



# *Goffstown Rail Trail Summary Report Community Meeting and Design Charette*

*Presented by:*

*Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee*



*September 2004*

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## **GOAL:**

## **Introduction**

***To develop a vision  
for the Goffstown Rail  
Trail by providing an  
opportunity for  
residents to identify  
community assets and  
design challenges...***

On behalf of the Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee (PRLAC), I am pleased to present to you the final report of the Goffstown Rail Trail - Design Charrette that was held on May 15, 2004 at Villa Augustina School. The Charrette Steering Committee met several times following the workshop to discuss the citizen comments and prepare recommendations for your consideration regarding the Goffstown Rail Trail.

This report includes “Abutter” comments from the Friday evening session on May 14th. Over fifty individuals that own property along the railroad corridor attended. Staff from UNH Cooperative Extension facilitated the meeting and scribes recorded all comments on sheets that were posted around the room.

A similar format was followed for the Saturday Design Charrette. After an overview about the proposed Rail Trail project, attendees assembled in one large group and a UNH facilitator lead the discussions. The three main topics included: Community Vision, Neighborhood Connections and Trail Design.

We were fortunate to have five professional engineers volunteer their services and expertise for the Design Charrette. They provided valuable information and answered many questions from the audience. The DVD video that supplements this report highlights these discussions and provides a summary of the ideas that were presented.

In closing, the PRLAC encourages Goffstown to continue working to develop the Rail Trail. As we learned during the Charrette, this is an important community resource that should be enhanced for residents and future generations to enjoy.

Ron Johnson, Vice Chairman

Piscataquog River Local Advisory





## Historical Perspective

**1846** - Idea conceived, Manchester and Goffstown railroad.

**1850** - Railroad completed to Riverdale.

**1893** - Spur to New Boston from Parker Station opened.

**1936** - Railroad severely damaged by flood.

**1976** - Covered Bridge in downtown destroyed by fire.

**1981** - Railroad discontinued after 130 years of service.

**1993** - Rail Corridor identified in planning study for a bikeway.

**1995** - Goffstown Planning Department contacts Guilford Transportation regarding acquisition of the corridor.

**1997** - Application made to NHDOT for a Transportation Enhancement Grant.

**2000** - Friends of the Greenway formed to advocate for the Rail Trail.

**2001** - Goffstown passes Article-9, appropriating funds to acquire the corridor.

**2003** - Goffstown re-authorizes funding for the purchase of the Rail Trail project.

**2003**- Goffstown Conservation Commission and PRLAC sponsor cleanup of the corridor from Pinardville to Lynchville Park.

**2004** - Selectmen announce agreement with Boston & Maine Corporation for the purchase of the rail corridor.

**2004** - Friends of the Greenway sponsor cleanup of the corridor from the Village to Glen Lake Dam.

**2004** - Community Partnership sponsors Design Charrette.

## ***STEERING COMMITTEE***

*RAY CLEMENT*

*JAN FALCONE*

*JOHN FEICK*

*ROBBIE GRADY*

*STEVE GRIFFIN*

*RON JOHNSON*

*DICK LUDDERS*

*RANDY KNOWLES*

*DAN REIDY*

*PHIL ROSE*

*MONI SHARMA*

*LOWELL VON RUDEN*

## **Charrette Process**

### **Planning**

In the Fall of 2003, a Steering Committee comprised of members from the Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee, Friends of the Greenway, University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension along with members of the community and local design professionals met to begin planning efforts for a design Charrette. The Charrette would focus on the proposed Rail Trail that had been acquired by the Town of Goffstown, running along the Piscataquog River from the eastern boundary of Town as it abuts Manchester to the village of Goffstown.

The newly acquired trail follows the abandoned Manchester-Goffstown railroad right of way crossing three portions of Goffstown, historically known as Pinardville, Grasmere Village and Goffstown Village. The goal was to organize a day long design Charrette that would involve the community and record their ideas and concerns in developing the trail. These ideas would later be presented to the Town of Goffstown to be used as a tool in developing the future trail.



### ***Organizational Meetings, Press Release & Media Efforts***

Meetings were held regularly at the Goffstown Town Hall to plan the Design Charrette. Once a date and location had been set, the committee began notifying abutters, community groups through mailings and publicity efforts that included a formal press release as well as distribution of pamphlets and posters. Interested design professionals were also contacted to help with the proposed event.

## **Abutters Meeting**

### **May 14th 2004**

On Friday evening May 14, 2004 a special abutter's meeting was held to collect ideas and concerns of existing land owners whose property directly abuts the proposed trail route. This meeting was facilitated by the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. The following are comments from these questions posed to the group:



*Abutters voice their ideas and concerns*

### ***What is Goffstown like now?***

Taxes too high for services provided.

Traffic congestion and urban sprawl on Mast Road.

Goffstown Village is congested with traffic, it losing the “small town” image.

Grasmere is becoming another Pinardville

Town's infrastructure needs attention (sidewalks, roads, drainage)

### ***What is the rail bed like now?***

Who owns the rail corridor? Does the town have legal title to the property?

What is the existing right-of-way width?

How much will it cost to convert the rail bed into a recreational trail?

Concern for loss of privacy and trespassing onto private property.



*Abutters gather at Villa Augustina.*

Concern regarding liability, lack of policing and illegal use.  
Concern with existing conditions for drainage, erosion and litter.  
Who will maintain the trail?

### ***Are there community assets to protect?***

Natural resources along the Piscataquog River (wildlife habitat and corridors existing vegetation).  
Hillsborough County property (large open space, riverfront)  
Scenic vistas to Piscataquog River and Glen Lake.

### ***What safety concerns (for you as well as trail users)?***

Rail Trail crossings at two locations on Route 114.

How to enforce motorized vehicle use on trail?

Proximity of trail to State Women's Prison.

Other Road crossings at Lynchville Park, Moose Club Park, Morgan Circle and private drives (Angel's Point).

Trespassing onto private property.

More people using the trail. Goffstown residents only?



People using the trail will illegally use Glen Lake across private property, steep slopes, more erosion.

Curfew at night? What are the hours of operation?

Provide fencing for abutters. (8' - stockade fence)

Winter use by snowmobiles? Will it be plowed and/or sanded.

Liability for commercial property owners.

Parking for trail users?

### ***What are your greatest concerns about a future rail trail?***

Abutters did not receive notification that Town purchased the rail corridor?

When will a second meeting be held?

Cost of the trail improvements – Tax increase.

Liability from trail users trespassing onto private property.

Loss of privacy, noise and loitering.

Reduction in property values.

Littering, vandalism and lack of maintenance.

Who will police the trail – Who do you call with problems?

Removal of vegetation for trail construction – loss of privacy.

When will the town listen to the abutters concerns?



