



Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Gap Closure and CT *fastrak* Study

December 18, 2017

Briefing to Plainville Town Council

Agenda for Tonight's Briefing

- Project History / Overview
- Public Engagement Efforts
- Details on Preferred Alignment (Alignment C)
- Schedule Moving Forward





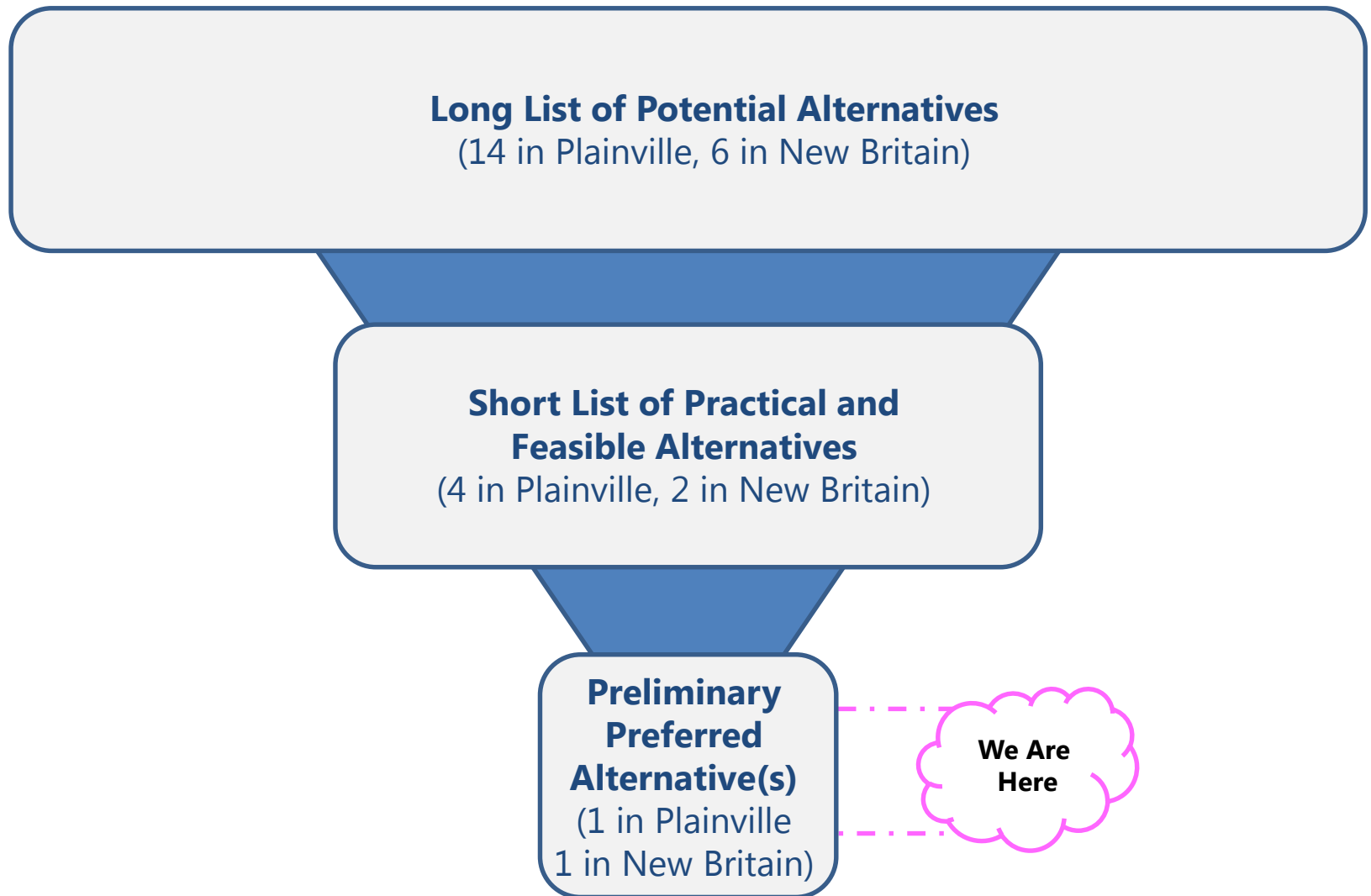
Project History/Overview

Vision Statement

"The vision for the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Gap Closure and CT**fastrak** Connection Study is to connect the communities with a **world-class multi-use trail** that closes the gap in the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) through the towns of Southington and Plainville with a connection to the CT**fastrak** station in downtown New Britain. These links will **prioritize safety, comfort, and mobility for all users, regardless of age or ability**, through cohesive and attractive trails that promote economic and community vitality."



Alternatives Analysis





Public Engagement Efforts

Project Steering Committee

- Serves in an advisory role
- Membership includes
 - Capitol Region Council of Governments
 - Town of Plainville
 - Town of Southington
 - City of New Britain
 - CT Department of Transportation
 - Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
 - East Coast Greenway Alliance
 - Plainville Greenway Alliance
 - Farmington Valley Trails Council
 - Plainville-Southington Health District



Public Meetings

- Community-wide meetings and workshops included
 - July 26, 2016
 - October 3, 2016
 - October 4, 2016
 - October 6, 2016
 - May 22, 2017
 - October 18, 2017
- A public hearing is anticipated for early February, 2018



Public Outreach (other than meetings)

- ✓ Project newsletters
- ✓ Regularly-updated project website (www.gapclosurestudy.com)
- ✓ Mobility Tour
- ✓ 2016 Discover New Britain Bike Ride
- ✓ 2016 Cross the State Ride in Plainville
- ✓ Public comment agenda item at all Steering Committee meetings
- ✓ Town Council presentations
- ✓ Regular Town Council updates from Town Manager
- ✓ On-line surveys
- ✓ Booths at New Britain Bike Rodeo
- ✓ Booth at Pumpkin Festival
- ✓ Newspaper articles
- ✓ Active social media presence
- ✓ Information and surveys posted at libraries and Town Hall
- ✓ Flyers and brochures posted throughout town
- ✓ Outreach at Tunxis CC and CCSU



Public Outreach (support)

- ✓ The majority of comments received have been supportive of the project, including
 - ✓ The alternatives that were identified and looked at
 - ✓ The evaluation criteria that were used to narrow alternatives
 - ✓ The identification of Alignment C as the preferred alignment
 - ✓ The details of Alignment C

"A lot of thought and planning went into the screening and evaluating steps, including asking for town opinions"

"Using actual canal lines is a bonus from a historical perspective"

"I believe this is the best possible plan for Plainville. This is not a perfect plan, but it is possible"

"I feel that incorporating Downtown into the "Gap" proposal is a good idea, and hopefully will result in positive economic impact for Plainville's businesses"

"I'm in favor of heavily weighing "off road" characteristics for that is the safest for young users"

Public Outreach (concerns)

- Concerns heard from members of the community in comment forms and at meetings includes
 - Security
 - Property values
 - Privacy
 - Safety
 - Impacts to the environment
 - Engineering concerns
 - Cultural resources and historic preservation
 - Traffic and parking
 - Property impacts



"Done in a bubble, not enough public notice/participation"

"My concern is that residents will have their properties affected"

"Concerns about safety and liability"

Public Comments Informed The Alignment

- The technical team considered public comments when preparing the preliminary preferred alignment in Summer 2017, and in revising the alignment following the October community meeting.

