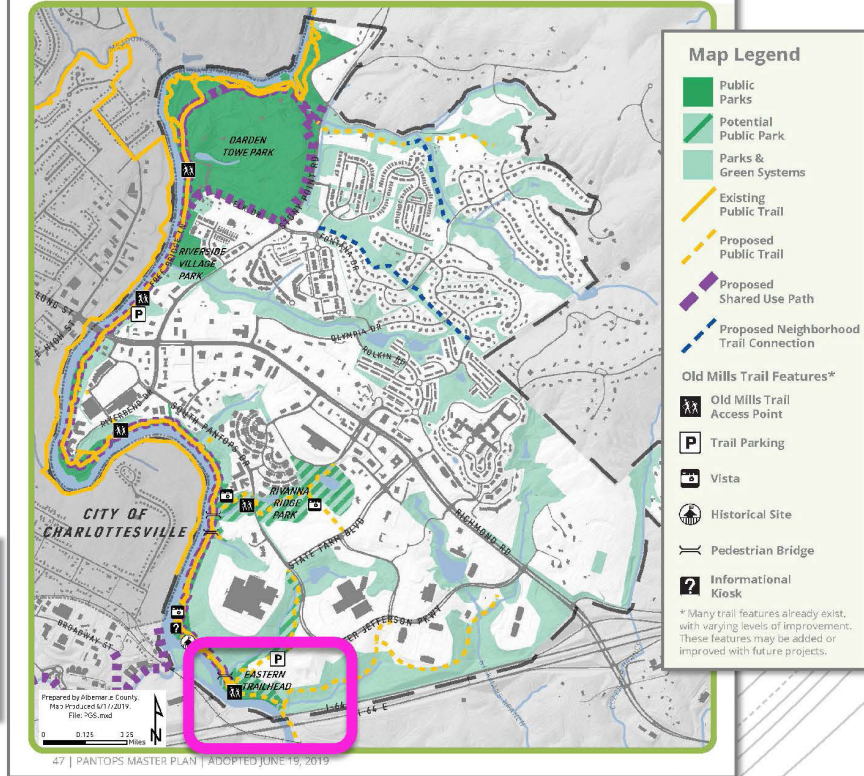
Trails

Pantops has some of the most extensive public trail networks within Albemarle County, with the Old Mills Trail running along the Rivanna River through the length of Pantops. The Old Mills Trail is part of the larger Rivanna Greenway Network, which when completed will run along the River Corridor from Pantops to the Village of Rivanna and east to the Fluvanna County line.



*Pantops Future Parks & Green Systems Plan
Pantops Master Plan / 2019*

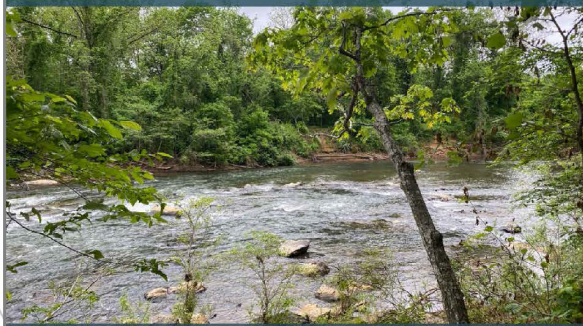
Future Parks & Green Systems Plan



Section B Attachment: Question 18 (Local and Regional Plans)

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- Biodiversity Action Plan
- **Urban Rivanna River Corridor Plan**
- Jefferson Area Bike-Ped Plan
- Destination 2045 Tourism Master Plan
- Parks & Rec Needs Assessment

Urban Rivanna River Corridor Plan



Prepared for the County of Albemarle & the City of Charlottesville
Prepared by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission
January 2022



• Goal 2: RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

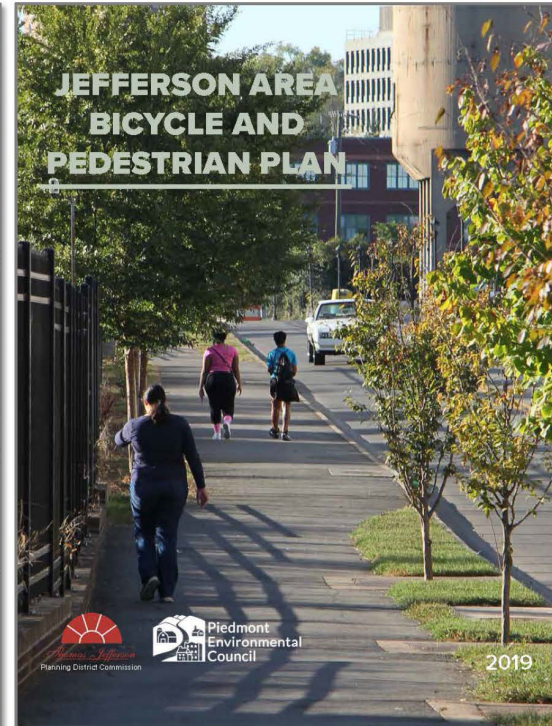
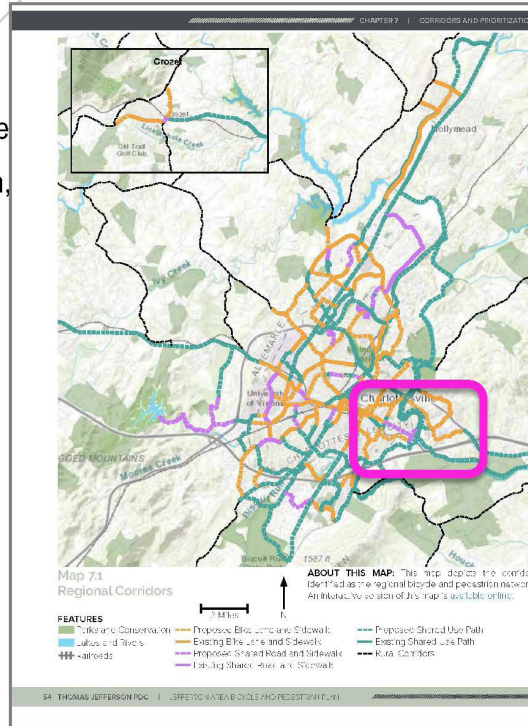
- Goal 2.1: Identify and implement needed improvements and other actions within the urban river corridor that are necessary in order to enable the planned extension of the Rivanna Greenway downstream to areas of interest (such as Shadwell, the Milton Boat Launch, and the existing riverfront greenway trail in the Village of Rivanna Development Area).

• Goal 3: MULTI-PURPOSE TRAILS & BRIDGES

- Goal 7.7: Promote regional efforts to incorporate this section of the trail into a larger network of greenways/blueways.
- Goal 7.8: Support the designation of portions of the Rivanna River Corridor trail system for incorporation into the proposed regional Three Notch'd Trail.

Section B Attachment: Question 18 (Local and Regional Plans)

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- AC44 Comp Plan: Greenways Plan
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- AC44 Comp Plan: Parks, Recreation, & Open Space
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- Jefferson Area Bike-Ped Plan**
- Destination 2045 Tourism Master Plan
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Jefferson Area Bike and Pedestrian Plan: "Regional Corridors" (TJPDC + PEC / 2019)

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High Priority – Facility/Amenity: "Walking, Hiking, and Biking Trails"

Facility/Amenity	Priority
Walking, Hiking and Biking Trails	High
Youth Athletic Fields - Diamond and Multi-Purpose	
Open Space/Conservation Parks	
Small Neighborhood Parks	
Large Community Parks	
Aquatic Facilities	
Off-Leash Dog Parks	
River Access/Boat Launches	
Pavilions and Picnic Shelters	

High Priority – Activity: "Walking / Jogging / Biking / Hiking"

Activity	Priority
Walking/Jogging/Biking/Hiking	High
Adult Fitness and Wellness	
Youth Sports	
Nature Programs	
Outdoor Recreation/Adventure (stand-up paddleboard, fishing, canoeing, kayaking)	
Visiting Parks/Picnicking	
Socialization with Dogs	
Swimming (learn to swim programs, water fitness)	
Youth Out of School Programs (camps, before and after school)	

Section C – Public Involvement and Impact

22. Public Participation

This project has long been the subject of community outreach, community engagement, and special events, and has long been supported by the community as a valuable project for outdoor recreation investment.

This project was selected as one of two highlighted ACPR priorities during the staff reports and presentations to the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, and general public during the AC44 Comp Plan process (2023-2025). As described and shown in other sections, this project was also an important element in the Pantops Master Plan (2019), Urban Rivanna River Corridor Plan (2022). All of these recent planning processes included significant public outreach and engagement, including: flyers and yard signs being installed around the river corridor; online questionnaires; community meetings provided in virtual, in-person, and hybrid formats; and formal meeting agenda items (including some public hearings) for Albemarle County’s Pantops Community Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors.

ACPR staff have also performed community engagement for this project as part of numerous events, including the Rivanna Riverfest (2023, 2024), the Rivanna River Basin Commission’s Annual Conference (2024), the Piedmont Environmental Council’s Active Mobility Summit (2024, 2025, 2026), and the Parent-Teacher Organization for Stone Robinson Elementary (2022) due to that school’s location along the planned Old Mills Trail Extension and its extensive river frontage and forested riparian slopes, which are used by SRES teachers for environmental education.

Our community’s interest in and support for this project is consistently strong. Local and regional stakeholders have made it clear that the demand to access and explore the Rivanna River downstream from Charlottesville is very strong, and that this project will be a very popular addition to our region’s outdoor recreation assets.

23. Collaboration

Project Partners:

- Monticello/Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation (previous conveyance/dedication of greenway easements for this project site and for future phases; prior and ongoing coordination with staff in multiple departments, including: Preservation and Operations; Archaeology; and Guest Services)
- Albemarle County Parks Foundation (fundraising target of \$75,000; see letter of support)
- Piedmont Environmental Council (project partner; see letter of support for partnership pledge)
- Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, City of Charlottesville, County of Albemarle (Urban Rivanna River Corridor Plan / collaborative regional planning process 2020 – 2022) (see TJPDC letter of support)
- Rivanna Trails Foundation, Charlottesville Area Mountain Bike Club, Charlottesville Area Trail Runners, and Pantops Trails Crew (partners on this other projects; ongoing coordination and strong alignment; monthly land manager lunch meetings hosted by CAMBC; see letters of support for partnership pledges)
- Rivanna Conservation Alliance (partnership pledge to assist with project, including bank stabilization and native landscape installation; see letter of support)
- Rivanna River Company (project partner; see letter of support for partnership pledge)
- Charlottesville – Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau (see letter of support)

Project Stakeholders:

- Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (owner of RR ROW; project coordination with assistance from Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation) (see attached correspondence)
- CSX Corporation (RR ROW lease agreement holder) and Buckingham Branch Railroad (RR operator) (see attached correspondence)

24. Workforce Development

This project will include major participation and contributions from local trail organizations, including the Rivanna Trails Foundation, C'ville Area Mountain Bike Club, and the C'ville Area Trail Runners. These groups have robust memberships, and their work days are well-attended by intergenerational volunteers. It is common to see teens, pre-teens, and youth attend and actively contribute to volunteer trail work – gaining technical skills and experience on trail, and getting a rewarding experience by co-laboring in community service. Additionally, the Pantops Trails Crew has expressed their intent to participate in the construction of this project. While this group is primarily comprised of seniors and retirees, the PTC will bring additional intergenerational dynamics to this project. With all of these project partners, it is likely that four (4) generations of locals will be working together on-site, sharing the challenge and reward of co-producing this new trail segment in a way that reflects the age diversity of our trails community.