### ***Who do you envision as the primary trail users?***

School children, families, senior citizens,

Dog walkers (dog fouling ordinance?)

Joggers, Cyclists,  
walkers,

Equestrian use?

Questionable characters,  
drug dealers and  
alcoholics.

Residents accessing  
public parks and schools.

Commuters into Manchester.

Non-residents with no respect for  
Goffstown.



### ***What Trail surface might be most appropriate?***

Variable trail surfaces in different areas, Paved and Gravel.

Paved trail for multi-use.

Some areas need immediate attention for poor drainage  
(Lynchville Park).

Some areas are all sand (Pinardville)

### ***Where might there be appropriate connections/ access points?***

Parks & Recreation Center on Mast Road (provide designated parking)

Connection in Pinardville to Manchester.

Connection to Goffstown Village. (Need information center)

### ***Where would be the least appropriate trail access points?***

No parking in residential areas. (Lynchville Park, Moose Club Park, Morgan Estates)

No parking along Route 114.

### ***Closing Comments – Have your concerns been adequately addressed?***

Like to see the trail as a way to alleviate congestion.

Town has many needs for maintenance, can we afford the trail?

Who will maintain the trail once completed?

If the trail project does not go forward, can the abutters purchase the corridor?

When can the abutters expect to get information back on our comments?

Who in the Town will manage the project? Can we contact them



# Charrette

The following pages are the result from a community wide Charrette that took place on May 15, 2004. With help from the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension and professional engineers and design professionals the Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee was able to compile the Community's Vision of the future Rail Trail.

A DVD documenting this event as been included as part of this final summary and contains a presentation of the ideas and constraints that should be addressed in design of the trail.

Following the vision is a map that highlights key access points, existing topographic constraints and possible ideas to be incorporated in the final design.

**SCHEDULE**  
8:00 - 8:30 REGISTRATION  
8:30 - 9:00 OVERVIEW  
9:05 - 10:05 BREAKOUT SESSION I  
10:10 - 11:10 BREAKOUT SESSION II  
11:15 - 12:15 LUNCH  
12:15 - 1:15 CHARRETTE FACILITATOR PUBLIC PLANNING  
1:15 - 2:30

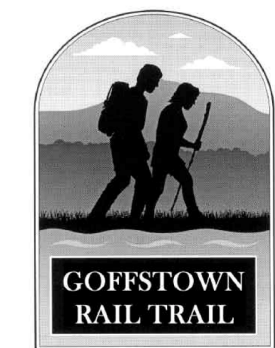
**BREAKOUT SESSIONS**  
The Breakout Sessions will focus on three topics: Community Vision, Neighborhood Connections and Trail Design. Participants will have one hour for discussion before moving to a new session. If you are interested in one particular topic, you may remain in that discussion group. Site walks will also be conducted during the morning sessions.  
**Community Vision:**  
an opportunity to define the community assets and develop a vision for the Rail Trail.  
**GOAL:**  
To develop a vision for the Goffstown Rail Trail by providing an opportunity for residents to identify community assets and design challenges.....  
The ideas and information generated during the Charrette will be incorporated into a Summary Report for the Town.  
**CONTACT INFORMATION:**



Sponsored by:  
  
Town of Goffstown  
*The Greenway*  
Goffstown, New Hampshire

**Design Charrette**  
  
**GOFFSTOWN RAIL TRAIL**  
Saturday - May 15, 2004  
Rosary Hall  
Villa Augustina School  
Goffstown, NH  
Sponsored by:  
Town of Goffstown  
Friends of the Greenway and  
Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee and  
University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension

**You Are Invited !!!**  
Join Us For A **Design Charrette**



**Saturday May 15th**  
**8:00 am - 3:30 pm**  
**Rosary Hall**  
**Villa Augustina**  
**School**  
**Goffstown, NH**

*Sponsored by:*  
Town of Goffstown  
Friends of the Greenway

8:00 - 8:30 REGISTRATION  
8:30 - 9:00 OVERVIEW  
9:05 - 12:15 BREAKOUT SESSIONS  
12:15 - 1:15 LUNCH  
1:15 - 2:30 CHARRETTE WORKSHOP  
Facilitators, Designers and Public collaborate to develop plans and drawings for the public presentation  
1:15 - 2:30 SITE WALK ALONG TRAIL  
2:30 - 3:30 PUBLIC PRESENTATION

#### GOAL:

To develop a vision for the Goffstown Rail Trail by providing an opportunity for residents to identify community assets and design challenges.....  
The ideas and information generated during the Charrette will be incorporated into a Summary Report for the Town.



## COMMUNITY VISION:

### *Describe your vision for the Rail Trail?*

Opportunity to unify and connect the different parts of Goffstown.

Accessible trail where everyone would feel comfortable.

Enhanced corridor that is cleaner than today.

A trail that connects to Manchester's trail – commuter link.

A place to incorporate public art.

A place for historic site interpretation.

Opportunity to promote local businesses (ice cream shops, bike stores)

Place to socialize and interact with neighbors, provides for a healthier community.

Safer means of transportation around town for children – connection to schools, parks.

Provides a major recreational asset.

Opportunity for exercise and relaxation.

Ability to enhance community image.

A great natural asset for the community.

Promotes a livable-walkable community.

Opportunity to create a linear park that protects green space, river corridor.

### *What are the important town assets?*

Recreational areas (Villa Ballfields, Barnard Park)

Piscataquog River  
– public access to water

Grasmere Village and rural character of County-owned property.

Goffstown Main Street program and revitalization efforts.



Local schools and their involvement with rails-to-trails.

Views of Piscataquog River and Glen Lake.

Historic Buildings in Goffstown Village and Grasmere.

Parks & Recreation Center along the trail.

Connection to Mount Uncanoonuc trails.

St Anselm College – connection and supporter of the trail.

Natural areas along the trail (Pine Barrens, River, and Wetlands).

History of the town and the railroad – opportunity for interpretation.

### ***How does the Rail Trail integrate with other Planning Initiatives?***

Town Master Plan update.

Ongoing town infrastructure improvements (Sidewalks, roads, parks etc.)

Promotes alternative transportation opportunities (State and National objectives)

Route 114 Corridor Study.

Link to other regional trails (Piscataquog Trailway in Manchester).

Ongoing efforts in town to protect “special places”.

Integration with other redevelopment projects (Janigan Mill property).

Town objective for design guideline standards.

### ***Are there special areas to protect and interpret?***

Tributary streams that flow into the Piscataquog River (Vernal Pools).

Pine Barren area and wild lupine at east-end of corridor in Pinardville.

Town property at sewer pump station below millpond waterfall.

Undeveloped sections of County property along the rail corridor.

Shoreline line along the Piscataquog River and Glen Lake.

### ***NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS:***

#### ***What are the concerns and ideas of abutters to the trail?***

Existing conditions – there is no management or policing of the corridor.