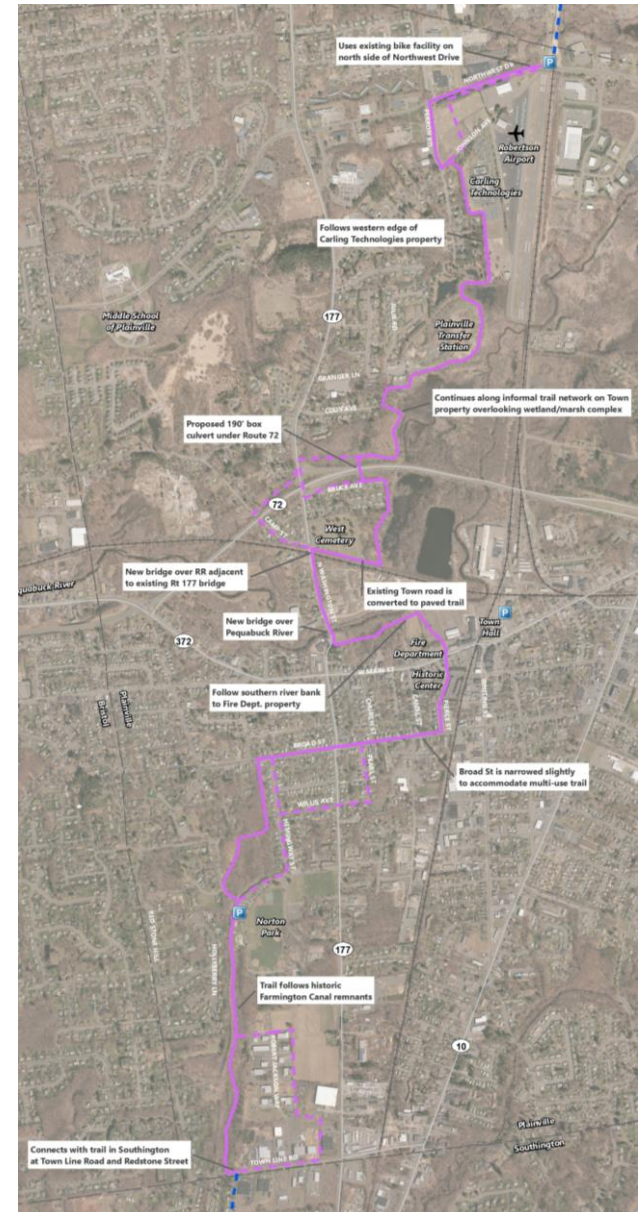




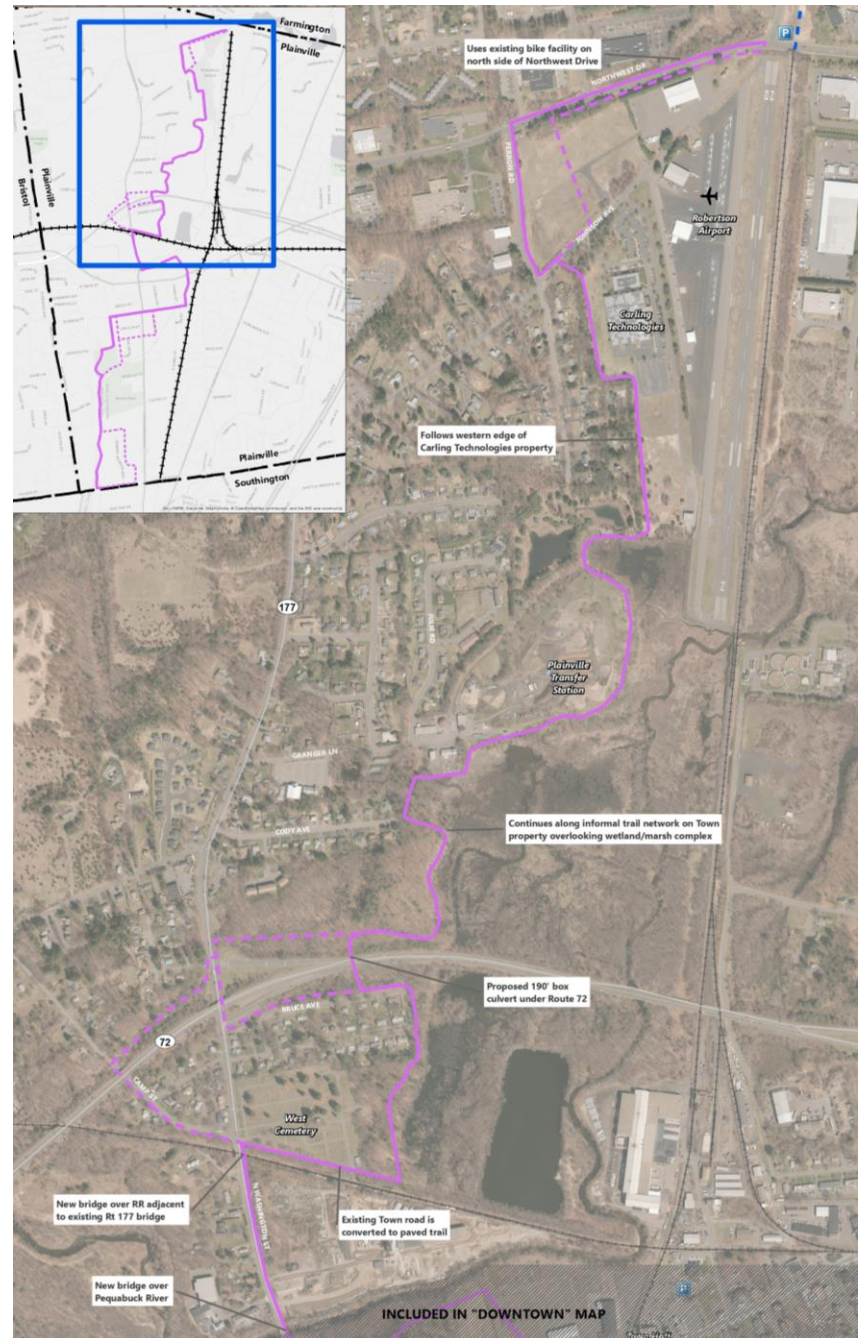
Walk Through of Alignment C

Overview of Alignment C

- Alignment C is:
 - Approximately 5.3 miles in length
 - Between 10' and 12' in width
 - Up to 98% off-road