25. User Benefits

This OMT Phase 1 Extension project is so beneficial because it will overcome the challenging trail gaps and barriers that have prevented safe, publicly-accessible trail use downstream from Albemarle County's Pantops Development Area and the City of Charlottesville. Many residents live on both sides of the Rivanna River – but none have had legal, maintained public access downstream from the river's urban corridor. This project will provide long-awaited access to exceptionally high-quality scenery and natural open space along the state-designated Scenic Rivanna River.

Another benefit is new public access to lands of national and international historical significance. This includes future visitors to Monticello: by establishing safe, convenient, maintained recreational trail access onto Lego Farm, Monticello's Guest Services could incorporate new and very different guided tours, new interpretive signage, and new supplemental online content to greatly expand the Monticello experience. This project creates the conditions to strengthen and enrich the story of Thomas Jefferson – and thereby enhance the experiential education of visitors to Monticello – by providing access to the riverfront lands where Jefferson was born and raised, and where he led ambitious river improvement projects to enable commercial navigation before becoming a legendary statesman.

This project is also beneficial because it will utilize the TJMF's greenway easement (dedicated in 2007) to establish formal, legal public access in perpetuity. Importantly, the schedule for this proposed project (if funded) will ensure that Section M of the TJMF greenway easement ("Failure to Timely Complete Trail") will not go into effect.

Additionally, this project has the benefit of supporting economic development and tourism objectives identified by the CACVB. The "Destination 2045 Tourism Master Plan" identifies "Infrastructure: Outdoor Recreation – Trails" as one of just two "Key Focus Areas" for our regional tourism market. Please see the CACVB letter of support.

26. User Fees

Albemarle County Parks & Recreation does not and will not require any fees or permits for our County Greenways.

27. Accessibility

This project will enable safe, convenient access for all trail users in an area that is currently inaccessible to most trail users due to topography, unimproved stream crossings, and unmanaged vegetation. This project will utilize standard materials and specifications to maximize safety and accessibility, including minimum 6' clear zone widths and trail improvements. The bridge and sheltered underpass will be built so as to enable seamless future upgrade from natural surface recreational trail (4'-6' wide) to stone dust trail with increased width (6' – 8').

Additionally, this project also includes designed opportunities to rest and relax in a natural setting, watch and listen to the Scenic Rivanna River, and observe the abundant wildlife in this vicinity. These passive recreation activities are beneficial for all trail users, and arguably provide an outsized benefit for trail users with sensory, cognitive, neurological and/or mental health conditions or disabilities.

End Section C

Section D – Design, Sustainability, and Environmental Impact

28. Design

This project will require final site and environmental surveys, as well as design and engineering for the site and structural components of the project. Future work will include site design and calculations for culverts and scour protection (for the required Floodplain Development Permit); and structural design and engineering for the pedestrian bridge and railroad under pass structure (for the required Building Permits). Current design plans include site layouts, cross sections, elevations, and preliminary designs for the bridge, underpass shelter, and trail construction and improvements.

29. Design Standards

The user groups for the Old Mills Trail will be primarily pedestrians and bicyclists. The trail be designed in accordance with Forest Service natural-surface trail standards appropriate for a low-to-moderate use recreational corridor along the Rivanna River. Typical longitudinal grades will generally be 5 percent or less, consistent with sustainable trail design, while allowing for potential future surface improvements and/or ADA upgrades. All bridges and structures will accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic and be designed to meet ADA requirements for accessible surfaces, clear widths, and rail heights. Structures will comply with local floodplain ordinances and applicable VDOT and AASHTO Green Book guidance for shared-use trails, supporting 100 psf pedestrian loads and light utility vehicles, but not HS-5 loading. All structures, graded benches, and corridors will allow for future tread widening as use increases and to meet appropriate recreational trail standards for the proposed user group. This project includes a proposed maximum tread width of 6’.

30. Sustainability and Resiliency

The OMT Extension is designed for long-term sustainability and resiliency through adherence to sustainable trail planning and design, and through forthcoming completion of (and responsiveness to) environmental due diligence.

The trail design will require minimal impacts by closely following the existing trail trace, avoiding steep slopes and sensitive drainages, and minimizing earthwork. All structures are aligned with flood flows and tucked into existing landforms outside the direct floodway where feasible, reducing hydraulic impacts. Scour protection will be provided at bridge end walls within existing channels. Durable, low-maintenance materials such as concrete and weathered steel are used for structural elements, with readily available components for ease of repair. The natural-surface trail incorporates on-site boulders and low-tech construction methods, enabling straightforward maintenance and repair by volunteers while remaining resilient to severe weather and flooding events.

Additionally, through a formal partnership with and pledge from the Rivanna Conservation Alliance, and with guidance from ACPR’s Natural Resources Specialist, this project includes approximately 4,000 SF of streambank mitigation and native landscape installation. This labor-intensive work will improve slope stability, reduce erosion and sedimentation, protect stream health, and promote biodiversity and habitat for pollinators and other wildlife.

See attached Floodplain Map with Phase 1 Design overlay.

31. Environmental Quality Impact

The Old Mills Trail is expected to have minimal and largely temporary environmental impacts due to its context-sensitive design and low-impact construction approach. The trail generally follows existing informal paths, minimizing disturbance to soils, vegetation, and wildlife habitat, and is aligned to avoid steep slopes, wetlands, and active drainages. Natural-surface construction reduces impervious area, limits runoff, and protects water quality in the Rivanna River. During construction, short-term impacts such as localized soil disturbance and noise will be mitigated through erosion and sediment controls, dry-weather work windows, and equipment access limits. Native vegetation will be preserved where feasible, and disturbed areas will be stabilized with native revegetation efforts to

discourage invasive species. After construction, the trail is expected to improve environmental stewardship by concentrating use on a defined corridor, reducing trampling, erosion, and informal access to sensitive riparian areas.

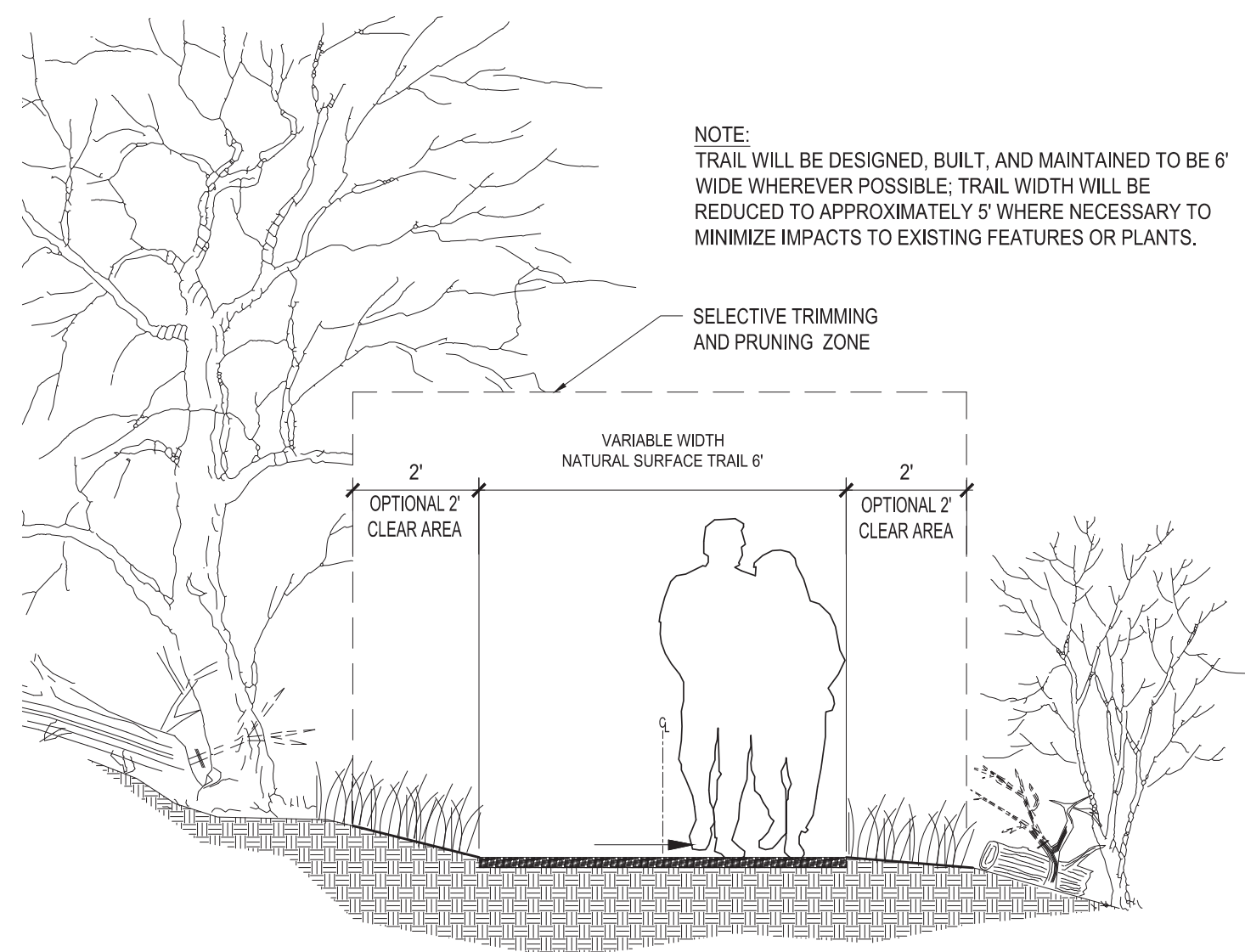
32. Future Maintenance

Future maintenance of the Old Mills Trail will emphasize routine, preventative care to ensure safety, durability, and cost-effective longevity. Quarterly inspections and post-storm assessments will address erosion, debris, vegetation encroachment, drainage performance, and structural conditions.