Abutter privacy and trespassing issues (need to define property lines).

Vandalism of rail trail improvements and private property.

Increased access to the river across private property (liability issue).

Respect for private property and neighborhoods.

Protect existing “sense of community”.

Increase noise and littering.

Concern for children’s safety.



Negative effect on property values.

Rail Trail needs to be good neighbor.

Hours for trail use? (open dawn to dusk)

Who in town to report problems? (currently they are being ignored)



***Who will be the primary users of the trail?***

Walkers, bikers  
(all age groups)

Families and  
children accessing  
parks and schools.

High School

students (commuting, athletic programs and physical education).

Winter recreation (cross-country skiing and snowshoeing).

Commuters from Goffstown into Manchester.

Hillsborough County Nursing Home residents.

More users as gas prices increase.

Segways for commuting (motorized vehicle?).

Non-motorized use, (how does this get enforced?)

Who will be ultimately responsible for management of the trail?

***What are the important community facilities?***

Schools along the trail. (Goffstown H.S., Villa Augustina, Bartlett Elementary)

Parks & Recreation Center (abuts rail corridor on Mast Road)

Piscataquog River and Glen Lake.

Goffstown Village and local businesses.

Janigan Mill property.

Saint Anselm College.

Ballfields on former landfill (Pinardville)

***What are the neighborhoods that need to be connected to the trail?***

The town's three villages (Goffstown Village, Grasmere and Pinardville)

Local neighborhoods (Union Street, Shirley Park, Danis Park, Morgan Estates, Lynchville Park, Mooseclub Park).

Mill Street and connection to Maple Avenue School.

Mill Street and connection to Elderly Housing (Old Goffstown H.S.)

Town Property near trail corridor (Barnard Park and Roy Park)

Local businesses in the three Villages.

New development project within close proximity should be connected to the trail.





## ***TRAIL DESIGN***

### ***What types of use are expected for the trail?***

Non-motorized use  
(How does this get enforced)

Walking, biking, jogging.

Winter use restricted to cross-country skiing, snowshoeing (no snow plowing)

Need to consider access for emergency vehicles.

Need to consider access for public works to maintain sewer line.

Consider future use for utilities (sewer extension, fiber optic etc.)

Some abutters need “right-to-pass” easement to get to their property.

### ***What is the preferred surfacing for the trail?***

Types of use will dictate the preferred surfacing.

Overall width should be between (10’ – 12’)

Chip-seal pavement option provides more natural look.

Provide both paved and gravel areas for different uses.

Compacted stone dust (provides for all uses except roller blades and skateboards).

Need to consider location of sewer line and manholes for trail alignment.

Non-paved surface would provide for more winter use (less snowmelt).

### ***How will the road crossings be designed?***

The two road crossings on Route 114 will be costly.

Would a pedestrian walk signal work for Route 114 crossings?

Construct a center median in Route 114 to slow traffic and warn both motorists and trail users of a crossing.

Underground tunnel at Route 114 crossings (Cost considerations).

Local neighborhood roads have crossing issues (site lines, grade change, and traffic).

Try and avoid road crossings if at all possible.

Shift Route 114 to south side of public r-o-w and keep trail on north side.

### ***Are there safety issues to consider?***

All road crossings have safety concerns.

Continued increase in traffic on Route 114 and other town roads.



Lighting of trail, especially at road crossings, trail heads and parking areas.

Steep slopes along Piscataquog River and Glen Lake.

Parking area at Villa Ballfields (Existing conditions are dangerous).

Emergency-call stations needed along trail.

### ***What should be the construction phasing?***

The overall costs will determine the construction schedule.

Prioritize the trail by points of interest and high-use areas (Goffstown H.S. and Parks & Recreation Center).

Clear and grade the entire corridor first, then consider surfacing options.

Review Route 114 Corridor Study for recommendations and ideas.

If Piscataquog Trailway from Manchester is completed – trail should begin at Pinardville, if not, Goffstown Village connection should become a priority.

### ***What are the plans for stewardship of the trail?***

The first issue is to stop the illegal use of the corridor (Town needs to install barriers to prevent motorized use and illegal dumping)

Establish policy and rules for trail use.

Identify a Town agency or official to manage the rail trail (point of



contact)

Trail management needs to be identified in the Town budget with annual appropriation.

Town needs to continue working with the Friends of the Greenway.

Develop other partnerships with schools and civic groups.

Start an Adopt-A-Trail program and involve local businesses.

## **Images:**

***Possible Trailhead at Recreation Center***

***Possible Park at Henry Bridge Road***

***Buffer to Existing Residences***

***Possible Relocation of Trail - Correctional Facility***

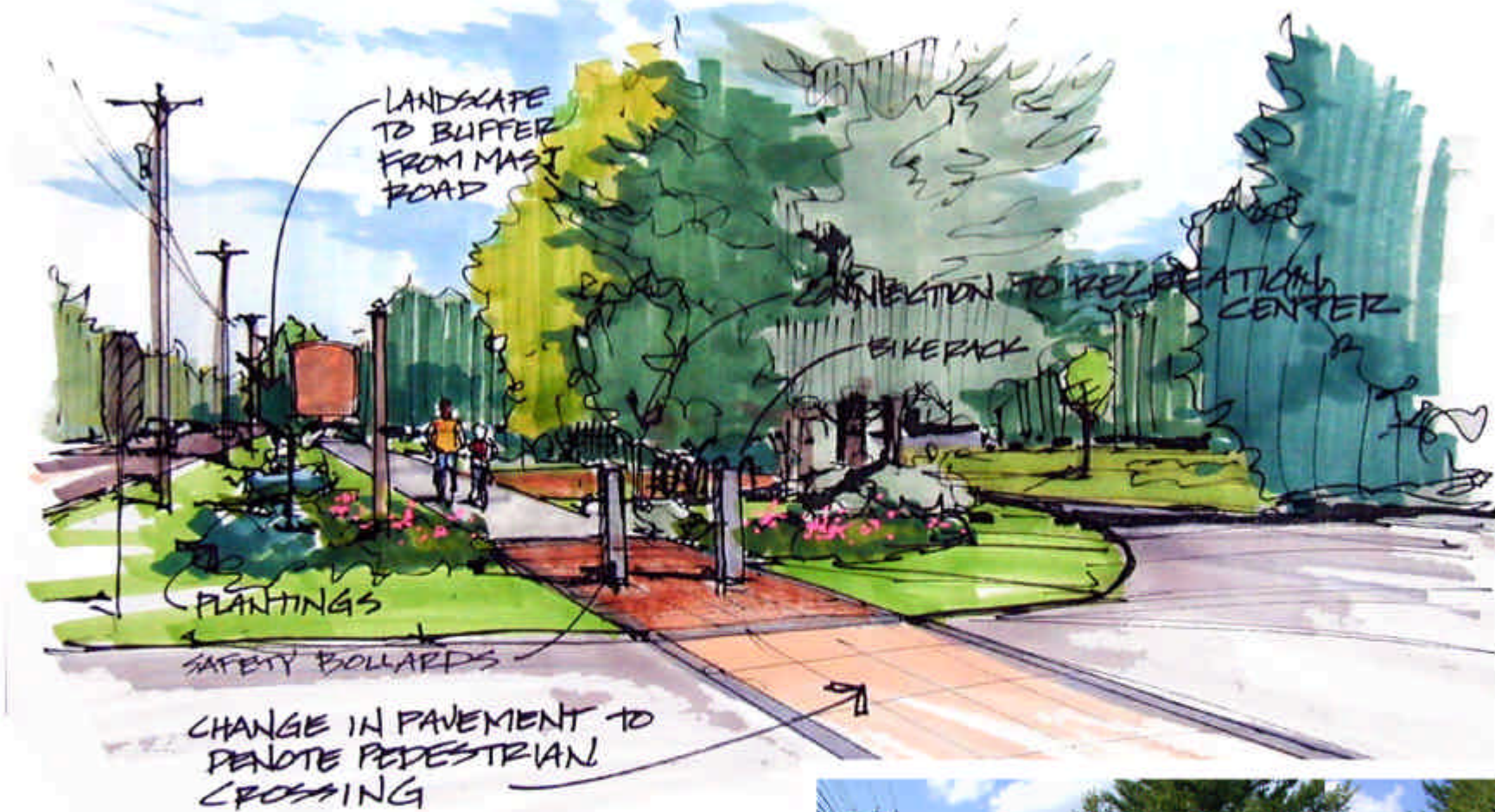
***Sheet 1 Goffstown Rail Trail Overview***