Alignment C – North





Plainville Trail Study
Plainville, CT | Client

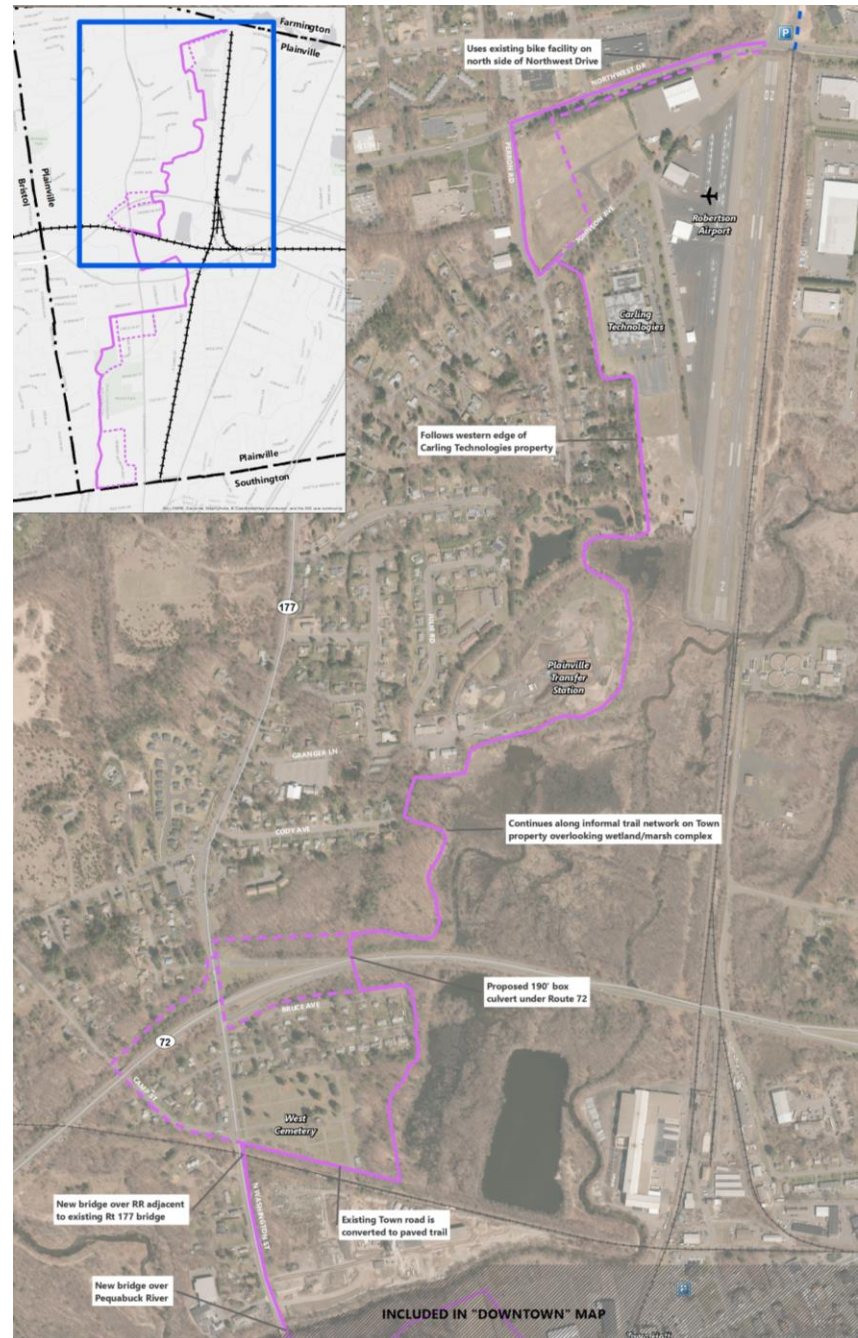
Photo 2-Before
Wetland Trail



Plainville Trail Study
Plainville, CT | Client

Photo 2-After
Wetland Trail

Alignment C – North





Plainville Trail Study

Plainville, CT | Client

Photo 1-Before

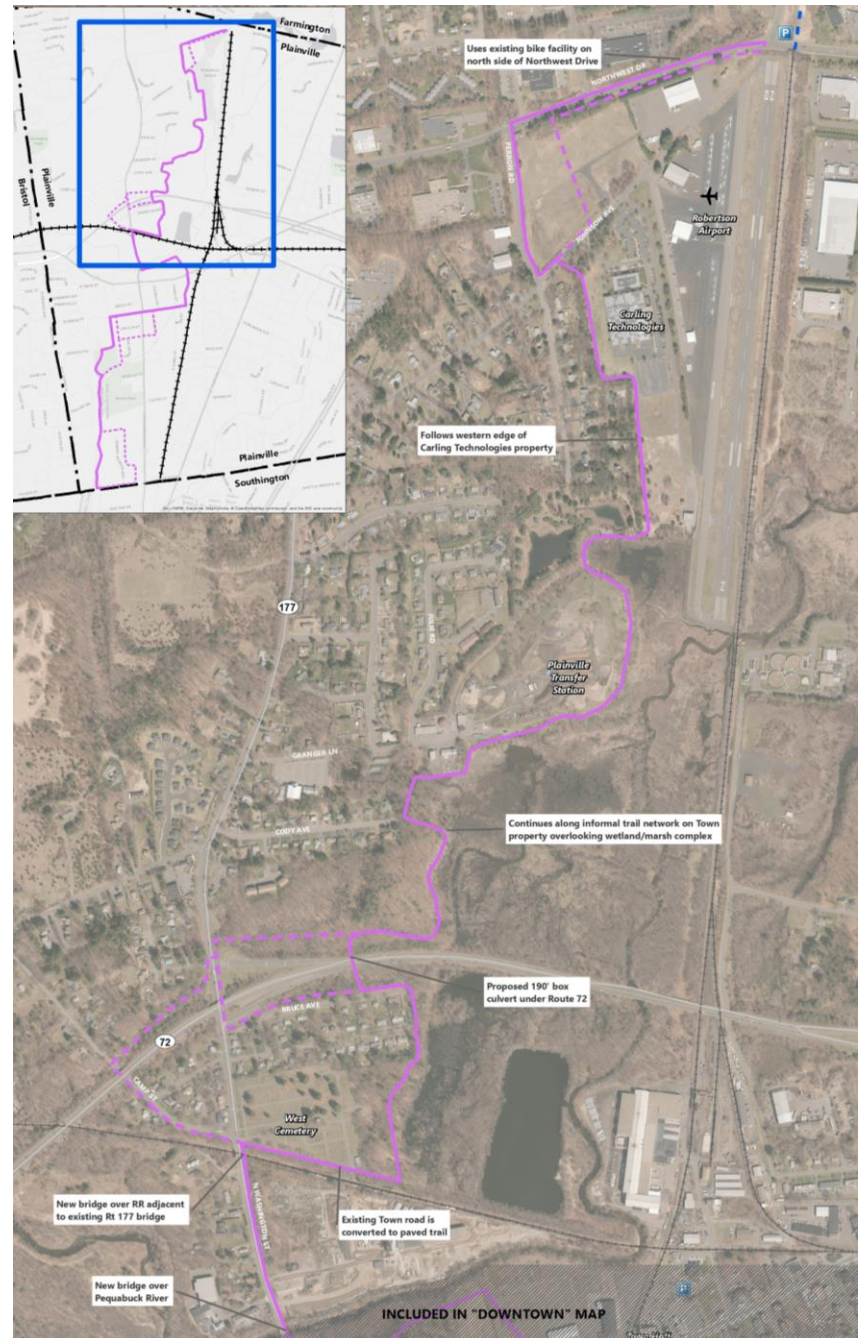
Woodland Trail



Plainville Trail Study