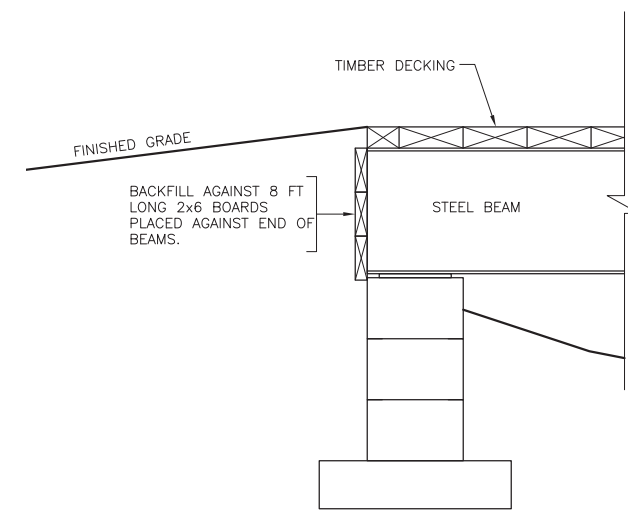
Pedestrian bridges will be inspected for deck condition, pile-supported abutment stability, scour at foundations, and performance of the railing system, with debris removal and minor repairs following flood events. The underpass shelter beneath the railroad trestle will receive regular inspections, cleaning, sediment and debris removal, and repair of protective elements as needed. Fieldstone retaining walls and minor culverts will be inspected for displacement, undermining, and blockage, with simple stone reset or clearing as required.

Maintenance will be performed by ACPR Trails Crew staff, and will be supported by trained volunteers and community partners using low-tech methods consistent with the trail's natural-surface design. Durable materials such as concrete, weathered steel, and native stone minimize long-term upkeep. Maintenance funding will come from ACPR's Annual Operating Budget, and will be supplemented by volunteer labor by community partners, volunteer service through the new Parks Ambassadors volunteer program, and periodic community workdays.

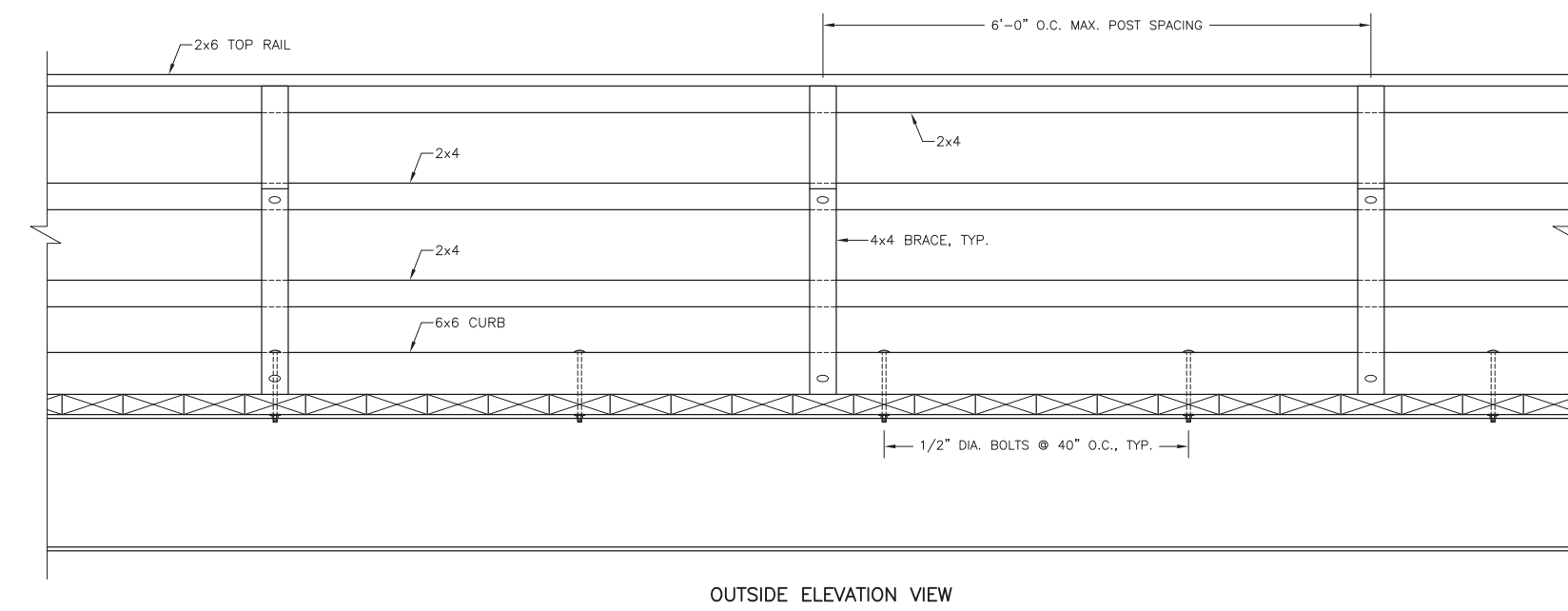
End Section D



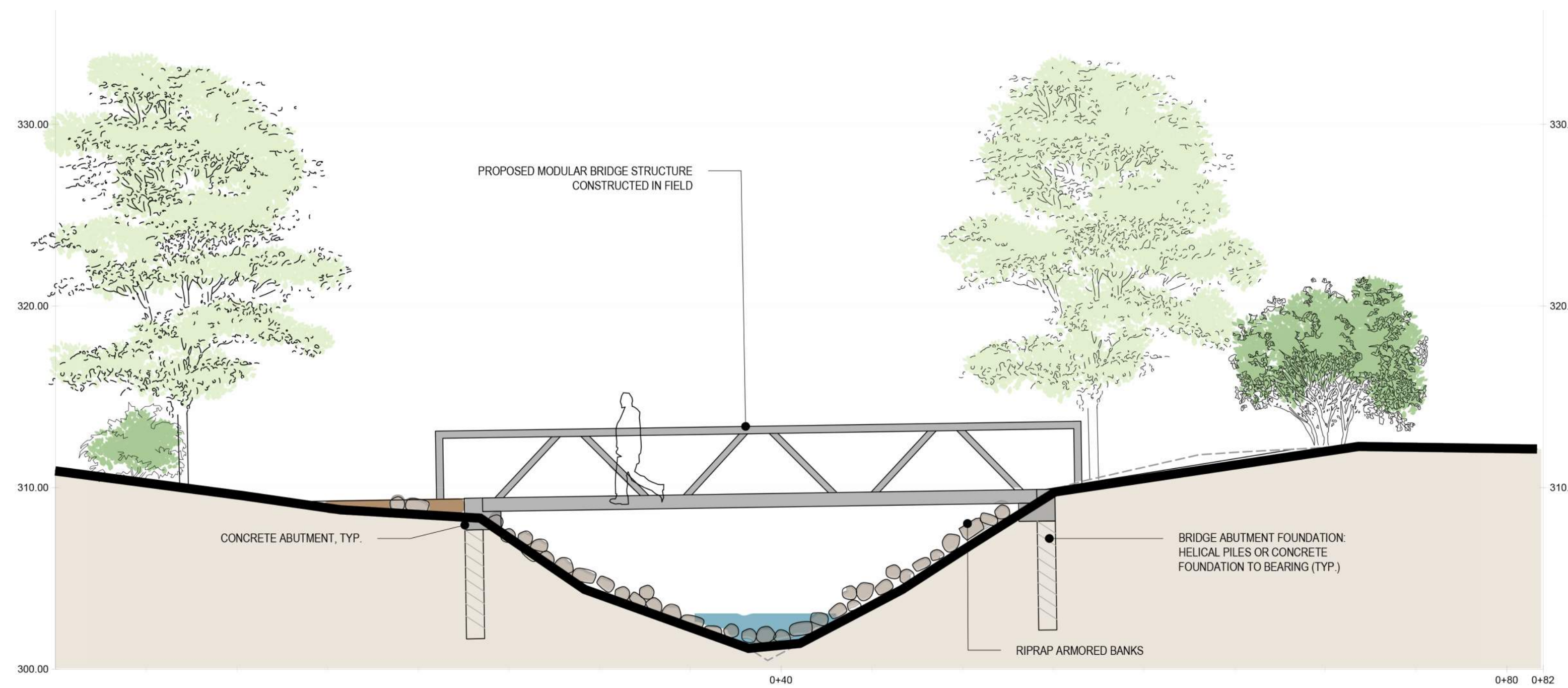
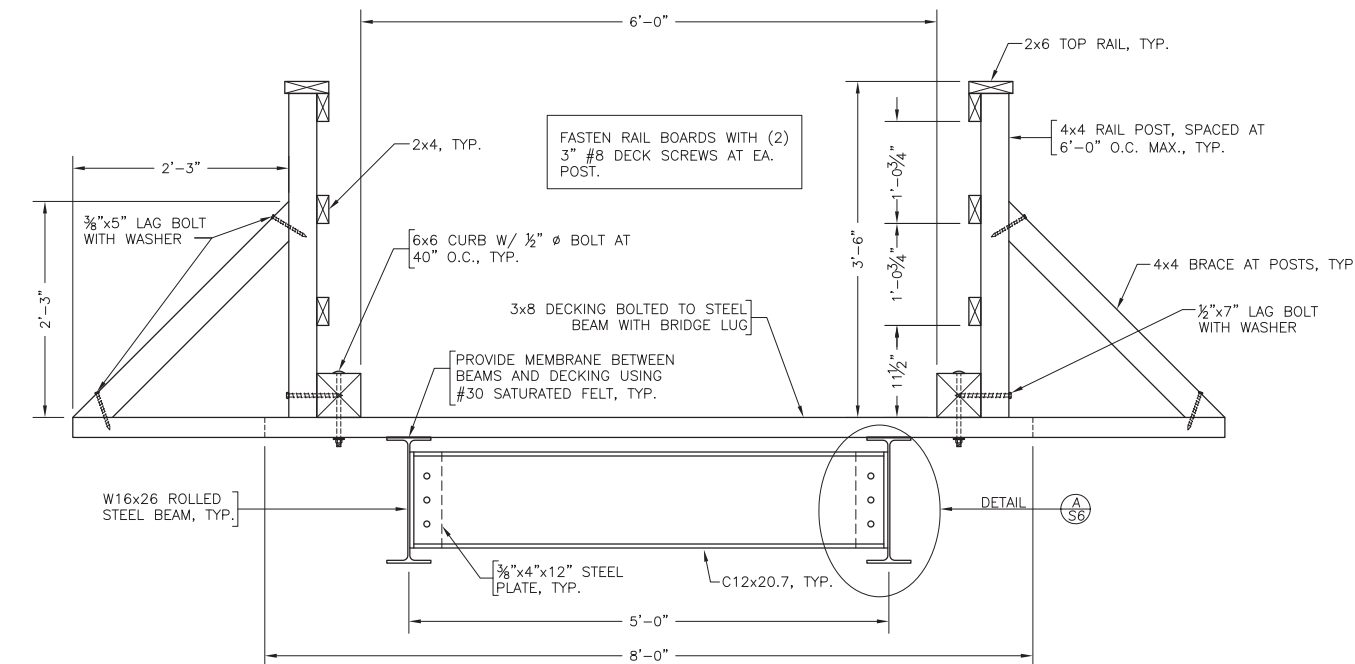
Typical Trail Section Scale: 1/2"=1'