***Sheet 2 Goffstown Rail Trail Overview***

***Sheet 3 Goffstown Rail Trail Overview***

***Sheet 4 Goffstown Rail Trail Overview***

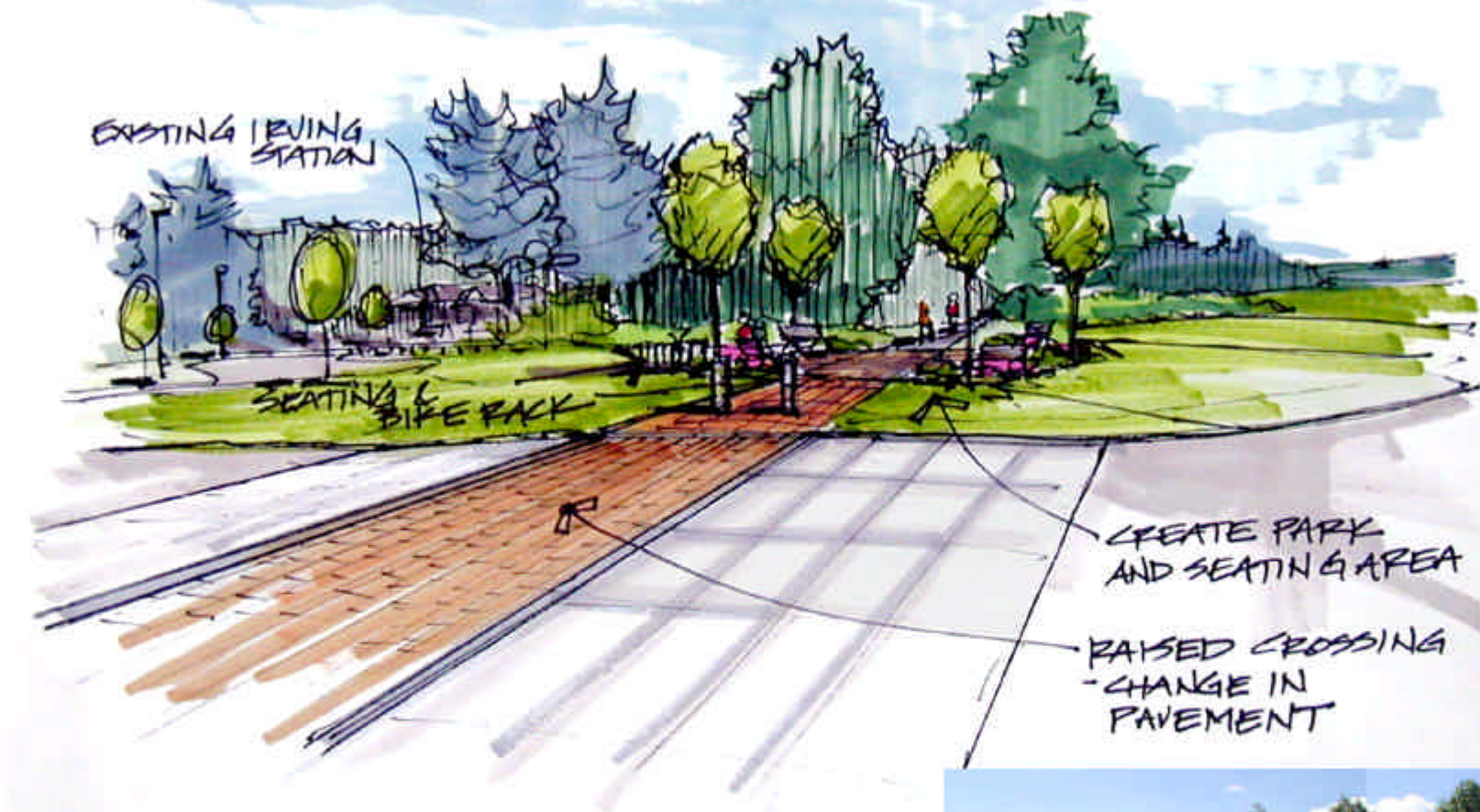