Plainville, CT | Client

Photo 1-After
Woodland Trail

Alignment C – North



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Culvert at RT 72

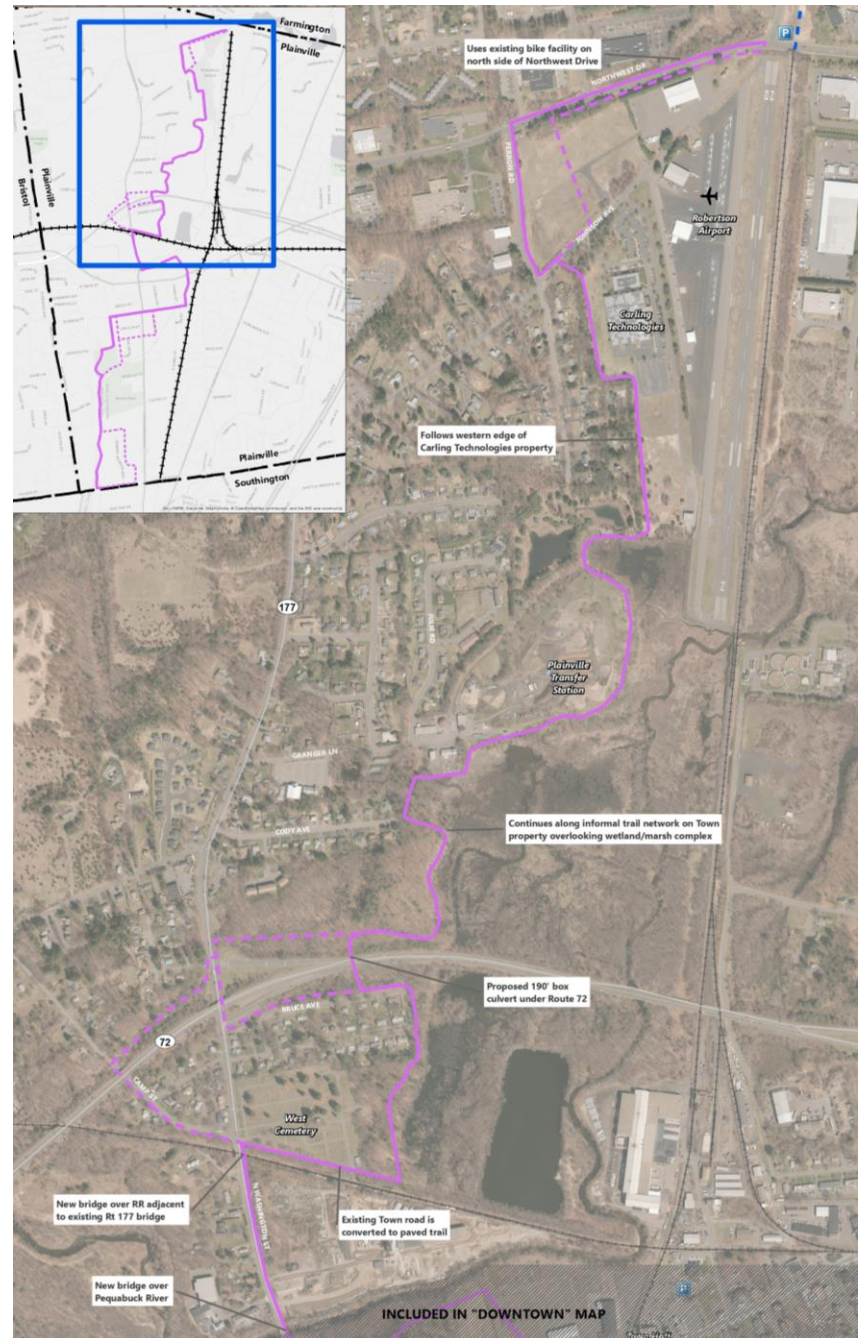


AFTER

Culvert at RT 72



Alignment C – North



Farmington Plainville

Plainville Southington

INCLUDED IN "NORTH" MAP

Follow southern river bank to Fire Dept. property

FIRE DEPARTMENT