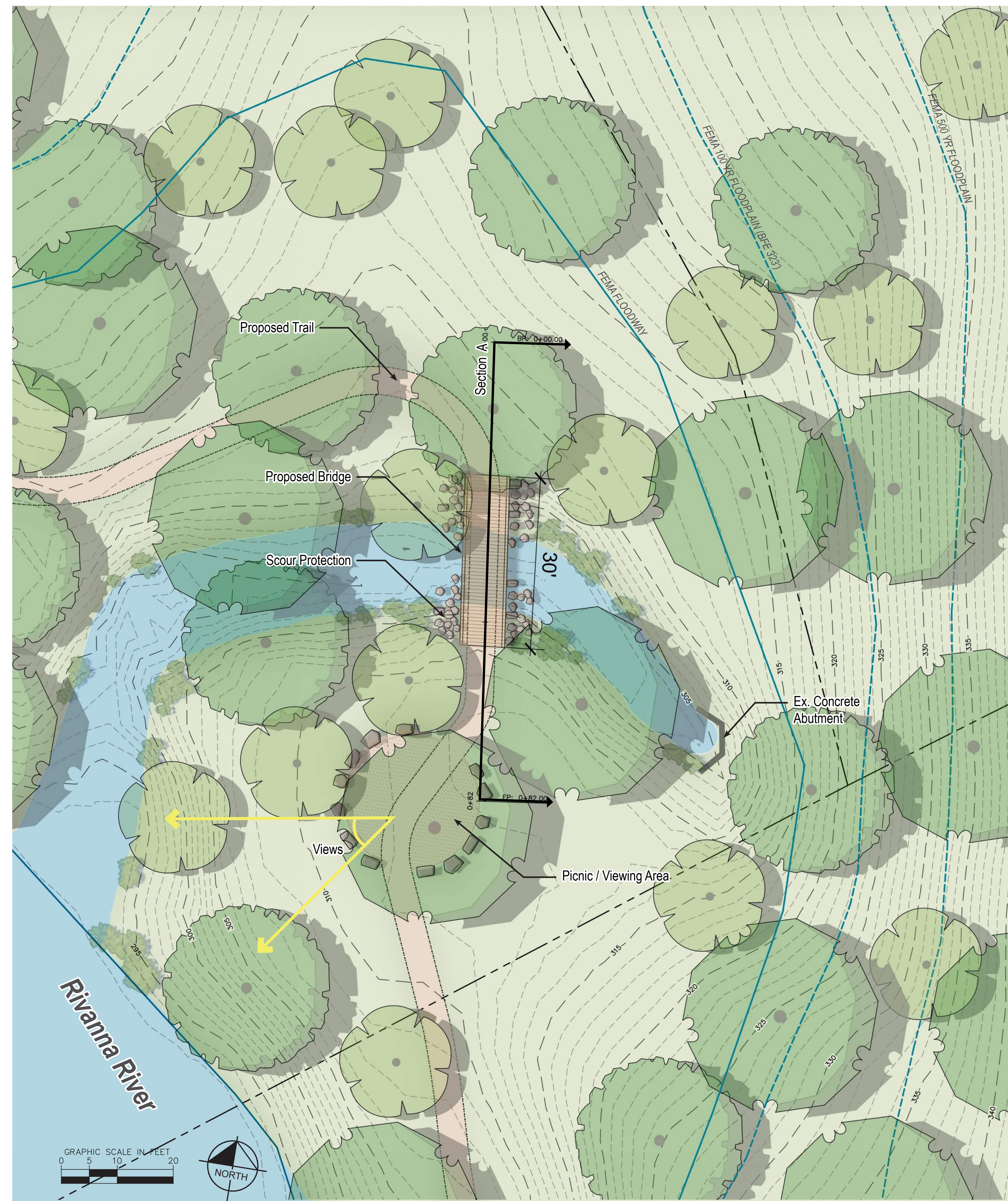
Typical Abutment Backwall Scale: 1"=1'

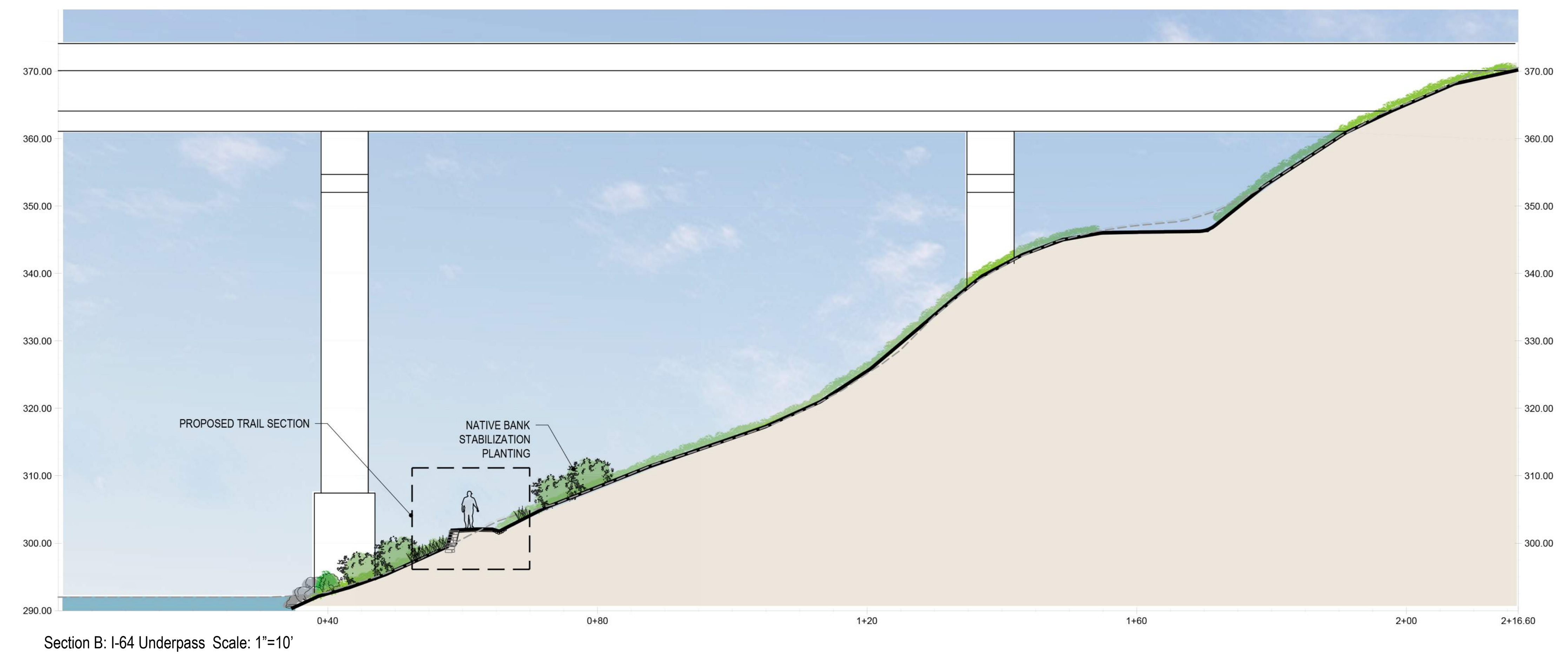
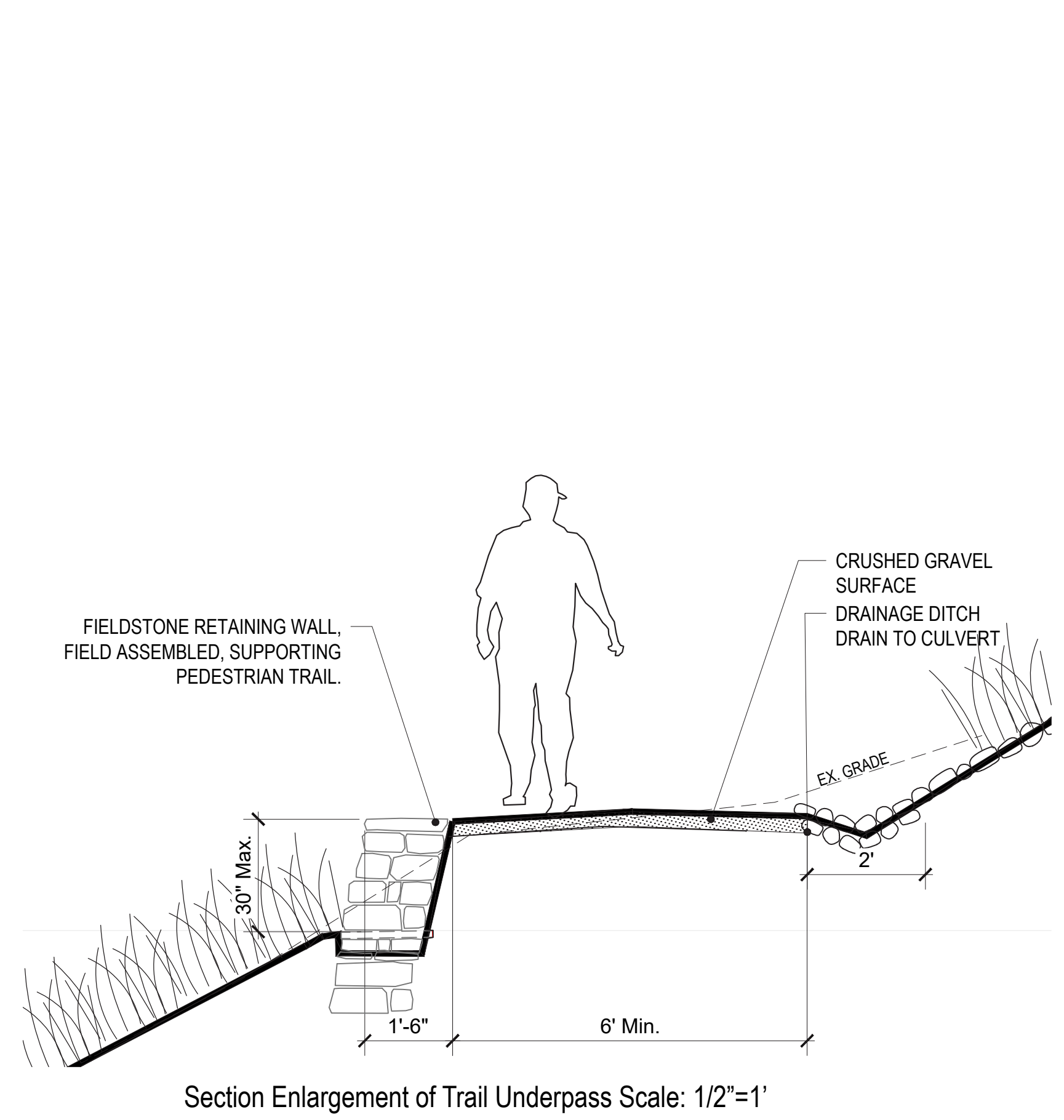
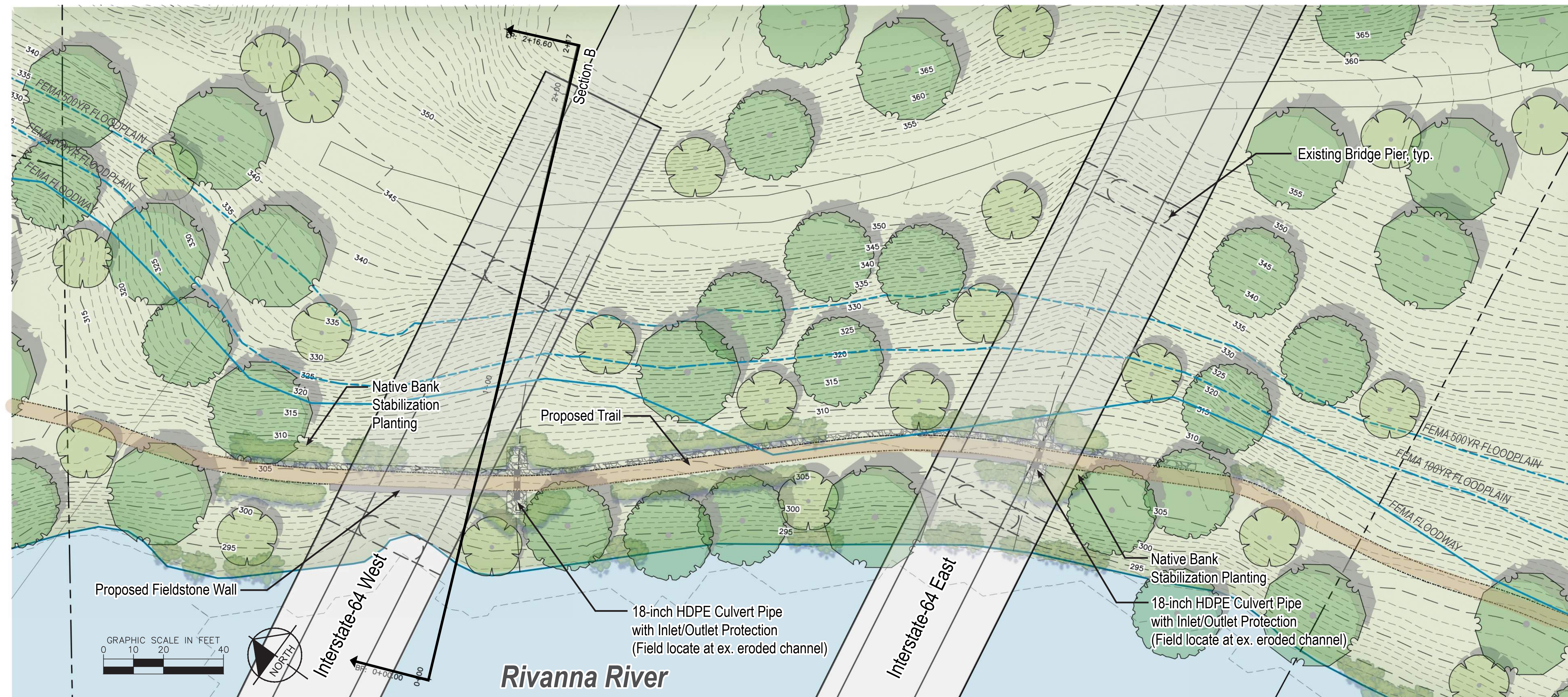