## Possible Trailhead at Recreation Center



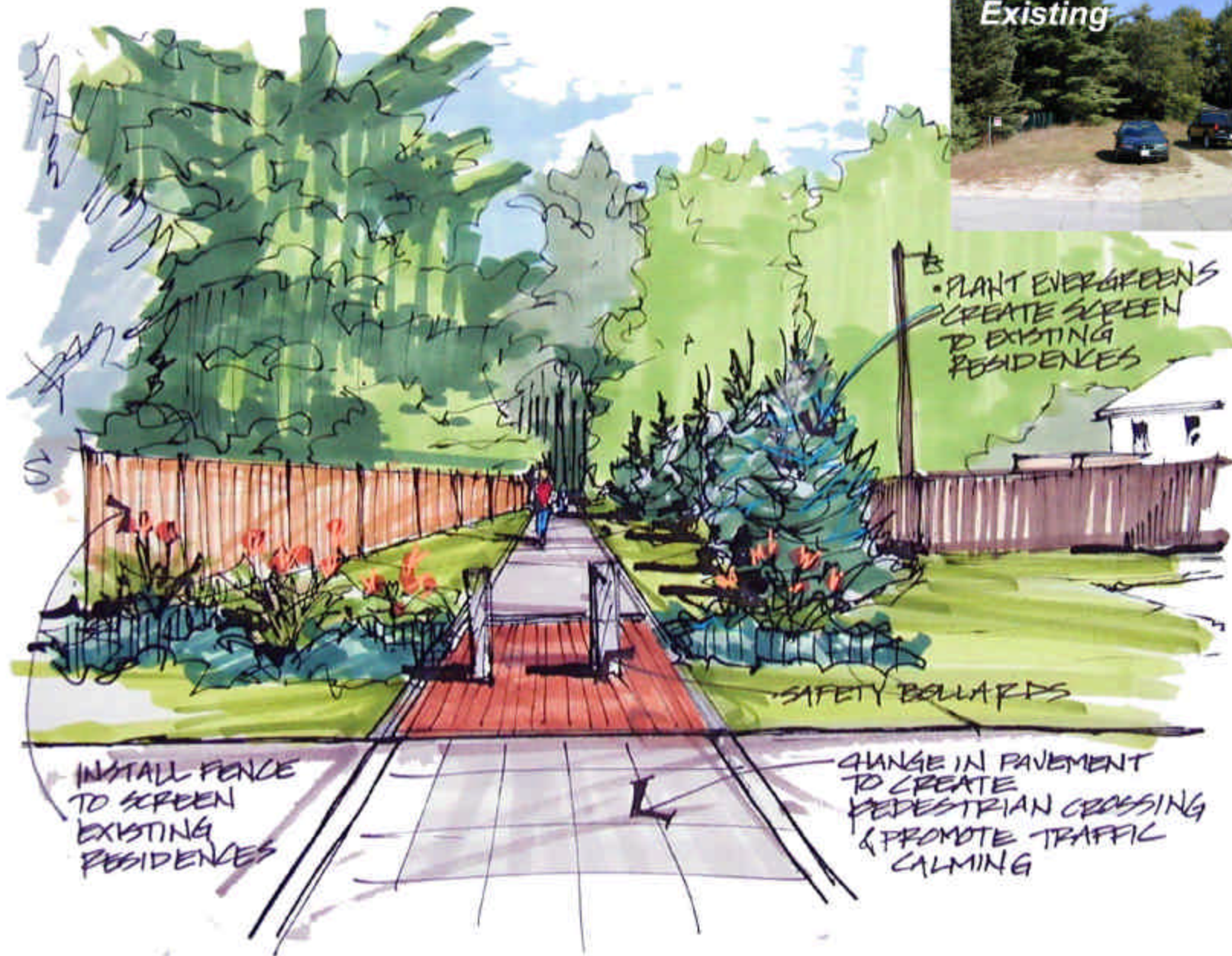




## **Possible Park at Henry Bridge Road**

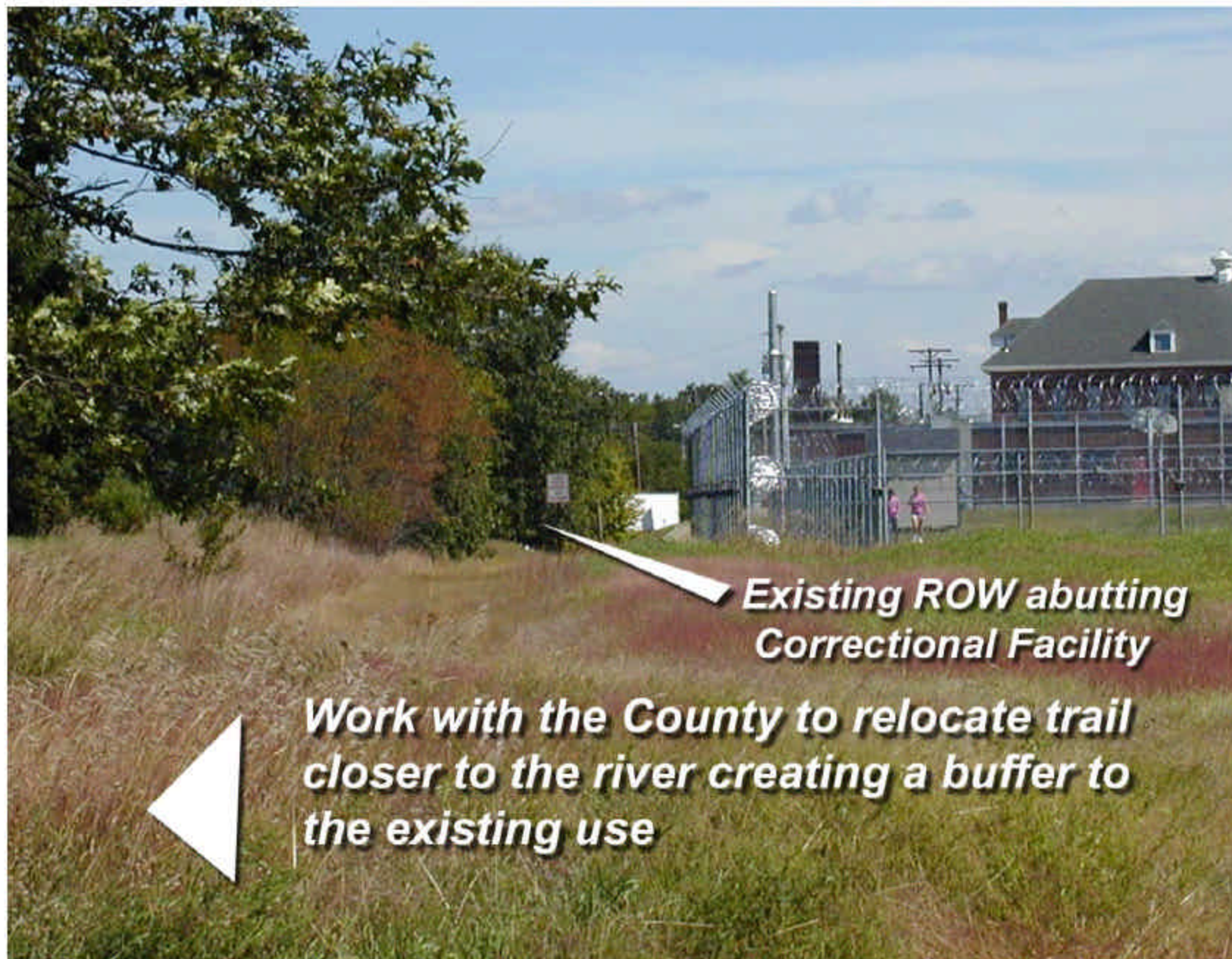






## **Buffering to Existing Residences**