HISTORIC CENTER

CHURCH ST

CANAL ST

PROCTER ST

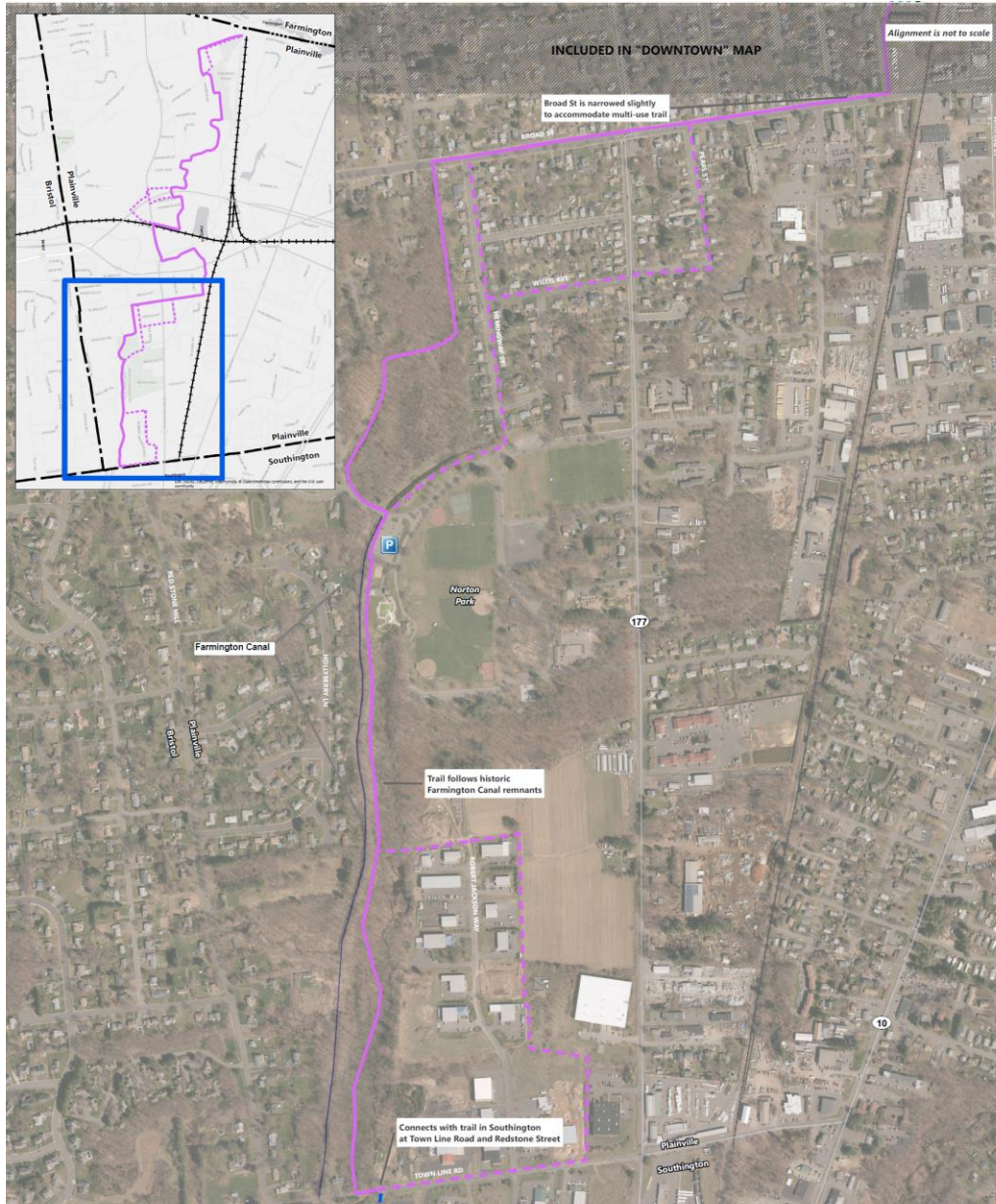
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Alignment is not to scale

**Historic
Center**

177

Alignment C – South



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Broad near RT 177

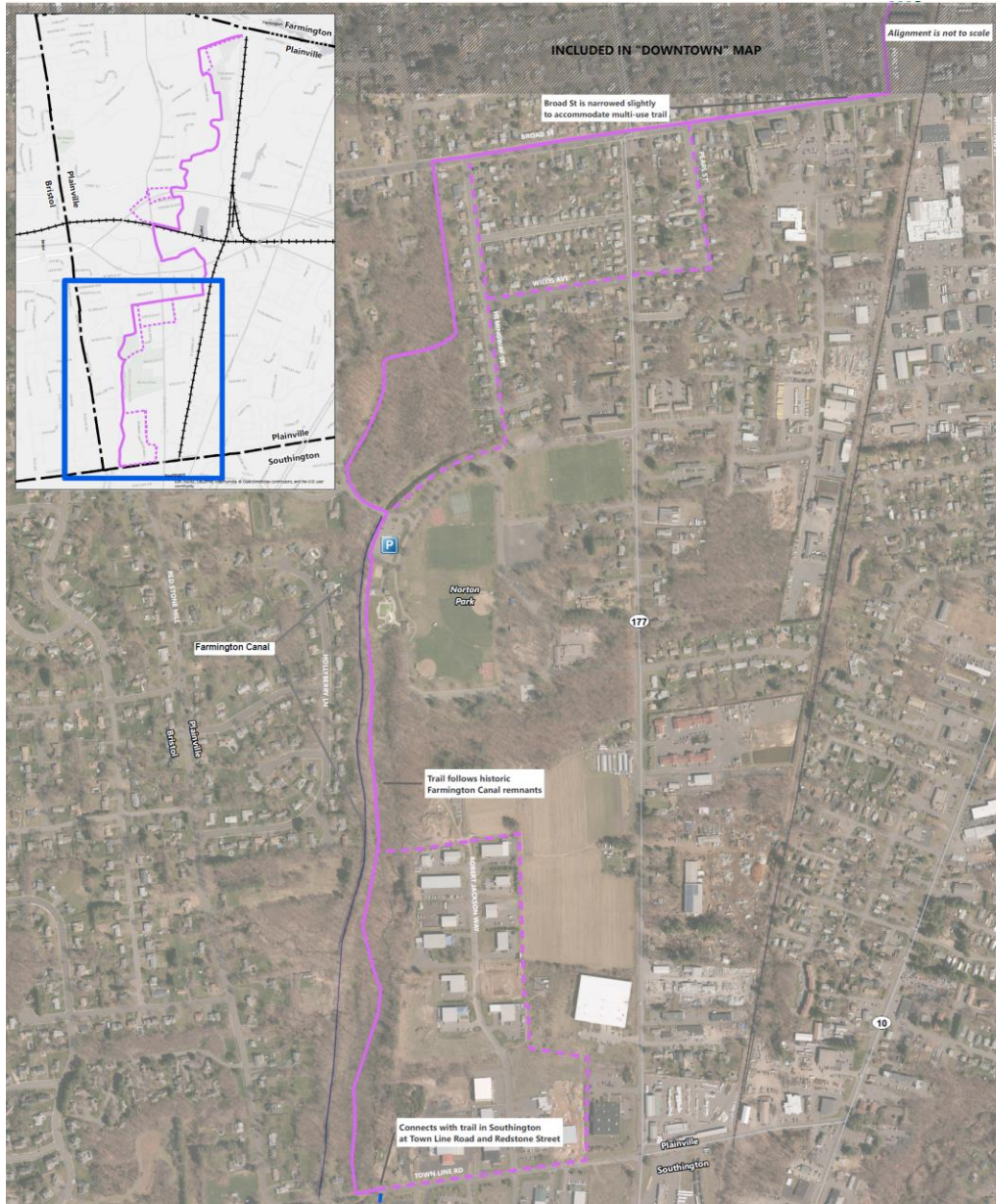


AFTER

Side Path Concept – North Side (other options exist)