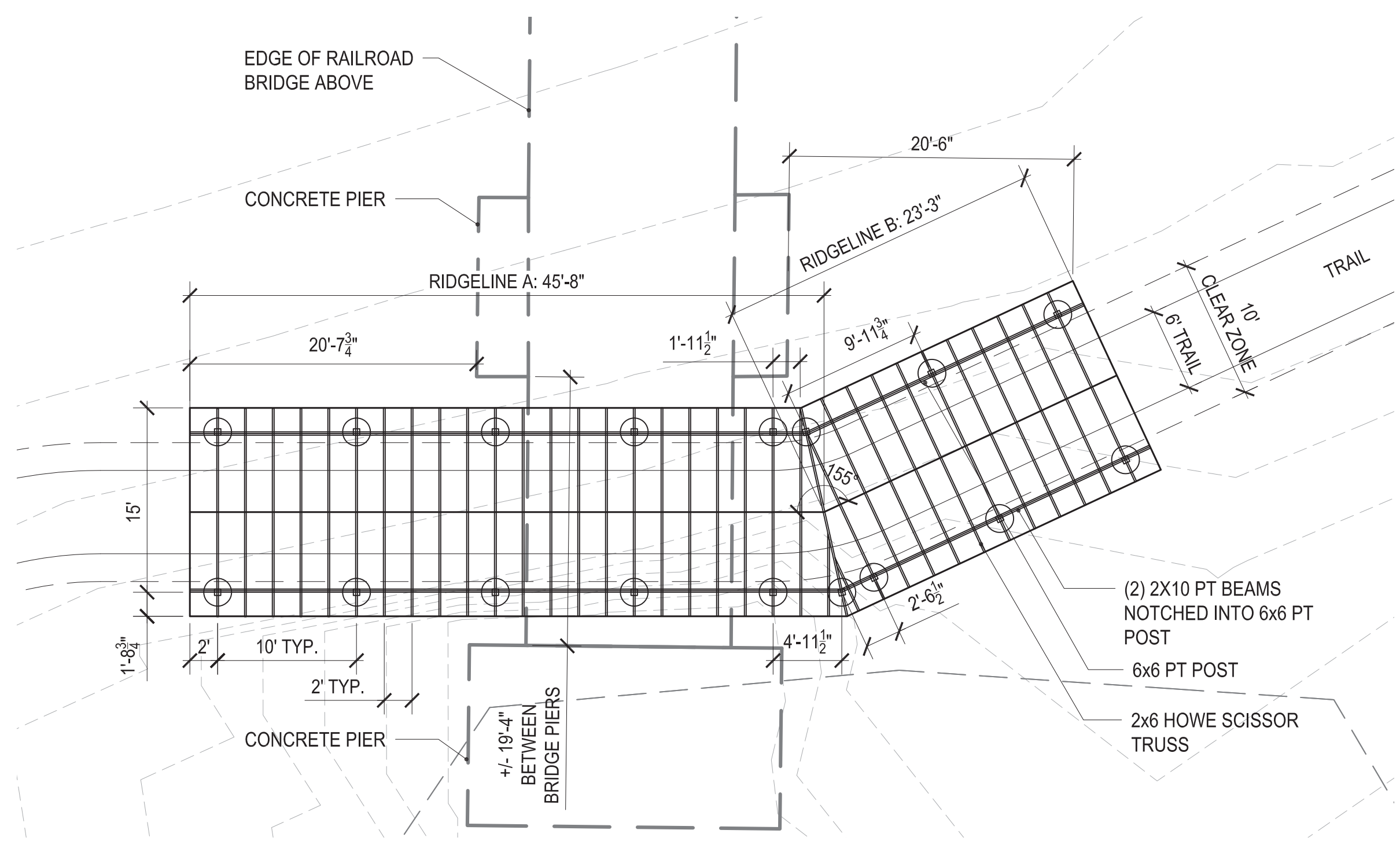
Typical Bridge Section Scale: 1"=1'



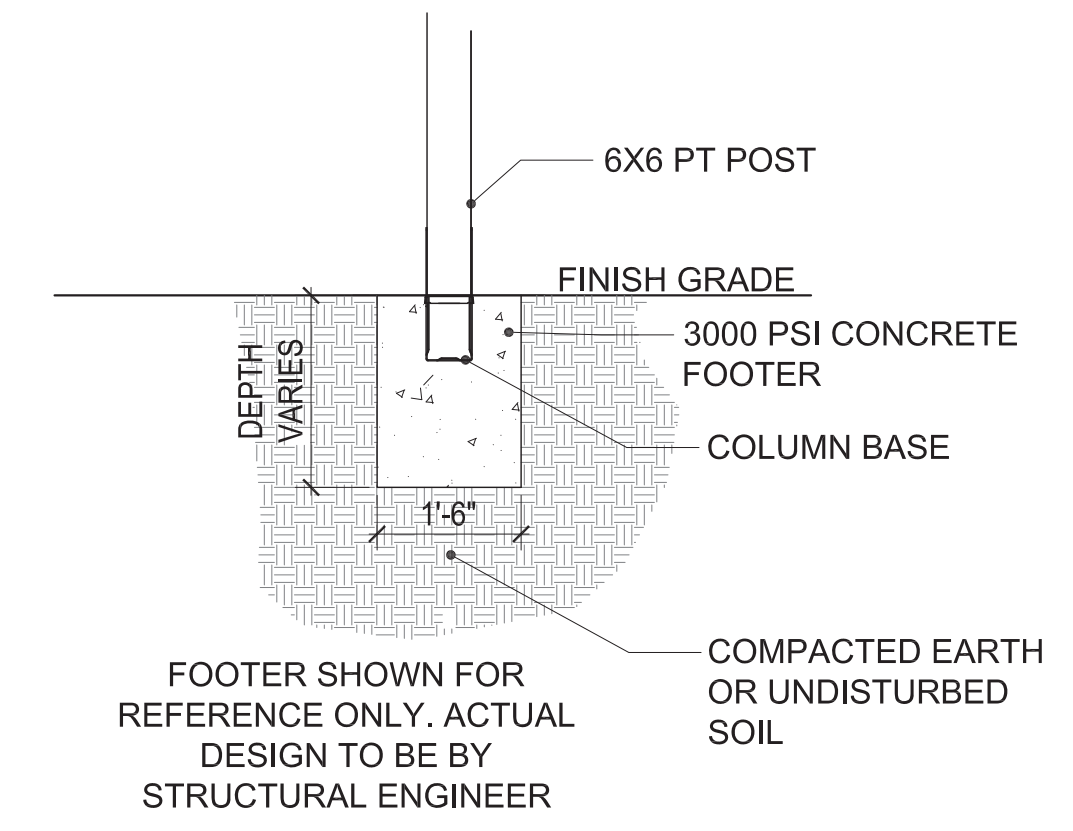
Section A: Bridge Crossing Scale: 1/4"=1'