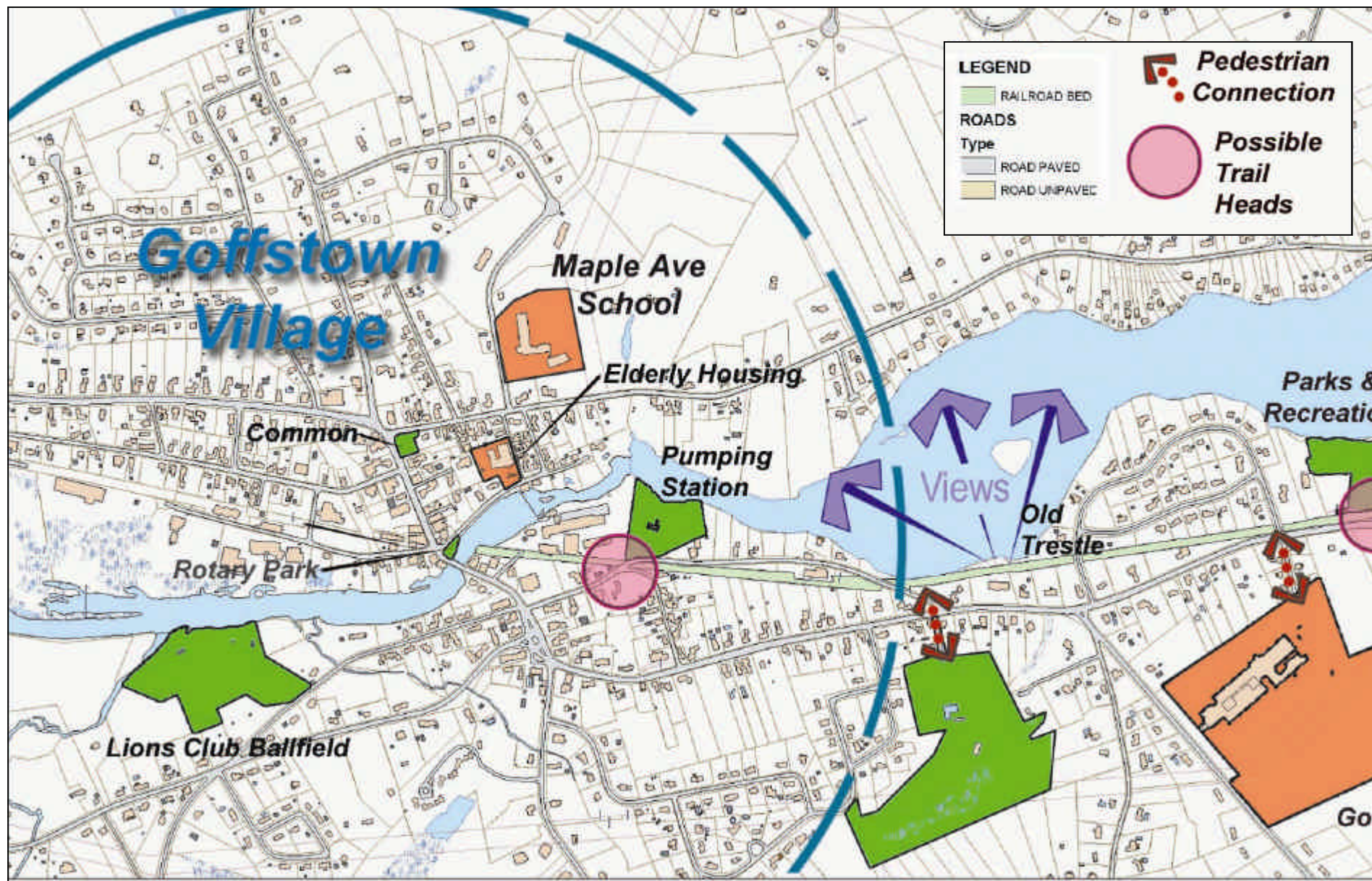




***Existing ROW abutting  
Correctional Facility***

***Work with the County to relocate trail  
closer to the river creating a buffer to  
the existing use***