Alignment C – South

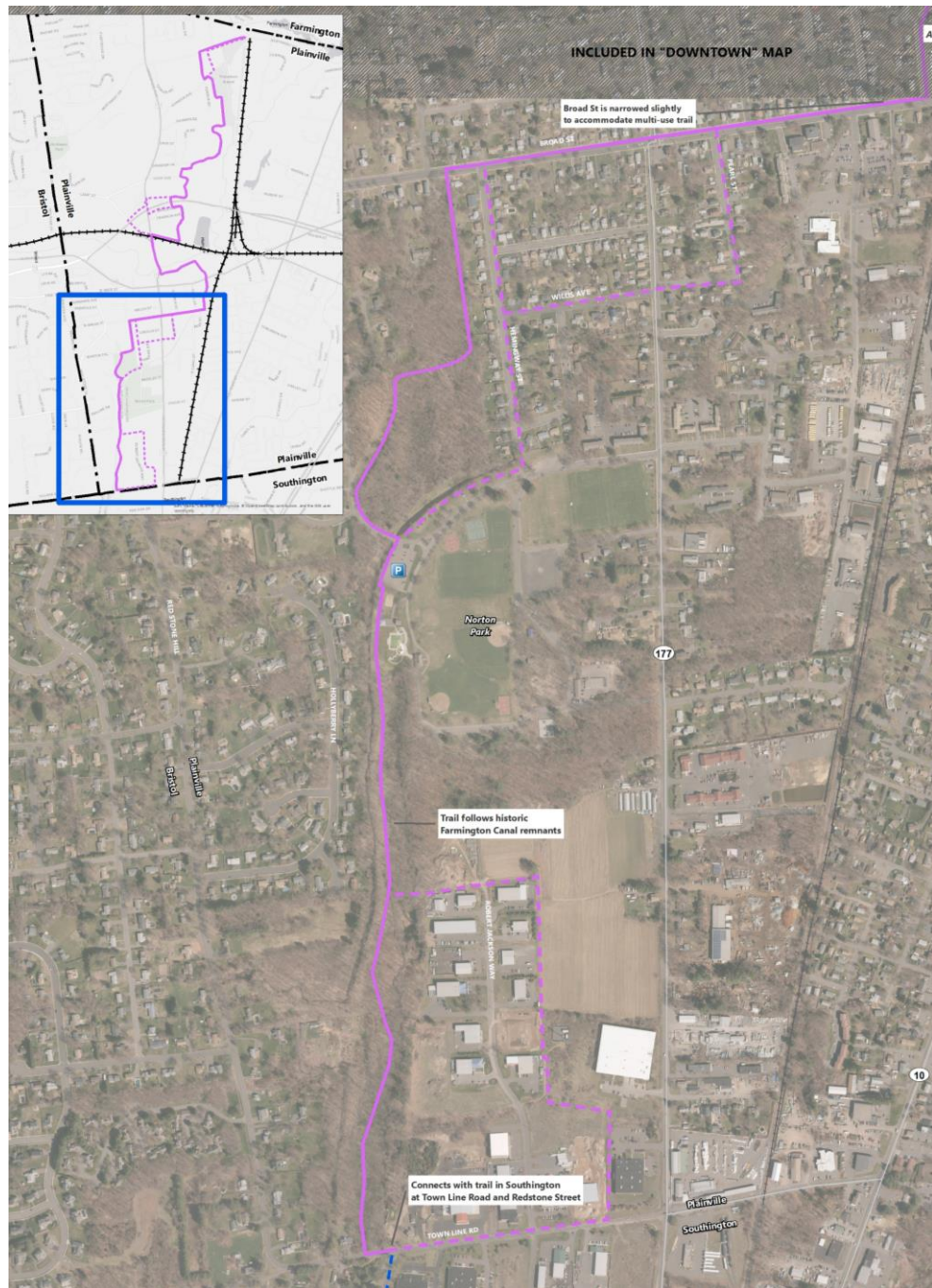




Before



Alignment C – South



Alignment C Statistics

- Alignment C performed best for
 - Amount of the trail considered off road (up to 98%)
 - Minimized conflict points with cars, non-trail users (road crossings and driveways)
 - Environmental impacts minimized
 - Connectivity
 - Stays outside of Tomasso Nature Park
 - Minimizes right-of-way impacts to residents/businesses





Schedule Moving Forward

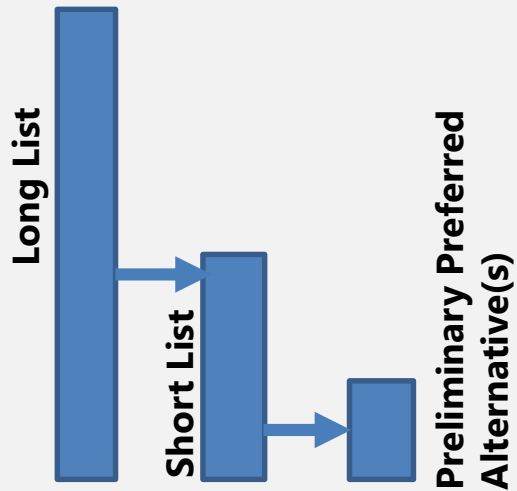
What Happens Next

- Listen and gather feedback from the Town Council and the public
- Continue to draft Final Report
 - Phasing
 - Funding
- It is possible that part of an alignment will be on road in the short term while longer term funding is compiled to make it off road