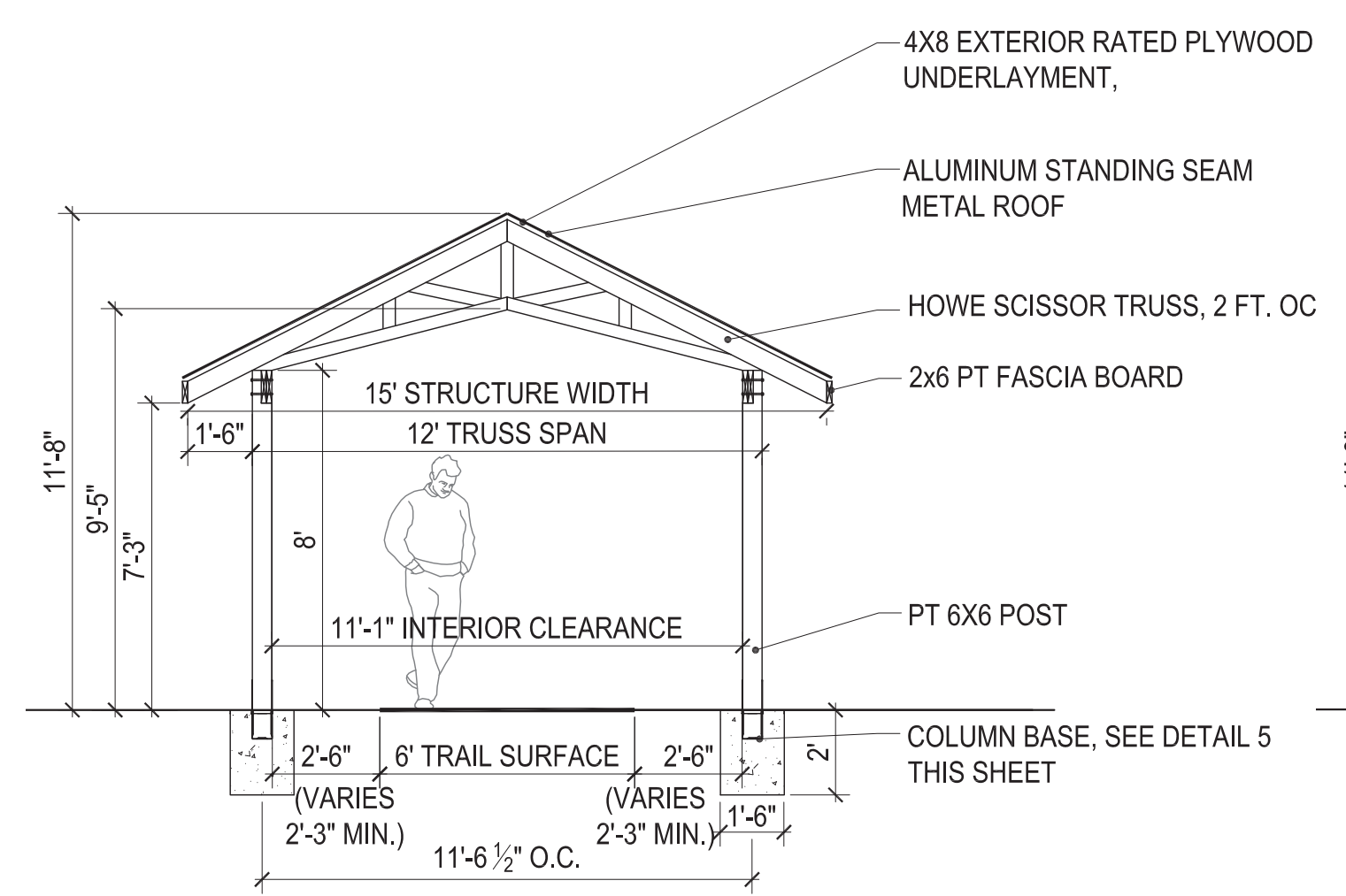




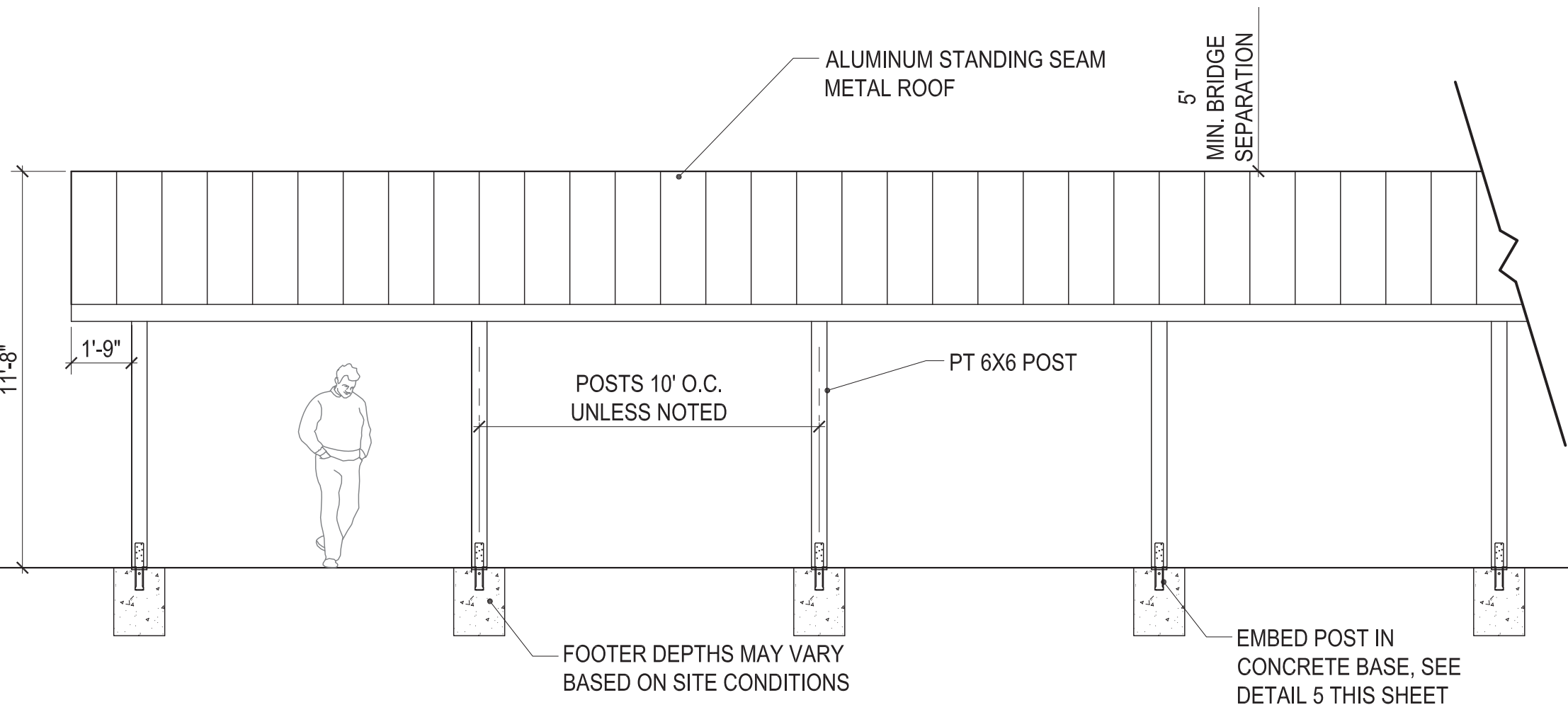
Plan of Railroad Underpass Structure Scale: 1/4"=1'



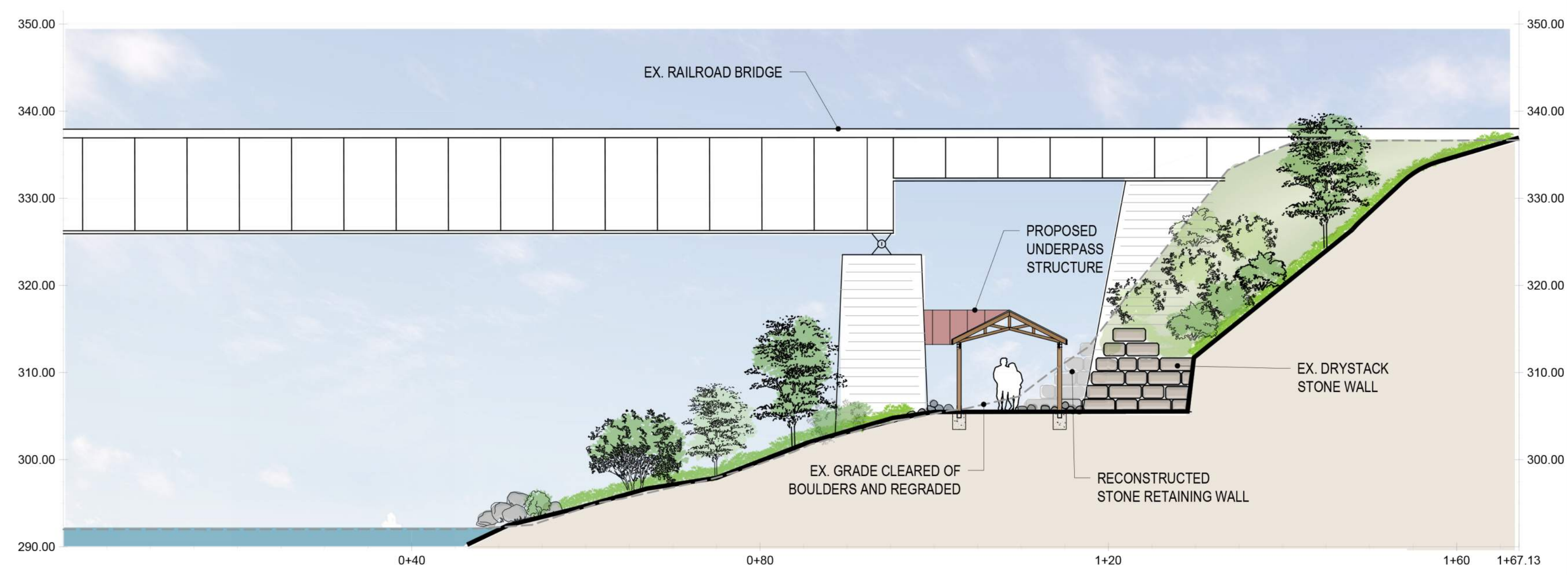
Structure Footing Scale: 1/2"=1'