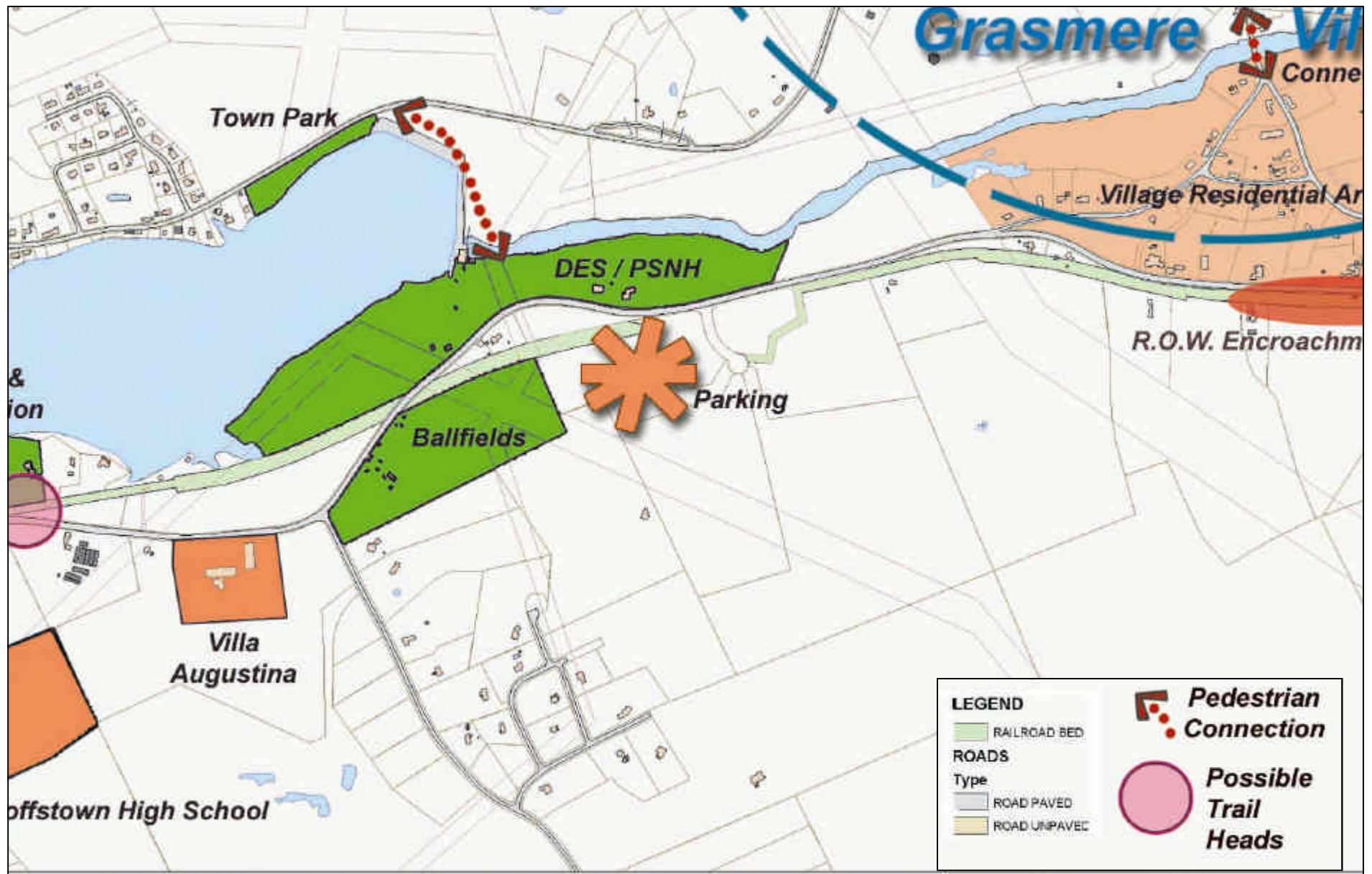




## Sheet 1—Goffstown Rail Trail

Sheet 1	Sheet 2	Sheet 3	Sheet 4
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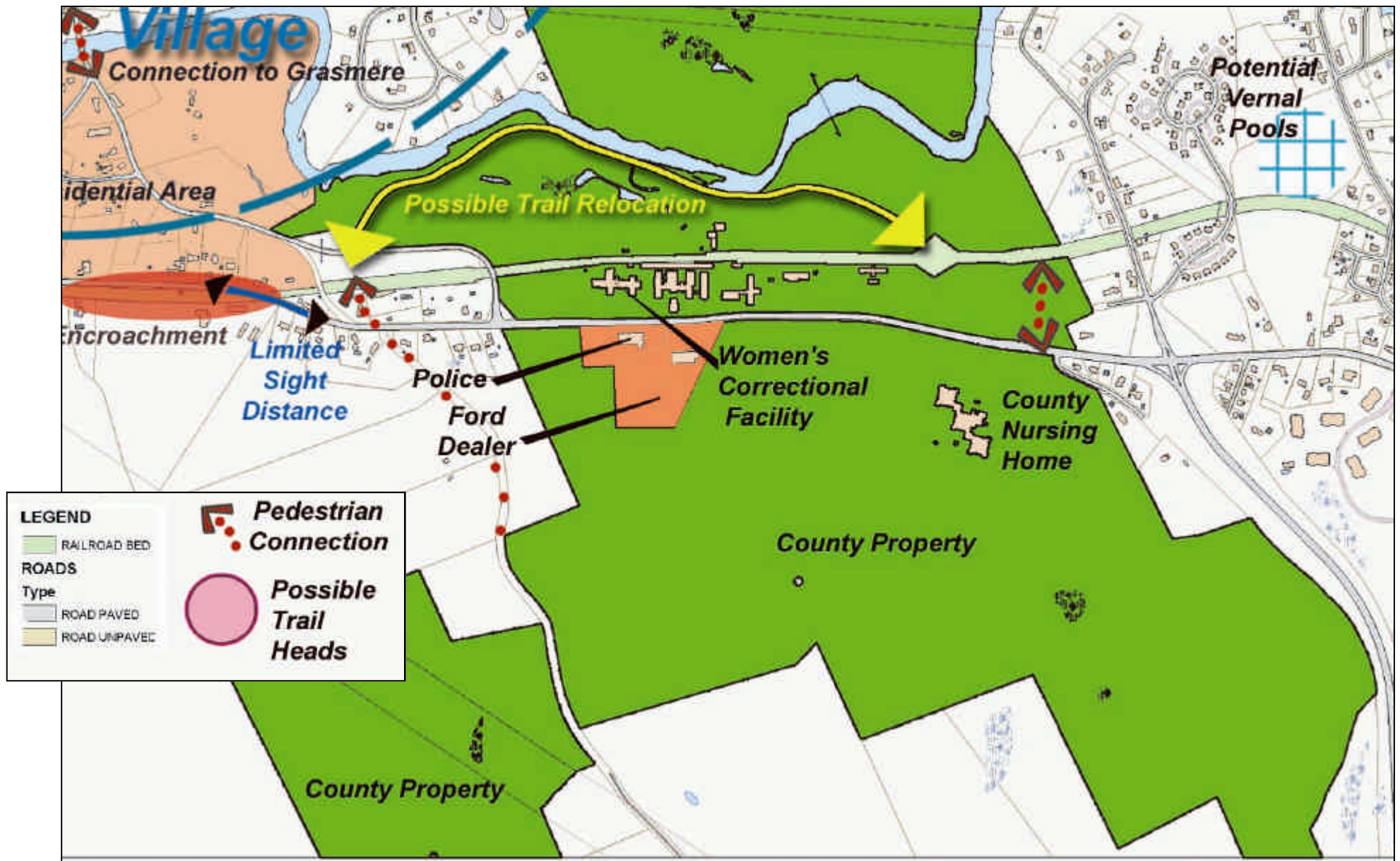