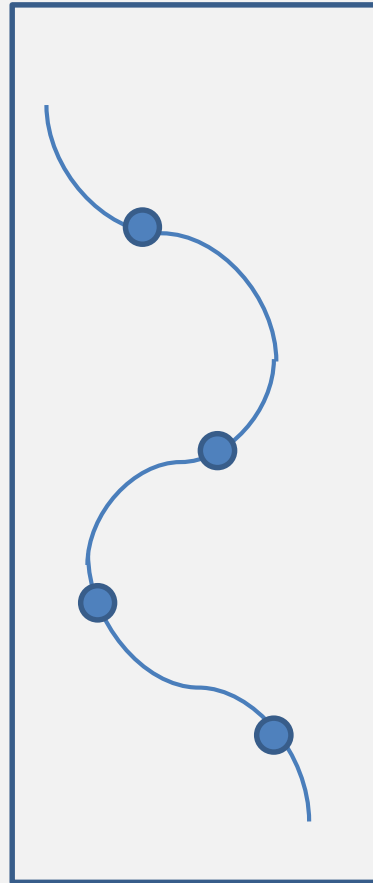


Our Workplan

Phase 1: Identify Alternative(s)



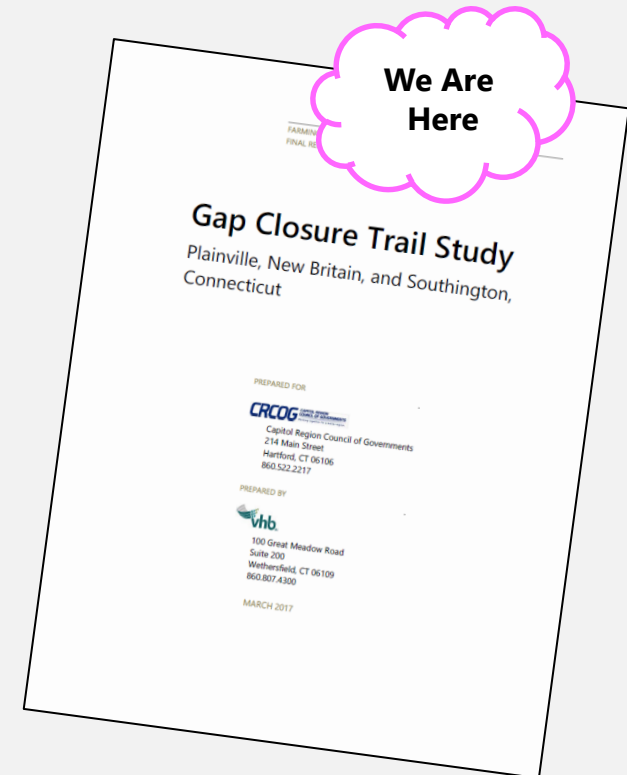
Phase 2: Refine Alternative(s)



Alignment is for illustrative purposes only.

Phase 3: Prepare Concept Plan

Make an alignment recommendation to Town Council

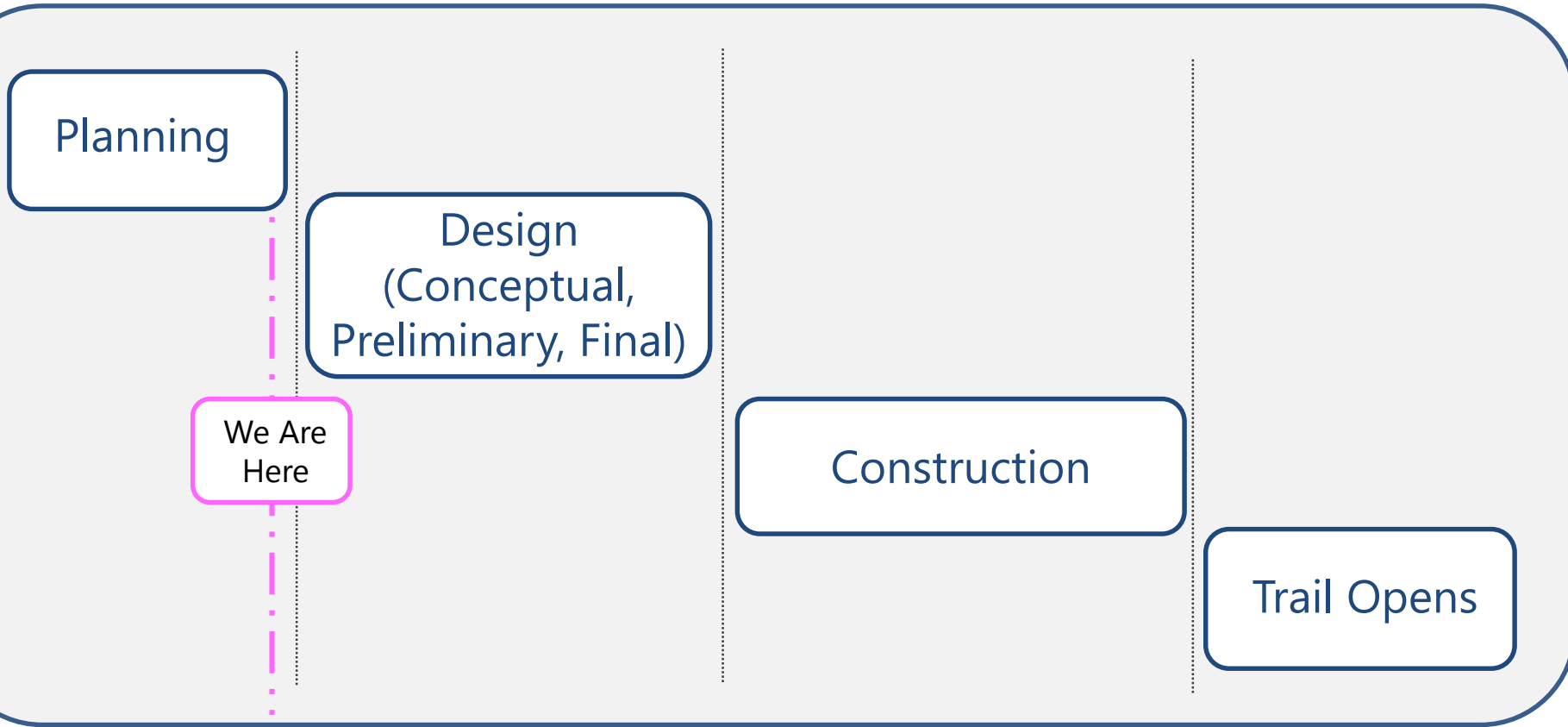


Spring/Summer 2017
COMPLETED

Fall/Winter 2017
COMPLETED

Winter 2017/2018

This Project is in the Planning Phase



Future phases will depend on Town Council endorsement and funding availability

Thank you!