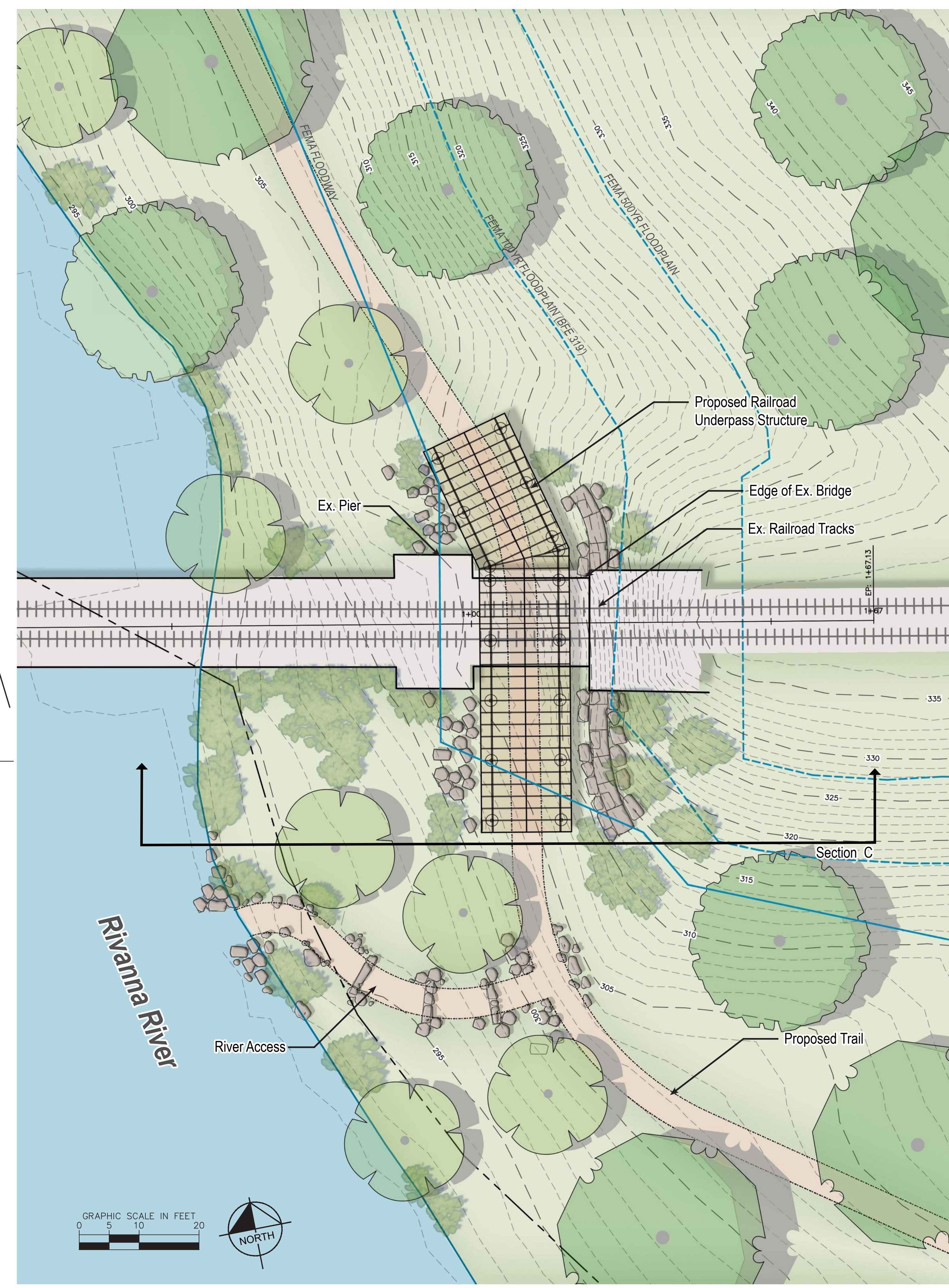
Detail Section of Railroad Underpass Structure Scale: 1/4"=1'

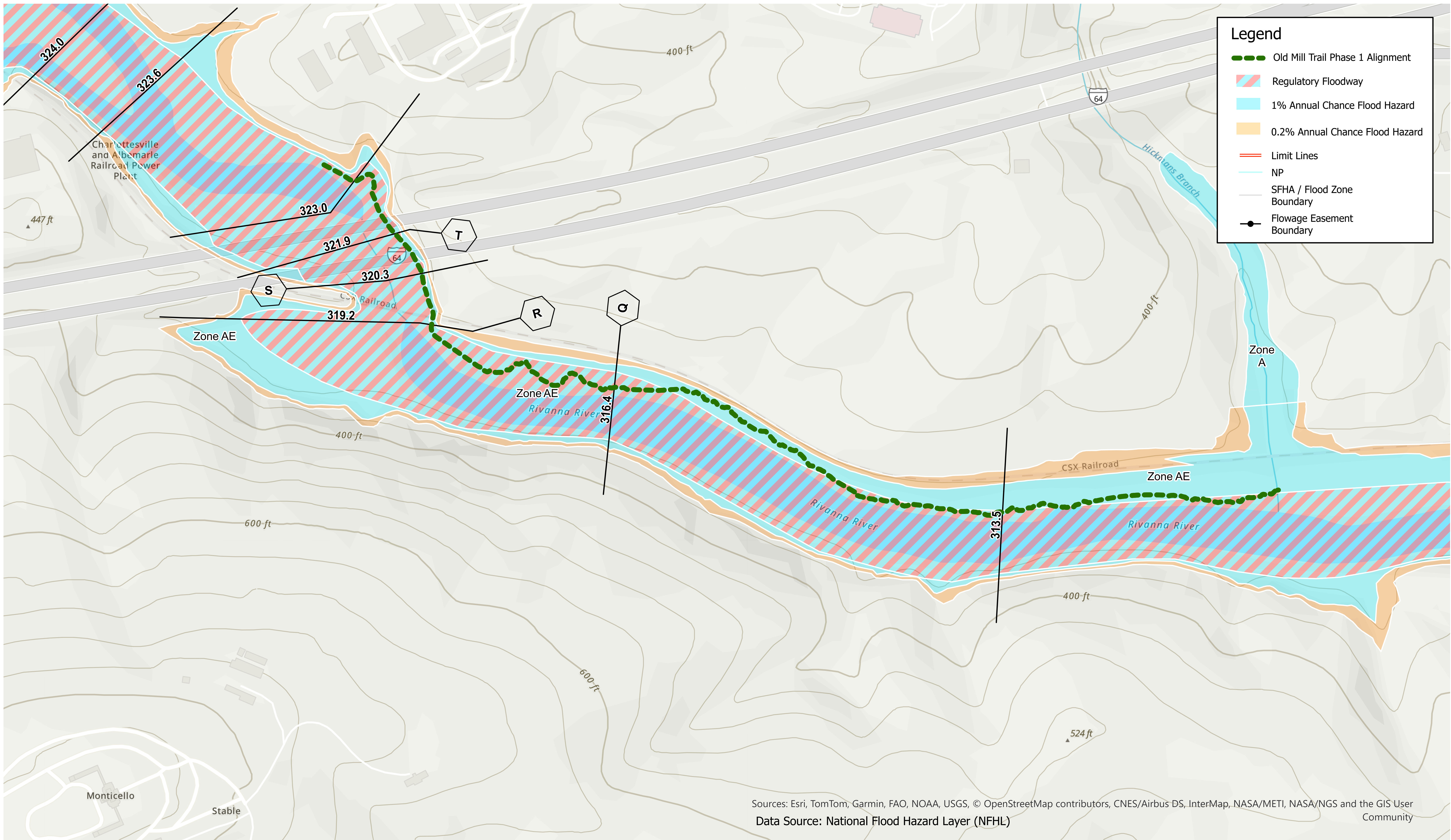


Elevation of Railroad Underpass Structure Scale: 1/4"=1'

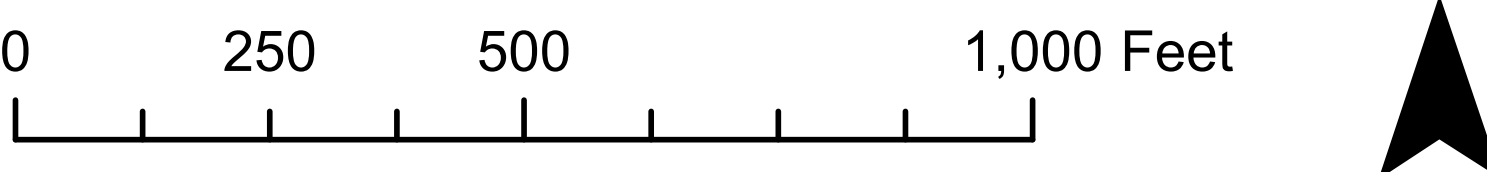


Section C: Railroad Underpass Structure Scale: 1"=10'





Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, CNES/Airbus DS, InterMap, NASA/METI, NASA/NGS and the GIS User Community
 Data Source: National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL)



Section E – Project Implementation

33. Project Schedule

The attached project schedule ([OMT_GANTT-RTPV2](#)) outlines a phased approach to complete planning, permitting, design, and construction of the Old Mills Trail Extension Phase 1 project within the three-year RTP grant period (following anticipated authorization in September 2026).

Pre-grant planning and early design activities were initiated in advance of RTP authorization and are largely complete or underway, including feasibility studies, preliminary engineering and design, stakeholder coordination, fundraising, and ROW acquisitions. Environmental review activities, including NEPA and Section 106 coordination, wetland delineation, and agency coordination, will continue into late 2026 to support final design and permitting.

Final design, due diligence, and permitting activities are scheduled for late 2026 through 2027. These tasks include completion of surveying, geotechnical investigations, final engineering for trail alignment, drainage, bridges, rail and highway underpasses, stormwater management, erosion and sediment control, floodplain compliance, and completion of all required local, state, and federal permits. Procurement of professional services and completion of plan approvals will occur concurrently to maintain project momentum.

Bidding and construction are planned for 2027–2028. Bid documents will be prepared and advertised following permit approvals, with contract award and mobilization occurring promptly thereafter. Construction will proceed through 2028, followed by final inspections, bond releases, and project close-out. A ribbon-cutting and public opening is anticipated at project completion, well within the RTP three-year grant window.

34. Budget

The attached budget was prepared by Kimley-Horn, in coordination with a project manager with over 30 years of experience in recreational trail planning, design, engineering, and construction. The estimate reflects a detailed Opinion of Probable Cost covering the full project scope. Cost development was informed by field reconnaissance to verify site conditions, review of mapping and preliminary design, and comparative analysis of recent bid tabulations for similar trail, bridge, and underpass projects in Virginia. Pricing incorporates appropriate escalation factors for limited access areas, agency oversight, and specialized construction methods. The estimate assumes volunteer labor by experienced trail builders, such as CAMBC, for tread construction in less equipment-dependent areas. Inclusion of soft costs, construction costs, and contingency provides assurance that the budget is reasonable and sufficient to complete the project.

35. Grant Match

This project involves pledges matches from numerous community stakeholders and project partners; please see attached Letters of Support and Budget for documentation and additional details:

- Albemarle County Parks Foundation: \$75,000 cash donation
- Piedmont Environmental Council: \$20,000 contribution towards professional services for engineering, design, and environmental due diligence
- Rivanna Trails Foundation: \$5,000 cash donation and volunteer labor
- Rivanna Conservation Alliance: \$2,500 in project material donations and in-kind/volunteer labor
- In-Kind Services and additional Volunteer Labor pledges from C'ville Area Mountain Bike Club, Rivanna Conservation Alliance, Rivanna River Company, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, Charlottesville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

36. Procurement

All procurement for the Old Mills Trail project will comply with applicable local, state, and federal-aid competitive procurement requirements, including the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA) and RTP grant conditions.

Anticipated contracting, labor, and material needs and corresponding procurement methods include:

- Professional engineering and design services, environmental, surveying, and geotechnical services (final design, construction documents, permitting and agency coordination): These services will be procured either through a Request for Proposals (RFP) using competitive negotiation in accordance with the VPPA, or through existing County on-call professional services contracts that were originally procured using competitive procedures compliant with federal procurement requirements.
- Trail construction contractor (natural-surface trail, pedestrian bridge, pavilion shelter, retaining walls, and minor drainage improvements): Procured through an Invitation for Bids (IFB) posted on eVA, and awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder in accordance with the VPPA.
- Construction materials and prefabricated elements (e.g., bridge components, railings, steel elements, shelters, culverts, and hardware): Purchased either as part of the competitively bid construction contract, through the County's small-purchase procedures, or via cooperative purchasing agreements that meet state and federal procurement requirements.
- Volunteer labor and donated services (corridor clearing, trail finish work, fieldstone placement, bank stabilization and revegetation, and maintenance assistance): Coordinated separately through County volunteer programs and will supplement but not replace competitively procured construction activities.