## Sheet 2—Goffstown Rail Trail

Sheet 1	Sheet 2	Sheet 3	Sheet 4
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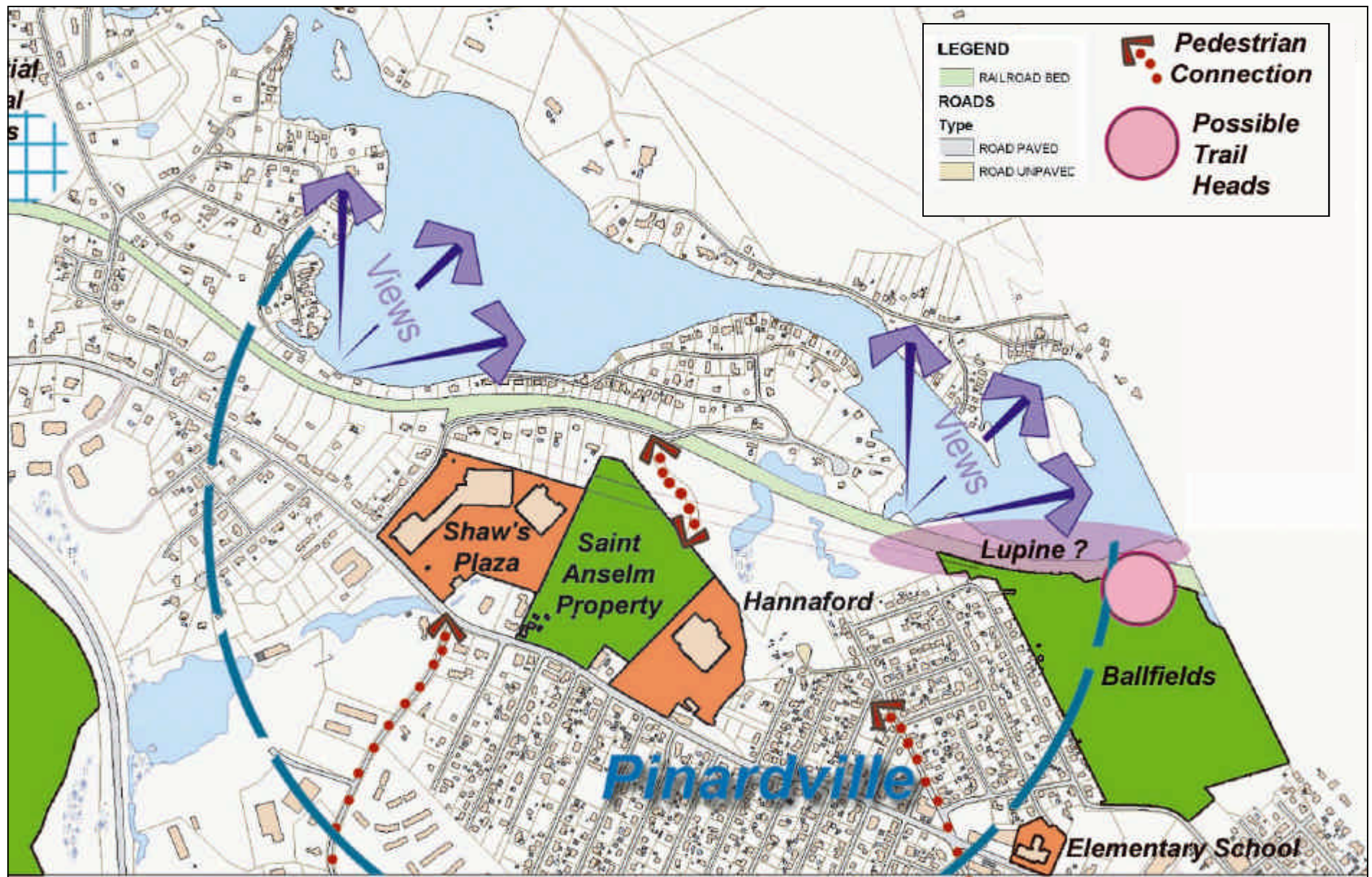




## Sheet 3—Goffstown Rail Trail

Sheet 1	Sheet 2	Sheet 3	Sheet 4
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## Sheet 4—Goffstown Rail Trail

Sheet 1	Sheet 2	Sheet 3	Sheet 4
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## Recommendations to Town of Goffstown

### ***Demonstrate ownership responsibilities for the rail corridor.***

The Selectmen need to do public relations regarding the purchase of the rail corridor and the future plans for the recreational trail.

The Selectmen and Town officials need to hold a follow-up meeting with abutters to the rail corridor, to explain the process for purchasing the corridor and describe exactly what land was purchased.

Town needs to address existing problems with illegal motorized use and dumping along the trail.

Town needs to address problems of trespassing on private property.

Several project signs should be installed at prominent locations along the trail to indicate that the Rail Trail is a Goffstown project.

### ***Appoint a Goffstown Rail Trail Steering Committee.***

Representatives from various town boards, commissions and departments including, but not limited to: Selectmen, Planning, Parks & Recreation, Public Works, Police, Fire, Conservation Commission. Membership should also include several town residents, Friends of the Greenway and a Hillsborough County government representative.

Designate a Project Manager for the Goffstown Rail Trail.

The Selectmen should designate a current Town employee for this responsibility.

This person would be responsible for the day-to-day issues. They would be a point of contact for residents to call with questions and concerns. This person could also coordinate the Steering Committee meetings.

### ***Sponsor several Rail Trail Days.***

An initial trail walk should include various representatives from town government and the Steering Committee to review issues and opportunities.

Periodic Rail Trail walks and cleanup events should be scheduled to promote the Rail Trail.

### ***Initiate the Survey and Engineering Process.***

The Selectmen should issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a professional land surveyor.

A boundary survey of the entire corridor that was purchased by the Town should be completed.

Title research for certain parcels should be included in the professional services.

Identification of potential easement areas should be documented.

### ***Develop a Rail Trail Master Plan***

The designated Project Manager should coordinate the development of a Master Plan for the entire rail road corridor.

The Rail Trail Steering Committee should be involved in the Master Plan process.

Overall goals and preliminary cost estimates should be included.

Community meetings should be held to gather additional input for the Master Plan.

### ***Initiate the Design Process.***

The Selectmen should issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a consultant to perform the design of the Goffstown Rail Trail.

The Rail Trail Steering Committee should be involved in the selection process.

Community meetings should be held to gather additional input for the design.

Design and Construction Standards should be developed for the Rail Trail.

### ***Seek Grant Funding for the Rail Trail Construction.***

The Selectmen should continue to pursue grants from Federal, State and Private agencies for construction of the Rail Trail.

The Town's CIP and Budget Committees should be involved in the grant process.

Encourage Private Fundraising for the Rail Trail.

Local businesses, Civic Groups and Service Clubs should be encouraged to sponsor sections of the Rail Trail.



Promote fund raising opportunities for local Trail Advocates.

Identify improvement projects and sponsorship opportunities for residents and other individuals.

***Develop a Rail Trail Stewardship Plan.***

The Rail Trail Steering Committee should develop a Stewardship Plan.

Identify maintenance and management responsibilities that will be done by Town agencies, (Police, Fire, Public Works, Parks & Recreation).

An “Adopt-A-Trail” program should be established.

Contact local schools, youth groups, Saint Anselm College and civic groups regarding stewardship opportunities.

**Special Thanks to.....**

TOWN OF GOFFSTOWN  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
LOCAL RESIDENTS

***DESIGN – ENGINEERING PROFESSIONALS***

GORDON LEEDY - VHB, INC.  
GREG BAKOS - VHB, INC.  
DIRK GROTENHUIS - KIMBALL CHASE  
JONATHAN MacDONALD - RIZZO ASSOCIATES  
MIKE HANSEN - THE LOUIS BERGER GROUP  
CYNTHIA BOISVERT - CUOCO & CORMIER ENGINEERING  
MATHEW PIKARSKI - WATERFIELD DESIGN GROUP  
UNH COOPERATIVE EXTENSION - HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY  
FRIENDS OF THE GREENWAY  
VILLA AUGUSTINA SCHOOL