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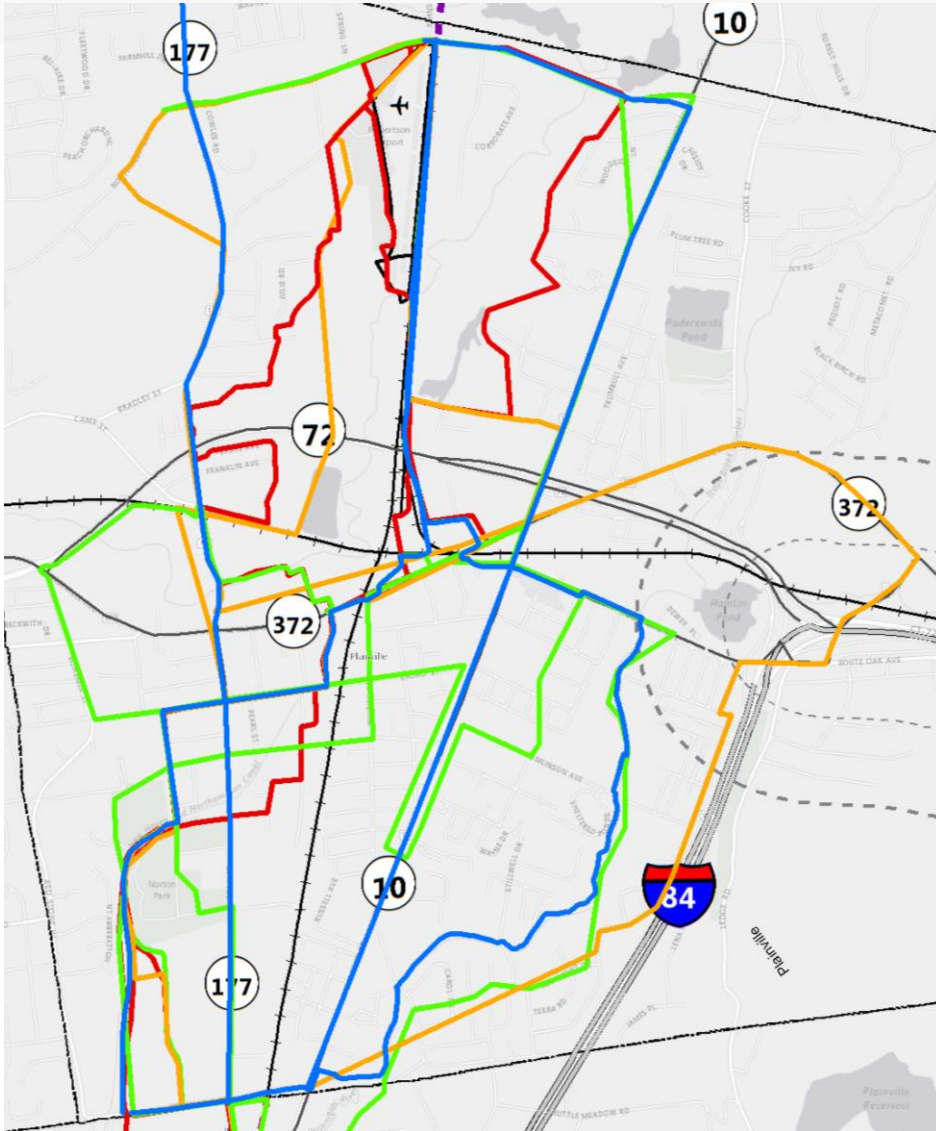
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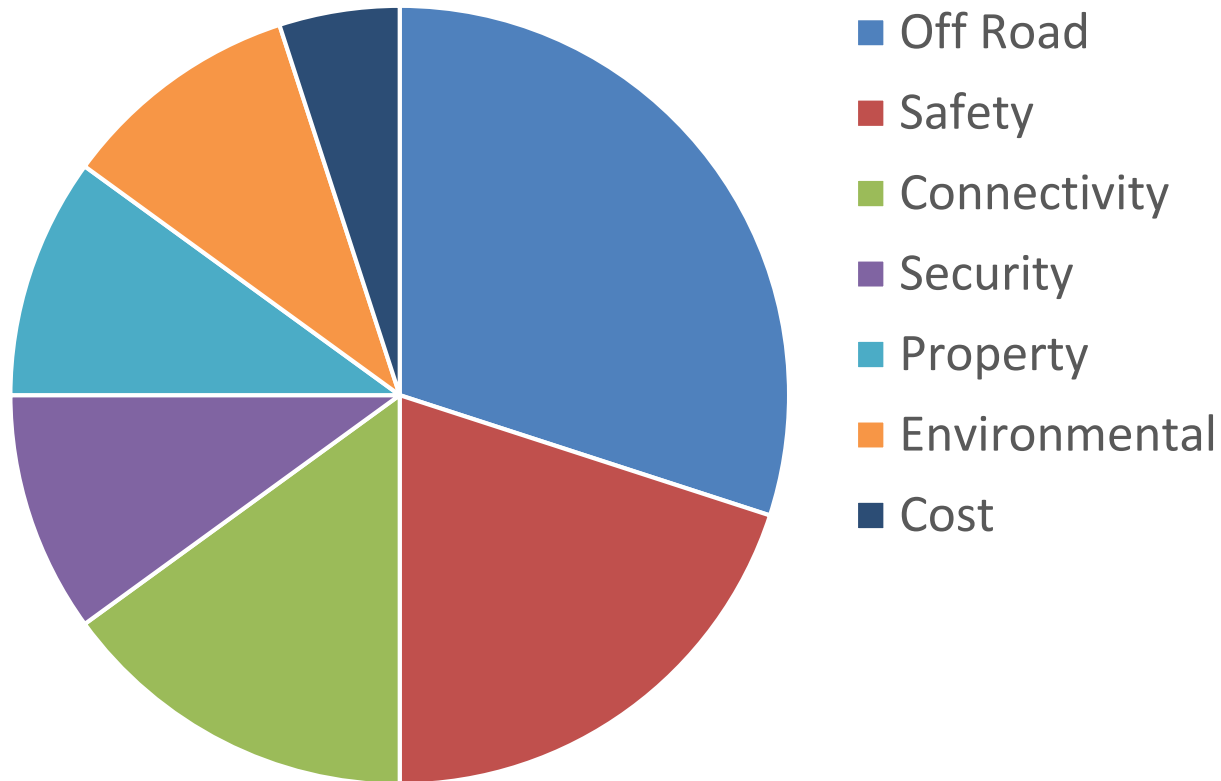
www.gapclosurestudy.com

Long List of Potential Alternatives



- 14 alternatives in total
- Created during fall 2016
 - Charrettes
 - Steering Committee
 - Stakeholder discussions
 - Technical efforts
- Different focal points
 - Shopping
 - Schools
 - Employment
 - Parks/Recreation

Weighting of Criteria



Multi-Use trails across New England