All procurement actions will ensure open competition, proper documentation, and full compliance with RTP grant requirements, federal-aid standards, and audit provisions.

37. Environmental Review

Albemarle County will complete all required environmental review activities in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Endangered Species Act, and applicable floodplain and wetland protection executive orders. The project is anticipated to qualify for a NEPA Categorical Exclusion, subject to agency concurrence.

The proposed trail corridor follows the Rivanna River and associated tributaries and includes intermittent and perennial streams. Tributaries originate from upstream drainage areas that are culverted prior to entering the corridor and transition to open channels downstream. Proposed phase 1 work does not cross or impact any mapped streams. The only crossing is a seasonally flooded highway drainage. Portions of the corridor are located within FEMA-designated 1% annual chance floodplains and mapped floodways. Jurisdictional wetlands occur adjacent to the corridor and include riverine and palustrine forested, scrub-shrub, and emergent wetlands associated with floodplain sloughs and river/stream channels. These are avoided and buffered by the design alignment. The corridor is also located within and adjacent to areas containing eligible and listed historic districts and registered historic sites; the proposed alignment avoids direct and indirect impacts to these resources.

An Environmental Due Diligence (NEPA) Check prepared by EDR LightBox has been completed and is included with this application. Determination and delineation of jurisdictional areas will be conducted within the trail corridor to identify and map resources to be avoided. Anticipated coordination and permits may include USACE Section 404 authorization, Virginia Water Protection Program coverage from VDEQ, and coordination with VDCR, VDWR, and VDHR. All required environmental documentation, permits, and approvals will be obtained prior to construction in accordance with RTP requirements.

The project is intended not only to connect underserved populations in a designated growth area to Charlottesville's urban trail network, but also to provide safe public access to, and interpretation of, the environmental and historic resources present along the Rivanna River corridor. To this end, avoidance of impacts is the goal.

End Section E

Old Mills Trail Phase 1 - Pantops to Hickmans Branch

Albemarle County, VA

OPINION OF PROBABLE COST

Prepared By: Kimley Horn Associates, Charlottesville, VA

4/5/2025

Key	
LS= Lump Sum	SF= Square Foot
AC= Acre	LF= Linear Foot
EA= Each	FF= Face Foot
CY= Cubic Yard	

1 Phase 1 Project Soft Costs	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	QTY.	TOTAL
Survey and Geotechnical	LS	\$15,000	1	\$15,000
Design and Engineering (Civil, Structural)	LS	\$60,000	1	\$60,000
			SUBTOTAL	\$75,000

2 Trail and Interstate Underpass Earthwork and Drainage	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	QTY.	TOTAL
Erosion control measures	LS	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
Tree protection (protect large trees)	LS	\$250	10	\$2,500
Trim and clear vegetation and debris (equip., supplies, by volunteers)	LS	\$2,500	1	\$2,500
Import base stone (#3 and #21A, purchase, haul, place)	TON	\$100	250	\$25,000
Geotextile/grid (trail base @ poor soils)	SY	\$3	1200	\$3,600
Cut to fill on site (hand work by volunteers +equip., supplies)	CY	\$8	500	\$4,000
Field stone walls (by volunteers, + equip., supplies)	FF	\$30	1200	\$36,000
stabilization fabric and plantings (by volunteers +equip., supplies)	SY	\$15	750	\$11,250
Trail signage (trail rules, approaches, trespass, interpretive)	EA	\$1,200	8	\$9,600
			SUBTOTAL	\$99,450

3 Pedestrian Bridge A	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	QTY.	TOTAL
Site preparation and excavation	LS	\$20,000	1	\$20,000
Pedestrian Bridge A End Walls (screw pilings with steel or concrete cap)	EA	\$24,000	2	\$48,000
Pedestrian Bridge A channel and bank stabilization	LS	\$55,000	1	\$55,000
Pedestrian Bridge A super structure	LF	\$1,750	35	\$61,250
Pedestrian Bridge A deck and railing	LF	\$750	35	\$26,250
Site stabilization and restoration (topsoil, spread leaf mulch, seed)	LS	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
			SUBTOTAL	\$215,500

4 Railroad Underpass Pavilion	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	QTY.	TOTAL
Rail Underpass Pavilion site work	LS	\$10,000	1	\$10,000
Rail Underpass Pavilion footings (excavation, reinforced concrete, post conn)	EA	\$1,200	12	\$14,400
Rail Underpass Pavilion structure (posts, frame, roofing)	SF	\$120	800	\$96,000
Rail Underpas Pavilion railroad inspector	HRS	\$100	120	\$12,000
			SUBTOTAL	\$132,400

PHASE I - SUBTOTAL ITEMS **\$522,350**
 Contingency (20%) \$104,470

TOTAL FOR ALL CONSTRUCTION **\$626,820**

**Letter of Support: Recreational Trails Program proposal from
Albemarle County Parks & Recreation for the “Old Mills Trail Extension (Phase 1)”**



On behalf of the Albemarle County Parks Foundation (ACPF), please accept this letter of support for the *Old Mills Trail Extension (Phase 1)* project being led by Albemarle County. The existing Old Mills Trail is a popular riverside trail in the Pantops neighborhood. However, the trail currently stops at the I-64 highway at the edge of Albemarle County's Development Area. Extending this trail under the interstate highway and adjacent railroad – and providing public access to the next section of the Scenic Rivanna River valley – is a project that has been identified by the community and adopted by the Board of Supervisors in multiple community plans. Most recently, this project was identified in the AC44 Comprehensive Plan (adopted in 2025).

Albemarle County has completed easement acquisitions to extend the trail downstream, but the project is currently unfunded. Therefore, we formally want to express our interest and enthusiasm for this planned trail extension – and we respectfully request DCR award the requested funding for this valuable project. As a demonstration of our commitment to the project, the ACPF, which generates community funding for area recreational projects, recently adopted the *Old Mills Trail Extension (Phase 1)* as a priority project, and voted on a budget that commits ACPF to fundraising \$75,000 for this project. ACPF fundraising for this project will meet or exceed the minimum match requirement for Albemarle County's RTP grant proposal. We are excited to help this project get funded and designed in 2026 with permitting and construction completed and allowing for public use and enjoyment in 2027.

As planned and designed, Phase 1 of this project will create numerous community benefits:

- provide high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities for dog walkers, hikers, runners, bikers, birders, shoreline fishermen, photographers, and others;
- provide direct, safe, convenient bike and pedestrian access to scenic natural open spaces and riparian wildlife habitat for residents of Pantops and others in Albemarle County's Development Area and the City of Charlottesville; and
- create opportunities to access and experience a UNESCO-designated landscape on Monticello's historic Lego Farm, in immediate proximity to an urbanizing neighborhood.

Community interest in this trail extension is high and has been so for numerous years. The broad community support – including fundraising, volunteer labor, and in-kind professional services – demonstrates the level of interest. Combined with the possibility of RTP grant funding, this trail extension project is closer to reality than ever before.

We respectfully encourage DCR to award funding for this project. It will expand our regional community's quality of life by providing public bike/pedestrian access to a remarkable landscape that is currently just out of reach to Albemarle and Charlottesville residents and our visitors.

Sincerely,

Lesley Hamilton
President
Albemarle County Parks Foundation

The Albemarle County Parks Foundation is an IRS-recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization

Re: Recreational Trails Program, Albemarle County Old Mills Trail Extension Phase 1

Dear Ms. Seaton:

For more than 50 years, The Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC) has promoted and protected the natural resources, rural economy, history and beauty of the Virginia Piedmont in our nine-county service area, including Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville. We believe passionately that connectivity and everyday access to nature, open space and fresh air are essential for healthy lives and thriving communities.

That is why PEC enthusiastically supports Albemarle County's proposed Old Mills Trail extension, beginning with its Phase 1 project at Thomas Jefferson's Lego Farm. PEC supported the riverside trail easement when Monticello proffered it nearly 20 years ago and we have been advocating for the trail's construction ever since.

The Old Mills Trail is a top local priority and the reasons for this become apparent with the first visit. The trail, which begins within sight of the City of Charlottesville, follows the Rivanna River (the first Designated Scenic River in Virginia) as it passes through the Southwest Mountains Historic District. Most of the surrounding lands are forever protected by conservation easements and other development restrictions for they are rich with natural and historic resources.

The trail will follow the still-visible traces of the ancient Three Notched Road. It will also form an extension of the trans-county trail of the same name (Three Notched) that Albemarle is creating with support from a Federal RAISE grant. Other historic treasures along the trail's route include Thomas Jefferson's Monticello, Jefferson's birthplace at Shadwell, historic Woolen Mills, and remnants of the Rivanna's canal and lock system, each with abundant opportunities for education and interpretation.

On top of its outstanding recreational value, the Old Mills Trail will connect two of Albemarle County's designated growth areas (Pantops and Rivanna Village) and is located near a hospital, a school, a shopping center and numerous hotels and inns. It will provide a beautiful, restorative route for walking, running and biking between the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle's Rural Area, and generate economic activity in the nearby neighborhoods.

In 2019, PEC organized and continues to facilitate the Piedmont Mobility Alliance, a coalition of more than 50 organizations, clubs, businesses and agencies that share a mission to promote connectivity and active recreation and transportation in Charlottesville and Albemarle County. Local interest is very high and several coalition member groups have already pledged substantial financial and in-kind contributions for this project.

PEC is committing staff time for facilitating community outreach and dialog during project design, implementation and maintenance. In addition, we have approximately \$20,000 in grant funds reserved for Old Mills Trail design and related consultants.

This project has been decades in the making and we are excited to see it come to fruition. We strongly urge you to fund it.

Sincerely,

Chris Miller, President
The Piedmont Environmental Council
45 Horner Street, Warrenton, VA 20186
410 East Water Street, Charlottesville, VA 22902
540-347-2334, ext. 7100 / Mobile: 703.507.5790



Section F – Grant Administration

38. Past Grant Experience

Albemarle County’s Office of Grants & Agreements includes multiple FTE staff who are tasked with coordinating and assisting the preparation and administration of grants, including competitive grants. Albemarle County has prior experience with grant funding, including:

- Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
 - Preddy Creek County Park: Trail Expansion & Rehabilitation (2013)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
 - Mint Springs Valley Park – ADA-Accessible Fishing Pier (2006)
- Transportation Alternatives / Transportation Enhancements
 - Crozet Connector Trail – multiple phases) (2012, 2015, 2018)
- Federal Access Lands Program (FLAP)
 - Sugar Hollow Access Management (2022)
- Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)
 - Three Notched Trail Shared-Use Path Planning Grant (2022)

End Section F

----- End of Application -----

Complete applications must be submitted via email to recreationgrants@dcr.virginia.gov by 4:00 pm on May 5^h, 2026. If your document file or email size is larger than 30MB please contact Recreation Grants staff at the email above or 804-786-1119 prior to the submission deadline for instructions on how to submit.